The Sinminhoe's Independence Movement during the Last Years of the Chosŏn Dynasty

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1. Introduction

The year 1905 was a turning point in the history of modern Korea. In November of that year, Imperialist Japan had just won the Russo-Japanese war and forced the Korean Government to sign the five-article pact historically known as the Ulis Choyak. The unsigned pact deprived Korea of its sovereignty and relegated it to the status of a Japanese protectorate. In December of the same year, the Japanese set up a Residency-General and, with the help of two Japanese army divisions stationed in Korea, began their semicolonial rule.

The Korean response was immediate and prompt: an independence movement was organized, including both "the righteous army" ( APPLICATION quoted) and a policy of "enlightenment education." The former consisted of Koreans who wished to defend national independence through armed resistance and were prepared to fight to the bitter end. The latter was based on the recognition that education alone was crucial in regaining national independence.

The prime movers of this educational movement were national leaders who had been devoted to the cause of national modernization before 1905. Their strategy was to install a patriotic spirit in young Koreans and teach them in such a way that they would become leading independence fighters. Their plan for the future was to set up military bases near the Manchurian border to develop a combat-ready independence army, and to await an opportunity to be provided by the inevitable clash of Japanese imperialistic expansionism with the interests of other great powers such as the

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United States and China. To carry out this vision, various movements were initiated such as “Save the Nation through Education” movement, the “Enlightenment Campaign” by the press, the campaign for the promotion of national industries, the campaign to repay the national loan, the new cultural movement, the movement for Korean Studies, the movement for a national religion, and the campaign for the establishment of independence army bases. These patriotic campaigns and movements received nationwide popular support and so achieved a great deal between 1906 and 1910. This period might well have been a period of despair, had it not been for the awakening patriotic spirit.

One secret organization operated on a national scale for the cause of independence during this period was the Sinminhoe. Being a secret association, the Sinminhoe was able to continue to operate undetected until the end of 1910. The Sinminhoe deserves our close attention for this reason and I attempt to examine it in as much detail as the scarcity of records and documents allows.

II. The Founding of the Sinminhoe

The Sinminhoe was founded in April 1907 under the leadership of Yang Ki-t’ak and An Ch’ang-ho. It came about through the combined efforts of five independence movement groups. The first constituent group was led by Yang Ki-t’ak. It founded a daily newspaper called the Taehan Maeil Sinbo (The Korea Daily News) in July 1904, through which it worked to regain national independence. First Párk Ûn-sik and then Sin Ch’ae-ho served as editorial writers for this daily newspaper. They wrote inspiring lead articles in support of the movements for the righteous army and enlightenment education. Just before the founding of the Sinminhoe, the group had begun to concentrate on the campaign to redeem the national loan on January 29, 1907.

The second group was the Sangdong Church and its attached school, Ch’ŏngnyŏn Hagwon. Chŏn Tŏk-ki, Yi Tong-yŏng, Yi Hoe-yŏng, Yi Chun, Kim Pyŏng-hŏn, and Kim Ku were its leaders. Until 1905, the group had been rallying to oppose the Őlsa Choyak, but when this effort failed, the group switched to a long-term strategy of building schools and teaching young people, in the belief that education alone could lay a solid foundation for the restoration of independence.¹

The third group consisted of former military officers, including Yi Tong-hwi, Yi

¹ Kim ku, Paekpŏn Ichi (白儿日志) [The diary of Paekpŏn (Kim Ku)], Seoul Paekpŏn Kim Ku Kinyŏn Sa’ophoe, 1968, pp 178-82
Kap, Yu Tong-yol, No Paeng-nun, Cho Sŏng-hwan, and Kim Hui-son. Seeing no point in fighting without being properly equipped, the group did not join the righteous army, although it supported the army wholeheartedly, and instead participated in the education campaign, waiting for a more opportune moment for military activity.

The fourth group was composed mainly of merchants and businessmen living in P'yŏngan Province. Yi Sŏng-hun and An T'ae-guk led the group. In March 1907, this group organized a traders' cooperative to effectively oppose Japanese authorities who had recently arrested An T'ae-guk, the president of Hyŏptong Sa. The group demanded the immediate release of An T'ae-guk and members closed their shops in the city of P'yŏngyang.2

The fifth group was the Kongnip Hyŏphoe, a cooperative society set up in the U.S. by An Ch'ang-ho. An went to the U.S. in 1902 to study, but when he saw the miserable state of Korean workers in San Francisco and Los Angeles, he gave up his study and began working for the betterment of their living conditions and for the protection of their interests. He formed a friendship society called Hanin Ch'innokhoe in 1903. The organization continued to grow and was later renamed the Kongnip Hyŏphoe. The leader of this group included An Ch'ang-ho, Yi Kang, Chŏng Chae-kwan, Im Chun-gi, Kim Sŏng-mu, Song Sŏk-chun, and Yi Chae-su. They published an official organ called the Kongnip Sinmun.3 When the news that Korea had been deprived of its independence by the Ŭlsa Choyak reached them, they became extremely bitter and indignant and decided to fight for Korean independence when the proper time came.

Most of the leaders of these five groups knew one another because they had belonged as young men to the Tongnip Hyŏphoe (Independence Association). During the so-called Tongnip Hyŏphoe period (1896-98) when the association organized a movement for the self-government and self-strengthening of Korea, these men were too young to be its leaders, but they were in the vanguard of another organization, the Manmin Kongdonghoe (The Joint Meeting of the Whole Nation). By 1905 they were old enough to become leading figures in their own groups.

An Ch'ang-ho and his Kongnip Hyŏphoe initiated the founding of the Sinminhoe later in Seoul. An and his group members gathered at Riverside in Los Angeles during the New Year's holiday of 1907 and agreed to form the Tachan Sinminhoe.

2 Taehan Maeil Sinbo [Korea Daily News], 26 March and 27 March 1907
3 Sŏkpyŏn Tosan An Ch'ang-ho (續篇 李山昌浩) [Supplementary volume, Tosan An Ch'ang-ho], Seoul Tosan Kinyŏm Sa'ophoe, 1954, pp. 117-33, Yi Kwang-su (李光洙), Tosan An Ch'ang-ho, (島山安昌浩) Seoul, 1948, pp. 8-13, Chu Yohan, ed., An Tosan Chŏnhyup, [The complete works of An Tosan], Seoul 1971, pp 40-54
They drafted both its prospectus (ch’wijkisŏ) and its general regulations (t’ongyong changjŏng).\(^4\) They also agreed that, in order to make it more significant, they would form this society in alliance with leaders at home. The group chose An Ch’ang-ho for the mission of convincing leaders in Korea to join forces and it raised the money necessary for him to carry it out.\(^5\) An left San Francisco on 20 January 1907. He arrived in Tokyo in mid-February and stayed for several days to meet with Korean students. On 20 February 1907, he arrived in Seoul.\(^6\)

On 22 February An Ch’ang-ho paid a visit to Yang Ki-t’ak, the editor-in-chief of the Taehan Maeil Sinbo, and donated 35 won for repayment of the national loan on behalf of the Kongnip Hyŏphoe.\(^7\) An then informed Yang of the founding of the Sinminhoe. Subsequently, An was able to contact through Yang’s connections a number of other leaders of the independence movement.

Yang Ki-t’ak, himself then an influential leader, had kept in touch with other patriotic leaders. In comparison, An Ch’ang-ho, though probably the ablest of the two, was less influential in Korea because of his long absence. Realizing that he lacked Yang’s background, An decided to support Yang, who was a comrade from the days of the Manmin Kongdonghoe, the head of the Sinminhoe. Yang was one of the key members of a secret association of reformists, Kach’yoktang in 1902. These reformists, who were also members of the Tongnip Hyŏphoe, were pitted against the pro-Russian conservative political faction. Their secret association came to an end, however, when Yi Sang-jae was arrested and imprisoned. Another consideration was that since the conclusion of the Ŭlsa Choyak, Yang Ki-t’ak himself had apparently been thinking it necessary to form another secret association.\(^8\)

An Ch’ang-ho’s tremendous efforts came to fruition at last in April 1907 when representatives of the above-mentioned five groups—Yang Ki-t’ak, Yi Tong-hwi, Chŏn Tŏk-ki, Yi Tong-nyŏng, Yi Kap, Yu Tong-yŏl, and An Ch’ang-ho himself—gathered in great secrecy in Seoul, discussed the proposed secret society

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\(^4\) Kuksa P’yŏnch’an Wiwŏnhoe (國史編纂委員會), ed., Han’gyuk tongnip undong sa (韓國獨立運動史) [A history of the Korean independence movement], 5 vols., Seoul: Kuksa P’yŏnch’an Wiwŏnhoe, 1965-69, vol 1, p 1028

\(^5\) Sokp’yŏn Tosan An Ch’ang-ho, p 135

\(^6\) Chŏsen no hogo oyobi hengi (朝鮮の保護及併合), [The protection and annexation of Korea], vol of Kim Chŏng-ju, ed Chŏsen tochi shiryō (朝鮮統治史料), [Historical records of the Japanese rule of Korea], 10 vols., Kankoku Shiryō Kenkyūjo, 1970-72, vol 3, p 73

\(^7\) Taehan Maeil Sinbo, 24 February 1907

\(^8\) Yu Cha-hu (柳子厚), Yi Chun Sŏmaeng Chŏn (李儁先生傳) [A biography of Yi Chun], Seoul, Tongbang Munhwa Sa, 1947, pp 59-68
under the presidency of Yang Ki-t'ak, and founded the Sinminhoe.9

These seven men can thus be called the founding members. At the inaugural meeting, the prospectus and the general regulations, both of which had been drafted in America by An Ch'ang-ho and his group, were adopted almost in their entirety. The original idea of establishing headquarters in Riverside, California, was amended, however, and Seoul was chosen instead. It was also agreed that each province was to have one director and that An Ch'ang-ho was to be director for the American Continent.10 The Sinminhoe was to be known in English as the “New People’s Society” 11 In the initial organization, Yang Ki-t'ak was the director general, Yi Tong-nyŏng the general secretary, Chŏn Tŏk-ki the treasurer, and An Ch'ang-ho the executive officer. The rest of the founding members assumed provincial directors’ posts. The duty of the executive officer was to deal with new membership.12

About four hundred new members were admitted to Sinminhoe immediately after the its inauguration, and membership increased to eight hundred by 1910.13 Since nearly all the leaders of the enlightenment movement became its members, the newly formed Sinminhoe emerged as the most influential secret association, leading and guiding the independence movement.

The Sinminhoe would be thought of as a successor to the Tongnip Hyŏphoe and the Manmin Kongdonghoe in terms of leadership and to the Kaehyo'ktang in terms of organization.

III. The Aims and Ideology of the Sinminhoe

The ultimate aims of the Sinminhoe were, first, to regain national independence and build a free independent country, and second, to institute a republican form of government.14 This was the first time in the history of Korea that a republic had been advocated instead of a monarchy. Even the Tongnip Hyŏphoe had never thought of a republican form of government, although it was progressive enough to strive for a constitutional monarchy. Until then a republican form of government

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9 Sŏkpyŏn Tosan An Ch'ang-ho, pp 86-87.
10 Han'guk tongnip undong sa, vol 1, p 1023
11 The Japan Chronicle, 12 July 1912
12 Sŏkpyŏn Tosan An Ch'ang-ho, pp 86-87
13 Paekpŏn ilchi, p 195, Pak Ŭn-sik chŏnsŏ [朴殷植 全書], 3 vols [The complete works of Pak Ŭn-sik], Seoul, T'an'guk Tachak Pusŏk Tongyanghak Yŏn'guso, 1975, vol 1, p 479
14 Han'guk tongnip undong sa, vol 1, p 1024
had been the ideal of only a few young members of the Manmin Kongdonghoe.

The members of the Sinminhoe realized that they lacked the strength needed to regain independence and that it was therefore imperative to gain strength. They maintained that Korean people must be “made new”, that is, must become “a new people.” These were the ideals of the Sinminhoe. The Sinminhoe was deeply committed to the concept of political democracy. It believed that the people are the master of the country and that national prosperity and power come from the prosperity and power of the people. According to the Sinminhoe, it was necessary for the people to renew themselves through their own efforts, without help from others.15 Thus the Sinminhoe advocated new thoughts, education, morality, culture, industry, politics, and “earnestness” as prerequisites for creating a new nation and a new society.

In order to achieve its goals and realize its ideology, the Sinminhoe decided to carry out a variety of activities.16 It published newspapers, magazines, and books to provide the people with the new knowledge. It attempted to instill the new national spirit in people. It built better schools with the idea of fostering talented boys, and directed the curriculum and teaching style of each school. It directed businessmen in the proper management of their businesses and set up a model business through partnership among Sinminhoe members. It established officers’ training schools abroad in preparation for a war for independence and built military bases abroad as part of founding the independence army.17

IV. The Organization of the Sinminhoe

As mentioned, the Sinminhoe was founded as a secret society. The reasons for secrecy were to minimize Japanese interference and oppression and maximize the effectiveness of the independence movement. Members also wished to avoid the dissolution of the society by any Japanese decree or suppressive measure and to secure a core organization to work for independence in the event that Japan gained complete control of Korea through coercion. They also wanted to strictly limit new membership so that Japanese secret agents could be prevented from penetrating the Sinminhoe. The central posts consisted of president, vice-president, direct general, councillors, treasurer, executive officer, and inspector. The first two posts, which

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15 Ibid., p 1026
16 Ibid., pp 1028-29, Yamagata lso (山縣五十雄), ed., Chōsen mbō jiken, [The Korean Plot Incident] (朝鮮陰謀事件), Seoul, 1912, pp 26-153
17 Han'guk tongrup undong sa, vol. 1, p 1024, 1027
were only created during the last years of the Sinminhoe, were honorary, and it was the direct general who had real control. Representatives of each province were chosen to fill councillor positions. The treasurer was responsible for financial affairs, and the executive officer examined the qualifications of prospective members and oversaw organizational matters. The inspector was in charge of disciplinary matters.

In addition, each province had a director, who was assisted by an advisory council. Similarly, each county had its own director and advisory council. The county members were divided into groups of five men called pan, each with one person in charge. Every twelve pan had one leader who oversaw the twelve group leaders, and every four pan were led by an associate leader. One striking feature of this organization of the Sinminhoe was that every level from the center down to the country level had its own legislative body.

During the last years of the Sinminhoe the holders of the key posts were as follows: Yun Ch'i-ho, president, Yu Tong-yol, vice-president; Yang Ki-t'ak, director general; Yi Tong-hwi, director of the Hamgyông provinces; Yi Sung-hun, director of North P'yongan Province; An T'aeguk, director of South P'yongan Province; Kim Ku, director of Hwanghae Province; Yang Ki-t'ak, director of Kyônggi Province; and Chu Chin-su, director of Kangwôn Province. As for the director of other provinces, nothing is known about them since they were never arrested and consequently not exposed.

The Sinminhoe was so organized that no member was able to recognize more than two other members, and no member was supposed to know even a single fellow member laterally. To qualify for membership, one had to be firm in one's patriotic thought and ready to sacrifice one's life to the cause of national independence. In addition, there was a period during which one had to meet the approval of the executive officer. A successful candidate finalized the procedure by declaring that he would offer both his life and property according to the dictates of the Sinminhoe.

By 1910, there were about eight hundred members, which means that almost all patriotic Korean leaders of the period belonged to the Sinminhoe. According to statistics revealed at the trial of 122 people in connection with the Case of One Hundred Five, the occupational distribution of Sinminhoe members was as follows:

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18. Yamagata, Chôsen imbô jiken, pp.2-177

19 Han'guk tongnip undong sa (韓國獨立運動史), [A history of the Korean independence movement], Seoul Aeguk Tongji Wonhohoe, 1956, p 91

20 These statistics were from pp 54-81 of Yamagata, Chôsen imbô jiken.
business, 37.71% (merchants, 31.97% and other businessmen, 5.74%); education, 38.52% (teachers, 22.95% and students, 15.57%); agriculture, 5.74%; religion, 4.92%; free labor, 4.92%, manual labor, 1.64%, and unidentified, 6.55%.20

This means that those in business and education together made up 76.23% and thus were an integral part of the Sinminhoe. It is, therefore, fair to say that the Sinminhoe, though a nationwide society, was strongly dependent on middle-class citizens to carry out its various movements.

V. The “Save the Nation through Education” Movement of the Sinminhoe

Because it believed education to be the best and surest way to foster the national power necessary for the construction of a new nation, the Sinminhoe attached the highest priority to the movement for a new kind of education. The “Save the Nation through Education” Movement had been under way even before the founding of the Sinminhoe, but it was with the sponsorship of the Sinminhoe that the movement began to achieve notable results. After 1907, a number of inspired Korean patriots sold their lands and built new schools throughout the country.

The Sinminhoe’s education movement had three objectives: to make the people aware of the urgent need for the new education and to build schools for it; to direct the thrust of education in those newly built schools toward the regaining of national independence; and to build Sinminhoe-sponsored model schools for educating young Koreans.

There were several reasons why the Sinminhoe itself had to build some schools in a number of important areas throughout the country. First, the Sinminhoe wished to provide a middle-school level of education to graduates of private schools established by local patriots, most of which were primary schools. Second, the Sinminhoe intended to establish schools which would be a model for others to follow in building middle schools. Third, it wished to offer teacher-training courses in order to have enough competent teachers for all the new schools. Such sponsorship of schools was considered the most important way for the Sinminhoe to achieve the goals of the “Save the Nation through Education” Movement.

With the aims in mind, the Sinminhoe sponsored the following schools: the Osan school in Ch’ŏngju, North P’yŏngan Province; the Taesŏng School in P’yŏngyang, South P’yŏngan Province; the Poch’ang School in Kanghwa, Kyŏnggi Province, the Yangsil School in Uiju, North P’yŏngan Province; the Shinan School in Ch’ŏngju, North P’yŏngan Province; the Kamyŏng School in Napch’ŏngjŏng, North P’yŏngan
Province; the Hyōpsŏng Anhŭng School in Anju, North P'yŏngan Province; the Sinhŭng School in Sŏnch'ŏn, North P'yŏngan Province; Hŭngyang School in Kwaksan, North P'yŏngan Province; the Myŏngnyun School in Ōnghŭng, South Hamgyŏng Province; the Kyŏngsŏng School in Kyŏngsŏng, North Hamgyŏng Province; the Yangsan School in Anak, Hwanghae Province; the Anak-kun Myŏnhakhoe Teacher Training Institute in Anak, Hwanghae Province; and the Sŏbuk Hyŏpsŏng School in Seoul.

A close examination of the Taesŏng School and the Poch'ang School will be sufficient to illustrate the characteristics of the Sinminhoe-sponsored schools. Since it was a school established in accordance with the purposes and values of the Sinminhoe, the Taesŏng School had the twin objectives of training leaders for the restoration of national sovereignty and of educating teachers to be employed in mass public education.\(^{21}\) To achieve this goal, the school emphasized the acquisition of knowledge, the cultivation of patriotism, and the development of a sound character.

In order to instill the spirit of nationalism, the Taesŏng School made patriotism part of every course and lecture. It also made it a rule that students sing the national anthem and hear an admonitory speech on patriotism at every morning session.\(^{22}\) A table printed in Taehan Mael Sinbo gives the subjects and the textbooks used by Taesŏng School.\(^{23}\)

As one can see from the table, the curriculum standard of Taesŏng School was rather high, indeed high enough to correspond to that of today's senior high schools or even junior college. Instead of the Chinese classics, the school used as its Chinese textbooks Liang Ch'i-ch'a'o's collected works, Yin-Ping-shih-wen-chi, which are essays on how to save China from invading foreign powers. The idea was, of course, to teach schoolboys why and how national independence should be regained.

It is interesting to note the importance given to physical education, the instructor of which was a former Korean military officer. He gave lessons not only in physical education but also in military training and tactics. From time to time there were also emergency drills at night held for the sake of military training.\(^{24}\) Military training was emphasized in order to terminate the traditional tendency to indulge in literary arts while neglecting military arts. It was also meant to keep the education offered

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21 Yi Kwang-su, Tosan An Ch'ang-ho, p 25
22 Ibid., p 89
23 Taehan Mael Sinbo, 6 October 1908
24 Yi Kwang-su, Tosan An Ch'ang-ho, p 240
in line with the Sinminhoe’s commitment to founding an independent army abroad. For the development of character, sincerity was emphasized as the basis. The school taught that sincerity consisted of righteousness, punctuality, keeping promises, and proper discharges of duty.  

The school encouraged students to govern themselves and so trained them in self-government. The student council consisted of five committees: lectures and discussion, music, sports, discipline, and social activities. The sports committee organized soccer and baseball matches between Seoul and P’yŏngyang, and the lectures and discussion committee often held oratorical contests with patriotism as the topic. For the first time in the history of Korean schools, a military brass band was organized. Because of these unique activities, graduates recalled the Taesŏng School as a kind of comprehensive institution that was a combination of middle school, school for political science, and military academy.

With Yun Ch’i-ho as its honorary principal and An Ch’ang-ho as its acting principal, the Taesŏng School continued to function as a Sinminhoe-sponsored model school until 1911, when as a result of the Case of the One Hundred Five the Japanese authorities discovered the existence of the Sinminhoe and closed the school down. A number of other school were established throughout the country modeled after the Taesŏng School, and many of the Taesŏng graduates later became leaders of the independence movement.

The Poch’ang School was actually a chain of schools established mainly under the aegis of Yi Tong-hwan. The principal middle school located on Kwanghwa Island had branch schools at both the middle and primary school levels throughout the country. The main Poch’ang School was a three-year school, but it required a one year preliminary course. The subjects and textbooks of this school were basically the same as those of the Taesŏng School.

In addition to the middle-school course, there were two other courses of study. One was a one-year intensive teacher-training course and the other was a night course. Boys between ages fifteen and twenty who already knew Chinese characters took the middle-school course, and men between ages twenty and forty who had already acquired considerable knowledge were placed in the teacher-training course to meet the ever-increasing demand for teachers as the “Save the Nation through Education” Movement continued to prosper. The night course was mainly for the

25 Chu Yo-han, _An Tosan chŏnŏk_, pp 80-82
26 Yi Kwang-su, _Tosan An Ch’ang-ho_, p 89
27 Chu Yo-han, _An Tosan chŏnŏk_, p 82
28 Taehan Maeil Sinbo, 25 April 1909
working class and was designed to provide them with the new type of education. The Poch’ang School was so successful and flourishing that the number of students eventually amounted to 410.\textsuperscript{29}

The principal middle school had twenty-one branch schools on Kanghwa Island alone. When these schools turned out to be extremely successful, Yi Tong-hwi formed a school board with the help of local leaders to enforce free and compulsory universal education for Kanghwa Island. The school board first added four schools—Chinmyŏng, Kyemyŏng, Ch’anghwa, and Konghwa—and later thirty-one more, thus increasing the total to fifty-six. It divided the existing sixteen myŏn and one hundred and fourteen tong of Kanghwa Island into fifty-six districts so that every district could have one school and so that school-age children could go to school in their own district.\textsuperscript{30}

The Poch’ang branch schools located in areas other than Kanghwa Island were: Kaesŏng Poch’ang School in Kaesŏng, Kyŏnggi Province; Kŭmch’ŏn Poch’ang School in Kŭmch’ŏn-gun, Hwanghae Province; Changdan Poch’ang School in Changdan-gun, Hwanghae Province; P’ungdŏk Poch’ang School in P’ungdŏk-kun, Hwanghae Province; Anak Poch’ang School in Anak-kun, Hwanghae Province; Hohŭng Poch’ang School in Hohŭng-myon, North Ch’ungch’ŏng Province; and Hamhŭng Poch’ang School in Hamhŭng-gun, South Hamgyŏng Province. There were more Poch’ang branch schools throughout the country, and according to Yi Kwang-su the schools established by Yi Tong-hwi during the Sinminhoe period numbered about one hundred.\textsuperscript{31}

It appears that the Poch’ang School was even more independence-oriented and more militant than the Taesŏng School. In May 1908, some Poch’ang schoolboys held a meeting to discuss how to regain the country’s independence, and seventeen of them cut their fingers to pledge their devotion to win back sovereignty, to work to save fellow countrymen, and their devotion gloriﬁ lifting Korea’s four-thousand-year history. The schoolboys also formed a “Finger-cutting League” (Tanji Tongmaeng) and declared their determination to devote their lives to the cause of national independence.\textsuperscript{32}

Other schools sponsored by the Sinminhoe were without exception imbued with essentially the same militant nationalistic thought. The Sinminhoe-inspired Korean leaders also turned to education and founded numerous private schools. The

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 5 March 1908
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 18 March 1908
\textsuperscript{31} Yi Kwang-su, Tosaen An Ch’ang-ho, pp 45-46
\textsuperscript{32} Taehan Mael Sinbo, 16 May 1908
education movement was the most successful of all the activities carried out by the Sinminhoe. The simple fact that some three thousand schools were established subsequent to the founding of the Sinminhoe is evidence of this. As of 1 July 1910, the number of private schools (whose establishment the Japanese were forced to endorse in spite of their oppressive anti-private-school decree) was 2,082. The inspiration behind all these schools was the Sinminhoe. In short, the dream that the Sinminhoe would produce hundreds of national leaders through the “Save the Nation through Education” Movement came true.

VI. Educational Association and Programs of “Enlightenment Lectures”

Both the Sinminhoe’s activities to promote educational association and their “enlightenment lectures” program were successful. One reason for the success of these activities was that they did not cost the impecunious Sinminhoe. The promotion of educational associations was carried out in two ways. First, the Sinminhoe itself moved around the country forming associations. Some of them were the Anak-kun Myŏnhakhoe (Anak-kun Educational Association) in Hwanghae Province, the Haesŏ Kyoyuk Ch’ŏngch’ŏng (Haesŏ Educational Association) in Hwanghae Province, the Pyŏngyang Ch’ŏngnyŏn Kŏnjanghohoe (P’yŏngyang Youth Scholarship Foundation) in South Pyŏng’an Province, the Yŏnhakhoe (Research Society) in South Pyŏng’an provinces, and the Tongjehoe (Tongje Society) in South Pyŏng’an Province. Second, the Sinminhoe combined various existing educational associations. To cite one instance of this, the Sŏu Hakhoe (Sŏu Educational Association) and the Hanbuk Hŭnhakhoe (Hanbuk Educational Association) were integrated into the Sŏbuk Hakhoe (Northwest Educational Association) in January 1908 through the efforts of the Sinminhoe. The Sinminhoe also attempted to merge the Kiho Hŭnhakhoe (Kyŏnggi-Ch’ungch’ŏng Educational Association) and the Kwangdong Hakhoe (Kangwon Educational Association) into a nationally united study society based on the Sinminhoe’s principle of a unified alliance of a self-renewed people.

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33 Hwangŏng Sinmun, (皇城新聞), 8 May 1909
34 Kwanbo (官報), [The Government Gazette], No 4756, 13 August 1910, p 64
35 Sŏbuk Hakhoe Wolbo, (西北學會月報) [Monthly report of the Northwest Educational Association], 3 15 (February, 1908) 44-45
36 Ibid, pp 8-9
37 Han'guk tongmu undong sa, (1965) vol 1, p 1024
As for the successful “enlightenment lectures” program, leading members of the Sinminhoe traveled around giving lectures and speeches whenever and whereever there were social gatherings. The Sinminhoe itself sometimes sponsored joint athletic meetings of private schools in order to take the opportunity to give “enlightenment” speeches.

The Sinminhoe used its “enlightenment” lectures as an opportunity to inculcate people with its patriotic ideas. Lectures presented the idea of regaining national rights and promoted recognition of popular rights. They pointed out the need for free and compulsory universal education and for the dissemination of new knowledge, and they advocated the establishment of schools and educational associations. They emphasized the importance of industry in saving the country. They urged the reform of old-fashioned practices and the cultivation of one’s own potential resources.

Leading members of the Sinminhoe who took part in the lecture program included An Ch’ang-ho, Yi Tong-hwi, Chŏn Tŏk-ki, Ch’oe Kwang-ok, Yun Ch’ŏr-ho, Yi Sang-jae, Ch’oe Pyŏng-hŏn, Chang Ung-jun, Yŏ Chun, Yi Hak-p’il, An Pyŏng-ch’ŏn, and Yun Ki-sŏp. All were noted for their eloquence. How devoted they were to this program is evidenced by the fact that Ch’oe Kwang-ok collapsed and died while giving a lecture.38 Also noted for their persuasiveness were Yang Ki-t’ak, No Paeng-nin, Yi Hoe-yŏng, Yi Sung-hun, An T’ae-guk, Yu Tong-yŏl, Pak Ŭn-sik, Yi Kap, Yi Tong-nyong, Sin Ch’ae-ho, Kim Ku, Chang Chi-yŏn, Cho Sŏng-hwan, Ch’oe Nam-sŏn, Nam Hyŏng-u, Kim To-hŭi, Chu Chŏn-su, Im Ch’ŏl-jŏng, and Kang Yun-hŭi. But it was not these leading members alone who participated in the program; almost all the Sinminhoe’s members took part in one way or another. People were deeply moved by what the Sinminhoe had to say about the restoration of Korean independence.

**VII. The Sinminhoe’s Publications Activities**

The Sinminhoe deemed it of great importance to enlighten the people through various publications and accomplished several noteworthy results in this area. First, the Sinminhoe took over the *Taehan Maeil Sinbo* as its official organ.39 It was easy for the society to secure the paper because the chief editor Yang Ki-t’ak and his staff were members. In addition, Yang carried out his duties as the director general of the

38 *Paekpŏn tehŭ*, p 187
39 *Han’guk tongnip undong sa*, (1965), p 91
Sinminhoe at his newspaper office, thus making the Taehan Maeil Sinbo the headquarters of the Sinminhoe. The Taehan Maeil Sinbo was a joint venture by Yang Ki-t’ak and the Englishman Ernest Thomas Bethel, who assumed the presidency. Because it had a foreigner as its head and part owner, the Taehan Maeil Sinbo was immune from Japanese censorship implemented under the Newspaper Decree. In this way the paper was able to be outspoken in what it said on behalf of the nationalistic cause of the Sinminhoe.

Second, the Sinminhoe published a monthly magazine called Sonyŏn (Boys).40 Ch’oe Nam-sŏn was its head and he contributed to it regularly along with Hong Myŏng-hŭi, Yi Kwang-su, Sin Ch’ae-ho, and Pak Ŭn-sik. This monthly not only inspired patriotic young boys but also promoted new culture and literature. It was discontinued when the Japanese found it to be one of the Sinminhoe organ in the trial resulting from the Case of the One Hundred Five.

Third, the Sinminhoe founded a publishing company called the Chosun Kwangmunhoe, which published a number of Korean classics. Pak Ŭn-sik and Yu Kiŏn were its directors and Ch’oe Nam-sŏn its executive.41

Fourth, the Sinminhoe established the T’ae-guk Sŏgwan, a chain bookshop, in cities like P’yŏngyang, Seoul, and Taegu with the financial support of Yi Sŏng-hun and An T’ae-guk. Its purpose was to promote national culture by publishing books and distributing them.42 These bookshops also functioned as liaison organs for the Sinminhoe.

Fifth, the Sinminhoe established the Myŏnhak Sŏp’o in Anak, it was to function both as a publishing company and bookshop. It published Ch’oe Kwang-ok’s Taehan Munjŏn (Korean Grammar) and Kyoyukhak (Pedagogics) and also distributed books in order to help the Sinminhoe’s campaign for enlightenment in Hwanghae Province.43

VIII. The Sinminhoe’s National Industry Movement

When the Sinminhoe carried out its national industry movement, its goals were to improve management among industrialists and to establish model industrial

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40 Yamagata, Chŏsen ambô jiken, p. 27
41 Sonyŏn, (少年) [Boys], 3 9 57
42 Yi Kwang-su, Tosa An Ch’ung-ho, p 33
43 Ch’oe Myŏng-sik (崔明植), Anak sakkŏn-kwa samul undong-kwa na (安岳事件과 三一運動과
나), [The Anak Incident, the March Movement, and I] Chinhae, Kŏngbŏ Chŏn’gi Wŏnhŏc, 1970, pp 18-19
companies. The Sinminhoe considered Japan's industrial invasion to be as serious and as dangerous as the military invasion. It believed that the promotion of national industry in addition to new education was the way to foster national strength.

The Sinminhoe set up model factories and companies that were jointly financed by its members and demonstrated to the general public and industrialists alike how to run and manage them successfully. The ultimate goal was to facilitate the accumulation of national industrial capital.

The Sinminhoe established the P'yongyang Ceramic Joint-Stock Company (P'yönyang Chagi Chejo Chusik Hoesa) in Masan-dong, P'yöngyang, in the belief that the production of Koryö celadons would help revive national industry, recapture the past glory of Koryö celadons, and fill the people with national pride. It also established two trading and wholesale companies: the Hyöpsong Tongs in Napch'önong, North P'yöngan Province, and the Sangmu Tongs in Sönch'ón and Yongch'ón, North Pyöngan Province.

In Pyngyang, the Sinminhoe raised stocks in order to establish a Korean industrial firm called the Cho'ón Sin'dap Hoesa. It also established a small-scale model textile factory and a small-scale tobacco factory in Anak, Hwanghae Province. Its plans to build a model farm village in Sariwön, Hwanghae Province, were aborted, however, when the Japanese authorities halted construction as soon as it was begun.

The Sinminhoe's national industry movement was not as successful as its educational movement. A possible reason for this is that patriotism and a small amount of capital were simply not enough to compete with Japanese monopolies backed by large amount of capital. It is significant, however, that despite difficulties the Sinminhoe put into practice almost all that it had planned for the promotion of national industry.

IX. The Sinminhoe's Youth Movement

The people were the main body of the independence movement but it was the younger generation, the future rulers of Korea, who were the main actors. That was

44 Han'guk tongnip undong sa, (1965), vol 1, p 1024
45 Yamagata, Chosen imbô jiken, p 27
46 Ibid., p 46
47 Ibid., pp 50, 96
48 Ch'oe Myŏnsik, Anak sakkôn, p 23
why the Sinminhoe decided to inaugurate a separate youth movement.

The Sinminhoe founded a youth association called the Ch’ŏngnyŏn Haguhoe in August 1909 to launch its youth movement. It was modeled after “Young Italy” and some other European youth associations. The founding members included Yun Ch’i-ho, Chang Êng-jin, Ch’oe Nam-sŏn, Ch’oe Kwang-ok, Ch’a I-sŏk, An T’aeguk, Ch’ae P’il-gŏn, Yi Sŏng-hun, Yi Tong-nyŏng, Kim To-hŭi, Pak Chung-hwa, and Chŏn Tŏk-ki. The prospectus was written by Sin Ch’ae-ho.50 This association was recognized by the authorities as legitimate. It existed ostensibly to promote character cultivation, while in practice it pursued activities promoting national independence.51

In order to become a member, one had to be seventeen years old, with scholarly achievement and moral uprightness equivalent to those of middle-school graduates. A prospective member also was required to take a training course before becoming a regular member. The training aimed at engendering such cardinal virtues as sincerity, perseverance, self-reliance, faithfulness, diligence, sense of proportion, and courage. The training course consisted of three parts: moral, physical, and scientific education.52

The headquarters were located in Seoul, and any city, town, or district with more than fifty members could have its own branch association. As a result of this stipulation, the Hansŏng branch association came into existence in May 1910, followed by branch association in Ŭiju and Anju in June 1910. To these were added the Chŏngju, Kwaksan, Sŏnch’ŏn, Yongch’ŏn, and Samhwa (Chinnamp’o) branch associations.53 Of all these branch associations Hansŏng was the best; it later moved to the western Kando (Chien-tao) in Manchuria where it established Sinhŭng Military Officers’ School. Its leading members included Yi Tong-nyŏng, Yun Ki-sŏp, Kim Chwa-jin, Yi Kuŏ-bong, Chang To-sun, and Yi Kyŏng-hŭi. The Hansŏng youth association continued to grow rapidly until it was disbanded by the Japanese in August 1910, only a year after its founding. It would have been more effective if it had been formed much earlier: as it was, the association did less than it could have done when Japan annexed Korea in August 1910.

50 Taehan Mael Sŭbo, 17 August 1909
51 Koryŏ Taeak Asea Munje Yŏng’gu (Yuktang Ch’ŏn’s P’yŏnch’a’n Wiwonhoe (高麗大學校亞細亞問題研究所六堂全集編纂委員會), ed., Yuktang Ch’oe Nam-sŏn’s Ch’ŏn, 15 vols, [the complete works of Yuktang Ch’oe Nam-sŏn] Seoul, Hyŏnam Sa, 1973, vol 10, p 247
52 Sŏnyŏn, 28 15
53 ibid, 36 78
X. Independence Army Bases and the "War of Independence"

The Sinminhoe's purpose in founding military school and independence army bases abroad was to enable the independence army to initiate a war for independence. It was envisioned that the army would march into Korea and join with the people, who would rise in the cause of national independence. The Sinminhoe may have adopted the strategy of a war of independence because of An Chung-ggin's influential lecture, "On Wars of Independence" ("Tongnip ch'onjaeng non"). An who first used the term "war of independence" was not satisfied with the "Save the Nation through Education" movement in Korea. An insisted on the need for an independence army to start the independence war from abroad, and he had a close relationship with the Sinminhoe.\(^ {54} \)

In August 1907, the Sinminhoe first began to examine the question of founding independence army bases and an independence army. In the wake of the forced disbanding of Korea's Imperial Armed Forces by the Japanese on 31 July 1907 (the formal ceremony took place the following day), many members of the military rose up in protest and subsequently joined the independence movement. Battles were conducted by the righteous armed corps with the full moral support of the Sinminhoe. From the Sinminhoe's point of view, the problem was that the righteous army lacked the modern military training and arms necessary to fight the Japanese regular army. Under the circumstance it was impossible to expect victory. Thus the Sinminhoe's need to modernize the righteous army was acute, but there was not much it could do, at least not until the end of 1908. At a time when it was expending most of its efforts and resources for the "enlightenment" movement, it was beyond the Sinminhoe's power to do more than giving moral support and encouragement.

In the spring of 1909, when the righteous army movement had begun to decline, the Sinminhoe started to seriously consider founding military officers' schools and establishing independence army bases.\(^ {55} \) Finally at the director's meeting of the Sinminhoe, held at the house of Yang Ki-t'ak, it was decided that military bases and military schools should be established abroad in order to found an independence

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54 Sŏn Hun (鮮于焞), *Mimjok kii sunan Paegǒn na sakkôn chunsang* (民族의 受難—百五人事件真相,) [National sufferings: The truth of the "Case of the one hundred five"], Seoul, Tongnip Ch'ŏngsan Pogipho, 1954, p 33

55 Won Ŭi-sang (元義常), "Sinhōng Mugwan Hakkyo" (新興武官學校) [Sinhōng Military Officers' School], in *Sungong'a*, (May, 1969), p 236
army strong enough to cope with modern warfare. The Sinminhoe’s most urgent priority, as it was felt, was to ensure a powerful independence army by means of systematic modern training and weaponry.\textsuperscript{56}

Just before this decision of the Sinminhoe was to be put into practice, Itô Hirobumi was shot and killed by An Chung-gŭn on 26 October 1909. The Japanese military police arrested key members of the Sinminhoe, including An Ch’ang-ho, Yi Tong-hwi, Yu Tong-yŏl, Yi Chong-ho, and Kim Myŏng-jun, on suspicion of being connected with An Chung-gŭn.\textsuperscript{57} Their periods of imprisonment lasted two to five months, and they were released one by one from the end of the following February.

The Sinminhoe held an emergency meeting in March 1910 and agreed that the “tactics of independence war” be adopted as the foremost strategy. It decided that the plan to establish independence army bases and military officers’ schools should be put into effect immediately. The plan was for members who had been arrested to take refuge abroad in order to carry out this undertaking, and that those members remaining home would support the undertaking while continuing their activities in the “enlightenment” movement.\textsuperscript{58}

The Sinminhoe planned to found independence army bases and deploy independence war tactics in the following:\textsuperscript{59}

1) It was thought that Manchuria, especially the area near the Changbaek Mountain (Ch’ang-pai Shan), would be the most suitable area for the planned independence army bases, partly because it was outside Japanese rule and partly because it would facilitate the independence army’s march into Korea.\textsuperscript{60}

2) The selection of the most suitable site for a base would be followed by fund-raising and the purchases of the necessary land

3) The land purchase would be followed by the recruitment of patriotic Korean emigrants both young and old.\textsuperscript{61}

\textsuperscript{56} Tongn'up undong sa (獨立運動史), [A history of the Korean independence movement], 10 vols, Seoul Tongn'up Undong Sa P'yŏnch'˘an Wŏnpho, 1970-78, vol 5, p 163

\textsuperscript{57} Kim Yun-sik (金允植), Sok i'mch'ongsa (續陰晴史), [Supplementary volume: History of clouds and sunshine], 2 vols, Seoul, Kuksa P'yŏnch'˘an Wŏnpho, 1960, vol 2 See especially the item for 22 February 1910

\textsuperscript{58} Sokp'yon Tosan An Ch'ang-ho, pp 134-45, Chu Yohan, An Tosan Chŏmsŏ, p. 896

\textsuperscript{59} Sokp'yon Tosan An Ch'ang-ho, pp 26-154, Sae Charyo Anak Sakkŏn Kwa Sinmunhoe sakkŏn (새 자료 安岳事件과 新民會事件) [New discovered research materials Trial documents of the “Anak Incident” and the “Sinmunhoe Incident”], Han'guk Hakpo (韓國學報), [Journal of Korean Studies], vol 8, (Winter 1977), pp 222-50

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, p 228

\textsuperscript{61} It seems that the Sinminhoe’s movement, the Ch'ŏngnyŏn Haguhoe (青年學友會), was related to the plan
4) The recruited emigrants would settle on the purchased land and build a new Korean village. This new Korean village would form a powerful Korean emigrant association and construct a viable rural farming community. A school, a church, and other cultural facilities would also be built there.

5) A military officers' school would be established for the training of independence army officers.

6) With the graduates from the military school and other patriotic young Korean emigrants as its core members, an independence army would be founded. Officers and soldiers alike would be trained in modern military tactics and strategies so that they could be equipped with modern arms. Thus the independence army would be a select force which would be able to face the Japanese regular army.

7) To ensure the excellence of the independence army, a number of young Koreans would be sent to Chinese military officers' schools.62

8) When all preparation is completed, an independence war would be initiated at the earliest and most suitable opportunity. The “most suitable opportunity” would presumably arise, it was thought, when the Japanese imperialistic expansion policy would inevitably result in wars with China, Russia, or the United States.63 While Japan was involved in such wars, the independence army would win its war and regain Korean independence with the help of other patriotic groups and association allied with the Sinminhoe at home.

XI. High-Ranking Members Found as Independence Army Base

After that, key members of the Sinminhoe (such as An Ch’ang-ho, Yi Kap, Yu Tong-yŏl, Sin Ch’ae-ho, Kim Hŭi-sŏn, Yi Chong-ho, Yi Chong-man [the brother of Yi Chong-ho], Kim Chi-gan, and Chŏng Yong-do) left the country one by one for Peking. Later Yi Tong-nyŏng went to Manchuria and the Russian borderlands on a survey mission.

In April 1910, the political exiles held a meeting in Tsingtao, China, to discuss the details of the establishment of independence army bases. Those present were An Ch’ang-ho, Yi Kap, Sin Ch’ae-ho, Kim Hŭi-sŏn, Yi Chong-ho, Yi Chong-man, Yi Kap, and Yi Kang.64 Yi Chong-ho took charge of fund-raising. He was the grandson of Yi Yong-ik, and it was believed that he had at his disposal thirty to fifty thousand won which had been deposited by his grandfather in Te-hua Bank (Te-hua Yin-

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62 Han’guk Hakpo, 8 233
63 Yamagata, Chōsen nobō jiken, pp 2, 26, and 83
64 Sŏk’pyŏn Tosan An Ch’ang-ho, p 144
hang) in Shanghai.\textsuperscript{65} At this meeting opinions were divided about how the money raised was to be used.\textsuperscript{66} Yu Tong-yŏl ad Kim Hŭi-sŏn proposed that the money at the disposal of Yi Chong-ho be used for the publication of a newspaper and a magazine, and An Ch’ang-ho and Yi Kap wanted to adhere to the original plan to invest in the establishment of a new Korean village and a military officers’ school. The debate ended in favor of the new proposal, but their failure to obtain the endorsement of the German governor-general in charge of Tsingtao, which was a part of territory leased to Germany, forced them to resort to the original plan.

The exiles then purchased some 70 square li (11.2 sq. m. or 4.2 sq. mi.) of land owned by an American firm called T’ai-tung Industrial Shih’yeh Hui-she for the purpose of establishing an independence army base, a new Korean village, and a military officers’ school. Yi Kap, Yu Tong-yŏl, and Kim Hŭi-sŏn, were to be the training instructors of the school, and Sin Ch’ae-ho was to teach Korean History and Chinese. Kim Chu-gan was to take charge of the farming activities of the village.\textsuperscript{67}

In September 1910 they arrived in Vladivostok, where they heard for the first time the news that Korea had finally been annexed as a colony to Japan. Shocked, they began to formulate new ideas and plans. Yu Tong-yŏl and Kim Hŭi-sŏn argued that the long-term project of establishing an independence army base and military officers’ school was quite inappropriate under the circumstances and that an independence army should be formed immediately using Korean residents in Manchuria and the Russian borderlands in order to march into the homeland. Again, An Ch’ang-ho and Yi Kap adhered to the original plan, but Yu and his supporters emerged victorious because Yi Chong-ho, who held the purse strings, took their side. Thus the founding of an independence army base ended in complete failure, and the task of forming an independence army was initiated instead.\textsuperscript{68} However, even this project suffered a fatal setback when both Yu Tong-yŏl and Kim Hŭi-sŏn were arrested in Yen-t’ai while carrying out their mission there.\textsuperscript{69}

XII. The Founding of Independence Army Bases in Korea

When the Taejan Maeil Sinbo was taken over by the Japanese in May 1910 and

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\textsuperscript{65} Chu Yo-han, \textit{An Tosaen Chŏnsŏ}, p 896
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid
\textsuperscript{67} Sokp’yŏn Tosaen An Ch’ang-ho, p 144
\textsuperscript{68} Ibid, pp 147-48
\textsuperscript{69} Chu Yo-han, \textit{An Tosaen Chŏnsŏ}, p 897
\end{flushright}
Korea became fully colonized in August the same year, members of the Sinminhoe who remained at home found it almost impossible to continue the “enlightenment” movement. They decided that all those not engaged in teaching and publishing should emigrate collectively to the western Kando, Manchuria, in order to carry out the task of establishing independence army bases there. In September 1910, the director general, Yang Ki-t’ak assigned Yi Tong-nyŏng, Yi Hoe-yŏng, Chang Yusun, and Yi Kwan-jik with the mission. Disguised as paper dealers, they left Seoul for the southern part of Manchuria in order to look for suitable places for independence army bases. This was not the first or the last mission of its kind. Ch’oe Myŏng-sik, Chu Chin-su, Yi Chong-rok, and Kam Ing-nyong each carried out similar missions in October 1909, September 1910, November 1910, and December 1910, respectively. The destination was invariably the Western Kando area. In addition, Yang Ki-t’ak sent Kim To-hŭi to Hwanghae Province to inform Kim Ku and other branch officers of the Sinminhoe’s plans for emigration and to have them prepare for it.

Yi Tong-nyŏng and his group returned from their successful mission in November 1910 along with Chu Chin-su. The land for a base had been secured in the western Kando, and now their plan for emigration made rapid progress. The Sinminhoe held the director’s meeting four times within a month—three times at the home of Im Ch’i-jŏng, and once at Yang Ki-t’ak’s. The final meeting held at Yang’s was for key members throughout the country; Yang Ki-t’ak, Chu Chin-su, Yi Sŏng-hun, Kim Ku, Yi Tong-nyŏng, and Kim To-hŭi were among those who attended. They agreed on the following matters:

1) Since the Japanese Government-General had begun to operate in Korea, in opposition to it, the Sinminhoe should establish a government called Todokpu in Seoul and Ch’ongggam in the provinces, which would rule the country secretly.

2) The Sinminhoe should give the highest priority to the establishment of both independence army bases and military officers’ schools in the western Kando by purchasing land there and making it a Korean “New Territory” with the ultimate purpose of regaining independence for the Korean peninsula.

70 Yi Ŭn-suk (李恩淑), Minjok-undongga Anae-ŭi Sugi (民族運動家 아내의 手記), [Memoirs of the wife of an independence movement leader], Seoul, 1975, p 155
71 Ch’oe Myŏng-sik, Anak zakkŏn, pp 26-38
72 Han’guk Hakpo, 8 233-37
73 Ibid., pp 228-29
74 Yi Ŭn-suk, Minjok undong, pp 15-16
75 Han’guk Hakpo, 8 233-37
76 Paekpŏm uche, pp 195-96; Han’guk Hakpo, vol 8, p. 234
3) The Sinminhoe should recruit as prospective Korean emigrants possessing at least one hundred won.

4) The Sinminhoe should appoint provincial directors; Yang Ki-t’ak was selected for Kyŏnggi Province and all the provinces south of the Kyŏnggi Province, Kim Kū for Hwanghae Province, An T’ae-guk for South P’yŏngan Province, Yi Sŏng-hun for North P’yŏngan Province, and Chu Chin-su for Kangwon Province.

5) The appointed provincial directors should recruit emigrants from their respective provinces and raise the necessary funds within fifteen days. The amount to be raised by Hwanghae Province, South P’yŏngan Province, and North P’yŏngan Province would be 150,000 won each, that to be raised by Kangwon Province would be 100,000 won, that to be raised by Kyŏnggi Province and the rest would be 200,000 won.

The Sinminhoe’s recruitment of prospective emigrants to the western Kando made rapid progress. Hwanghae Province was the most successful in both recruiting and raising funds. 77 The response from Seoul citizens was also great. Yi Sŏng-nyŏng and Kim Tong-sam were among those who emigrated to the western Kando in response to the request from Yang Ki-t’ak, Yi Tong-nyŏng, and Chu Chin-su. 78 Chu himself sold all his property and prepared for emigration. 79 Yi Tong-nyŏng, Yi Hoe-yŏng and his four brothers, and Chu Chinsu and his family arrived in the western Kando between December 1910 and January 1911. In the wake of the “An Myŏnggŭn Incident” (An Myŏnggŭn Sakkŏn), the Japanese authorities began to arrest key Sinminhoe members both in Seoul and in Hwanghae Province in January 1911, and in September fabricated the “Case of the One Hundred Five” to make possible a full-scale roundup of the rest of the members, thus dealing the emigration plan a great setback.

XIII. Sinhŭng Military Officers’ School

An advance party led by Yi Tong-nyŏng and Yi Hoe-yŏng settled in Tsou-chia-chien, San-yiian-pao, Liu-ho-hsien, Feng-t’ien-sheng, in January 1911. Together with their followers the advance party formed a new Korean village. In April 1911 they organized the Kyŏnghaksa for the purpose of achieving economic self-reliance through efficient farming and also set up an educational institute called the Sinhŭng

77 Han’guk Hakpo, vol 8, pp 236-40
78 Yi Sang-yong (李相龍), Sŏch’u yugo (石洲遺稿) [The posthumous works of Sŏch’u], Seoul, Koryŏ Taeakkkyo Ch’ulp’’anbu, 1973, p 173
79 Han’guk Hakpo, 8 236
Kangsipso to train army officers. This institute was later renamed Sinhŭng Military Officers' School (Sinhŭng Mugwan Hakkyo), and became the first independence army bases established by the Sinminhoe.

Yi Ch’ŏ-ryŏng became the first president of the Kyŏnhaksa Yi Hoe-yŏng and Chang Yu-san were chosen to handle internal affairs and farming affairs, respectively. Yi Tong-nyŏng was elected treasurer and Yu In-sik secretary of education. Yi Tong-nyŏng became the first principal of Sinhŭng Military Officers' School. Kim Tal was the head of teachers, both Kim Ch’ang-hwan and Yi Kwan-jik served as military instructors, and Yi Kap-su, Chang To-sun, and Yi Kyu-ryong were ordinary teachers.

Special attention should be paid to the literal meaning of the sinhŭng, "newly risen." The element sin (new) was derived from the name Sinminhoe. While hăng (rising) was taken from the phrase hăngguk (to make a nation “rise,” that is, flourish) The reason the school was simply called an institute (kangsipso) was in order not to attract the attention of the native Chinese and to escape interference by the local Chinese warlords. The school offered two courses of study: one was the regular course and the other a special short course. The former aimed at providing a comprehensive middle and high school education, and the later at training military officers.

The task of founding an independence army bases in San-yūn-pao was a thorny one from the very beginning because of oppression by the native inhabitants and by the exclusive local Chinese warlords. The cold continental climate, and financial difficulties also caused problems. Nonetheless, the first year turned out to be a fairly successful one for the school, which graduated forty students, but the Kyŏnhaksa suffered complete failure when it had to be closed down due to a poor crop yield. The Sinminhoe members moved from San-yūn-pao to Ha-ni-ho, T'ung-hua-hsien, some ninety li (10 li = 4 km. or 2.5 mi.) southeast of San-yūn-pao. Ha-ni-ho thus became the second independence army base. The members formed a Korean emigrants organization called the Pumindan with Hŏ Hyŏk as its first president. The second president was Yi Sang-nyong. Sinhŭng Military Officers' School was also moved to Ha-ni-ho. The construction of the school was started early in the spring of 1913 and was finished in May 1913. The new classrooms were all spacious and every grade had its own building, with a big auditorium and office rooms for the teachers. There were also an editor's room, a night-duty room, a room for the school

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80 Yi Ŭn-suk, Minjok undong, p 160, Sikchu yugo, pp 208-9
81 Yi Ŭn-suk, Minjok undong, p 160
band, a dining room, a kitchen, and a supply room. In the corridors were rifle stands labeled with the students’ names. A military drill ground of tens of thousand of p’yŏng (12.24 p’yŏng = 1 acre or 4,047 sq. m.) was leveled, and the interior work of several dozen classrooms was completed. This was accomplished almost entirely through the backbreaking labor of dedicated students.

The school offered a four-year regular course, a six-month course for army-officer candidates, and a three-month short course for noncommissioned-officer candidates, thus accommodating the educational needs of a wide variety of young men and former righteous-army members who came to the school. It was compulsory for the graduates of this school to serve at least two years in whatever capacity ordered by school authorities.

The school curriculum also included a wide variety of modern subjects—infantry, cavalry, artillery, military engineering, surveying, the science of fortification, military law, disciplinary punishment, garrison duty, first-aid treatment, formation, drills, tactics, and strategies. Natural science and Korean history were also taught.

The military training included both individual drills and basic training. Simulated war games were repeatedly conducted against imaginary enemies on various nearby hills; both offensive and defensive strategies were practiced. Crossing the river at night in the dead of the winter, marching 70 li, skating, spring and autumn athletic meetings, fencing, judo, soccer, and horizontal bar exercises were all part of the physical education, the purpose of which was to cultivate strong bodies.82

On the whole, the education and training given at Sinhŭng Military Officers’ School were extremely strict, and military discipline was so stern and rigid that during night emergency calls, there was an inspection to see whether even one button was undone. War-preparedness had to be so complete that a student could pick up his own rifle from the rifle stands without error even on a night as dark as pitch, having just been roused from sleep by the blare of trumpets.

The school had to struggle with financial difficulties, and part of its expenses were met by whatever the students could earn working during vacations. The staple food was millet, and a bean sauce made of picked beans was the only side dish. In spite of all these problems, the students were in high spirits, waiting for the day to come when they should serve their country and die for national independence. By the spring of 1917 the school had grown so much that a branch school called the Paeksŏ Farm Branch School (Paeksŏ Nongjang Pun’gyo) was established in Hsiao-peitai, T’ung-hua-hsien.83

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82 Won Ŭi-sang, “Sinhŭng Mugwan Hakkyo,” p. 241
83 Ibid., p. 242
After 1 March 1919, that is, after the March First Movement, patriotic young Koreans literally flooded the school for admission. When the school found itself too small to accommodate all the candidates, it moved to Ku-shan-tzu, Liu-ho-hsien. The original school continued to function as a branch school. More students meant that more teachers were needed, and Yi Ch’ŏng-ch’ŏn, Yi Pŏm-sŏk and other military instructors were added to the faculty. The great success of Sinhŭng Military Officers’ School was is indicated by the total number of graduates, which amounted to some 3,500 between the spring of 1911, when the school was founded, and August 1920, when it was closed by the Japanese.

In 1919 a strong independence army was formed with Sinhŭng graduates as its core members. The army consisted of the Sŏro Kunjŏngsŏ (Military Administration for the Western Route) and the Pungno Kunjŏngsŏ (Military Administration for the Northern Route). When the latter established an Officer Training Center in Hsi-ta-p’o, Wang-ch’ing-hseien, in August 1919, Sinhŭng graduates alone were appointed to be drill master in accordance with a special request from the commander-in-chief of the Pungno Kunjŏngsŏ, Kim Chwa-jin.

This is only one example of how many of the Sinhŭng graduates fought for national independence in various capacities. It was also Sinhŭng graduates who masterminded the Sŏro Kunjŏngsŏ numerous raids and surprise attacks on the Japanese army and installation in Manchuria and North P’yŏngan Province in 1920. The Battle of Ch’ing-san-li independence war is yet another example of their activities. Indeed, the victory the independence army achieved at Ch’ing-san-li is the most striking example. When attacked by five Japanese regular army divisions, the Pungno Kunjŏngsŏ forces and allied independence armies with just twenty-eight hundred men, fought bravely, killing twelve hundred Japanese soldiers. Needless to say, the staff and other officers of the Pungno Kunjŏngsŏ were almost all Sinhŭng graduates.

XIV. Tongrim Military Officers’ School

In addition to establishing Sinhŭng Military Officers’ School, Sinminhoe members (including Yi Tong-hwi, Kim Ip, Yi Chong-ho, Chang Ki-yŏng, Kim Ha-sŏk, and O Yong-sŏn) founded another such school in Lo-tzu-kou, Wang-ch’ing-hsien, Manchuria, in 1913. The Tongrim Military Officers’ school (Tongrim

84 Ibid., pp. 242-43
85 Ibid., p. 243
86 Ibid., p. 243
Mugwan Hakkyo) eventually became another independence army base founded by the Sinminhoe, although the school closed a year later because of financial troubles and pressure from the local Chinese warlords. About forty students had gone to Russian areas to work for money to revive their school, which shows how great the financial pinch had been on the one hand and how much the school had instilled national spirit in its students on the other.\textsuperscript{88}

Actually, the Tongrim Military Officers’ School was reestablished inside Russian territory. According to the Japanese intelligence sources of 1916, there was a “Tongrim School” located in Chu-ch’uan-kou, Russian Maritime Territory (Yen-hai Chou), which was full of anti-Japanese sentiment. There were two teachers, Yi and Kim, and one hundred eighty students.\textsuperscript{89} No further details are known about this school, but in all probability it must have been used as an independence army base by Yi Tong-hwi, Kim Ha-sŏk, Yu Tong-yŏl, Cho Sŏng-hwan, Pak Ŭn-sik, and Sin Ch’a-ae-ho when they organized an independence army. They planned to start an independence war by marching into Korea immediately after the March First Movement.\textsuperscript{90}

\textbf{XV. Milsan Military Officers’ School}

The third officers’ school established by Sinminhoe members was Milsan Military Officers’ School in Feng-mi-shan-tzu, Mi-shan-hsien, Manchuria. According to a 1916 report by Japanese authorities, there was a military officers’ school in Feng-mi-shan-tzu run by Yi Kap, who was the principal, and other Korean independence movement leaders.\textsuperscript{91} Nothing more is known about it. Originally, some political exiles including An Ch’ang-ho and Yi Kap made a vain attempt to set up a military officers’ school in Mi-shan in 1910; the 1916 report strongly suggests that comrades of Yi Kap and others did eventually succeeded in doing so.

From the evidence reviewed so far, it is clear that the Sinminhoe was only partially successful in its movement to found independence army bases. This was mainly because it needed a continual supply of funds and patriotic emigrants, and these were hampered by the wholesale arrest of Sinminhoe members in Korea in

\textsuperscript{87} Kang Tŏk-sang (姜德相), ed., \textit{Hyŏndaes sa charyo} (現代史資料) [Records of modern history], Seoul, 1970, vol 27, p 155

\textsuperscript{88} Tongnip Sinmun (獨立新聞) [The Independent], 20 April 1920

\textsuperscript{89} Kang Tŏk-sang, \textit{Hyŏndaes sa charyo}, p 167

\textsuperscript{90} Han’guk tongnip undong sa (1973), vol 5, p 410

\textsuperscript{91} Kang Tŏk-sang, \textit{Hyŏndaes sa charyo}, p 157
1911.

Nonetheless, the Sinminhoe’s movement to found independence army bases achieved results in at least two respects. The first was that the Sinminhoe actually succeeded in establishing three military officers’ schools (in western and northern Kando and in the Russian territory); these were used as bases for the independence army and independence movement. Further, these schools gave birth to a somewhat modernized independence army, small-scale though it might have been, that was basically different in both quality and quantity from the righteous-army corps and quite capable of competing with the Japanese regular army. Its rivalry with the Japanese army can be seen by its great victory achieved in the so-called Battle of Ch’ing-san-li (Ch’ing-shan-li Chǒnt’u). The second was that the Sinminhoe’s movement to found independence army base and conduct a successful independence war brought together other national movements and provided a model for other political factions and associations to follow in their pursuit of national independence. During the period from 1910 to 1945, all political factions of the national independence movements, including the Provisional Government in Shanghai, nationalistic independence movement leaders, and communist independence movement leaders adopted the Sinminhoe’s strategy as their own.

XVI. The Dissolution of the Sinminhoe

In 1911 the Japanese fabricated incidents like the “Anak Incident” (Anak Sakkôn), the “Yang Ki-t’ak et al. Violation of the Security Law” (Yang Ki-t’ak Tóng Poanbop wiban Sakkôn), and the “Case of the One Hundred Five” (Paego In Sakkôn). This gave them an excuse to arrest and imprison the Sinminhoe leaders, thus disrupting its activities and fatally crippling the society. In December 1910, the Japanese military police arrested An Myǒng-gǎn, who had been raising funds for the recruitment of righteous-army volunteers in Manchuria. Although An was not a member of the Sinminhoe, the Japanese authorities took advantage of this opportunity and also arrested some 160 Sinminhoe members of Hwanghae Province.92

In January 1911, the Japanese military police arrested thirty-three Korean patriots beginning with Yang Ki-t’ak in Seoul. This incident was called the Case of Yang Ki-t’ak et al. Violation of the Security Law.”93 Then followed the arrest of six or

92 Han’guk Hakpo, vol 8, pp 222-30
93 Ibid., p 233
seven hundred patriots of Southern and Northern P’yŏngan Provinces. The Japanese military police fabricated the so called “Korean Conspiracy Case of an Assassination of Governor-General Terauchi” and applied it to the arrested Korean patriots.

Conducting the investigation, the Japanese military police found out the existence of the secret association Sinminhoe and its organization. Of those six or seven hundred people, 122 found the torture too much to bear, confessed their membership, and were brought to trial, and one hundred five received heavy prison sentences.

Thus it was called the Case of the One Hundred Five. During the trial the defendants complained of the cruel torture they were subjected to and exposed the Japanese fabrication of the incident so logically that the Japanese authorities were put in extremely embarrassing position. Because a number of Christians were among the defendants, the American Presbyterian Foreign Mission, the Edinburgh Religious Council, and other foreign Christian bodies protested strongly against the false accusations of the Japanese, putting Japan into an even tighter corner. As a result, only six of the defendants, Yun Ch’i-ho, Yang Ki-t’ak, Im Ch’i-jŏng, Yi sŏng-hun, An T’ae-guk, and Ok Kwan-bin, received six-year prison sentences in July 1913, and the rest were released. The Japanese, nonetheless, had achieved their aims with this fabricated incident most of the indicted were disabled through torture and the Sinminhoe was virtually dissolved by September 1911.

XVII. Conclusion

As demonstrated, the Shinminhoe was representative of the independence bodies and groups active during the critical years of 1907 through 1910 that preceded the complete colonization of Korea by Japan. The Shinminhoe was a secret society organized around a core of ordinary citizens, most of whom were intellectuals and members of a newly developing commercial class; it can be said to have changed the Chosŏn dynasty’s last four years from a period of despair to a time of great awakening and building of national strength. The Shinminhoe’s “enlightenment” movement was so active that it became the driving force of the independence movement. It was through the efforts of the Shinminhoe that the “enlightenment”

94 Sŏnu Hun, Minhok’i suan, p. 24, Yamagata, Chŏsen unbu jiken, P.23
95 Yamagata, Chŏsen unbu jiken, pp. 20-54
96 Ibid., pp. 54-177
97 Ibid., pp. 178-250
movement and the righteous-army movement were made complementary, in spite of their potential of mutual conflict. Consequently, both were fruitful.

Of the six great movements the Sinminhoe launched, the most epoch-making was the founding of the three independence-army bases in Manchuria. The Sinminhoe alone was capable of such a grand enterprise. It made use of its accumulated experience in resisting invading foreign powers since the opening of Korean ports and combined that with the "enlightenment" movement and the righteous-army movement. Thus it formulated as its supreme strategy the concept of a "war of independence". To put this strategy into practice, the Sinminhoe overcame hardships and difficulties of all sorts to establish three military officers' schools in Manchuria and found a modern independence army, which moved the anti-Japanese independence movement into a significantly different stage. Equally epoch-making was the Sinminhoe's formal adoption of constitutional republicanism as the goal of its national movement. The adoption of this kind of goal was the first in the history of Korea.

The influence of the Sinminhoe's activities over later independence movements was great. It was the national strength cultivated and fostered by the Sinminhoe, for instance, that became the main force of the March First Movement. It was again the Sinminhoe's movement to found an independence army groups responsible for the various military independence campaigns carried out, the independence army groups formed, and the pitched battles and guerrilla warfare conducted after the March First Movement. The great victory over the Japanese regular army in the Battle of Ch'ing-san-li was due largely to the Sinminhoe, for without the three independence-army bases the Sinminhoe had established, such a victory would not have been possible.

After the March First Movement, some former Sinminhoe members joined the communist-led independence movement. Yi Tong-hwi, the director of the Haemyŏng provinces, and the members of his branch are cases in point. Later, Pak Chung-hwa and some others from both Seoul and the provinces south of Seoul followed suit. As a result, the nationalistic independence movement subsequent to the March First Movement was led mainly by the former Sinminhoe members. For instance, all of the cabinet members of the Provisional Government of Korea established in Shanghai in 1919 except Syngman Rhee were the former Sinminhoe members.

In conclusion, because of human shortcomings and organizational limitations the Sinminhoe was not always successful in its undertakings, but no other society, faction, or group in the modern history of Korea achieved so much of importance or contributed so much to national independence in such a short period of time.
GLOSSARY

An Ch’ang-ho 安昌浩
An Chung-gún 安重根
An Myŏng-gún Sakkôn 安明根 事件
An Pyŏng-ch’an 安秉楨
An T’ae-guk 安泰國
Anak Sakkôn 安岳事件
Anak-kun Myŏnhakhoe 安岳郡勉學會
Ch’a I-sŏk 車利錫
Ch’ac P’il-gun 蔡弼近
Ch’oe Kwang-ok 崔光玉
Ch’oe Mŏng-sik 崔明植
Ch’oe Nam-sŏn 崔南善
Ch’oe Pyŏng-hŏn 崔炳憲
Ch’wiji Sŏ 趣旨書
Ch’ŏngnyŏn Haguhoe 青年學友會
Changbaek San (Ch’ang-pat Shan) 長白山
Chang Chu-yŏn 張志淵
Chang Ki-yŏng 張基榮
Chang To-sun 張道淳
Chang Y-sun 張裕淳
Chang Ung-jin 張應震
Cho Sŏng-hwan 曹成煥
Chosŏn Kwangmunhoe 朝鮮光文會
Chosŏn Sŏp Hoesa 朝鮮實業會社
Chu Chin-su 朱鎔洙
Chŏn Tŏk-ki 全德基
Chŏng Chae-kwan 鄭在寬
Chŏng Yong-do 鄭英道
Chŏngnyŏn Hagwon 青年學院
Feng-mi-shan-tzu 蜂蜜山子
Feng-tien-sheng 奉天省
Ha-ni-ho 哈泥河
Haesŏ Kyŏyuk Ch’onghoe 海西教育總會
Hanbuk Hŭnghakhoe 韓北興學會
Hanmin Ch’inmokhoe 韓民親睦會
Hsi-ta-p’o 西大坡
Hstao-pei-tai 小北岱
Hyŏpsŏng Tongs’a 協成同事
Hyŏptong Sa 協同社
Hŏ Hyŏk 許赫
Im Ch’i-ŏng 林 Atatürk
Im Chun-ki 林俊基
Ito Hirobumi 伊藤博文
Kachyŏktang 改革黨
Kam Ing-nyong 甘翊龍
Kando (Chien-tao) 間島
Kang Yun-hŭi 姜坿熙
Kangsŏpso 講習所
Kim Ch’ang-hwan 金昌煥
Kim Chi-gan 金志侃
Kim Chwa-jin 金佐鎬
Kim Hŭi-sŏn 金義禧
Kim Ip 金立
Kim Ku 金九
Kim Myŏng-jun 金明濙
Kim Pyŏng-hŏn 金炳憲
Kim Sŏng-mu 金成武
Kim Tal 金達
Kim To-hŭi 金道熙
Kim Tong-sam 金東三
Kongnip Hyŏphoe 共立協會
Kongnip Sinmun 共立新聞
Ku-shan-tzu 孤山子
Kwandong Hakhoe 關東學會
Kyoyukhak 教育學
Kyönghaksa 耕學社
Liäng Ch'í-ch'ao 梁啓超
Lü-ho-hsien 柳河縣
Lo-tzu-kou 羅子溝
Manmin Kongtonghoe 萬民共同會
Mi-shan-hsien 密山縣
Minjokái sunan. Paego in sakkôn chinsang 民族의 受難：百五人事
件真相
Nam Hyöng-u 南亨祐
Nam Kung-ôk 南宮祿
No Paeng-nin 盧伯麟
O Yöng-sôn 吳永善
Ok Kwan-bun 玉觀彬
P'yöngyang Ch'ongnyöon Kuönhakhoe 平壤青年勸學會
P'yöngyang Chagi Chejo Chusik 平壤磁器製造株式會社
Paeksó Nongjang Pun'gyo 白西農場分校
Pak Chung-hwa 朴重華
Pak Yöng-sun 朴永順
Pak Ŭn-sik 朴殷植
Pumn dan 扶民團
San-yöan-pao 三源堡
Sandong Church 尚洞教會
Sin Ch'ae-ho 申采浩
Sin Tal-won 申達元
Sinhöng Kangsüpso 新興講習所
Sinhöng Mugkwn Hakkyo 新興武官學校
Sinminhoe 新民會
Song Sök-chun 宋錫俊
Sonyön 少年
Söbuk Hakhoe 西北學會
Sönu Hun 鮮于燎
Söu Hakhoe 西友學會
T'aedong (T'aitung) Shih-yeh Hui-she 泰東實業會社
T'ung-hua-hsien 通化縣
Taehan Chaganghoe 大韓自強會
Taehan Munjón 大韓文典
Tanji Tongmaeng 斷指同盟
Te-hua Yin-hang 德華銀行
Terauchi ch'ongdok 寺內總督
Todokpu 都督府
Tong 洞
Tongnip Chönjaeng Non 獨立戰論
Tongnip Hyöphoe 獨立協會
Tongrim Mugwan Hakkyo 東林武官學校
Tongyong Changjông 通用章程
Tsou-chia-chieh 鄭家街
Ülsa Choyak 乙巳條約
Wang-ch'ing-hsien 汪清縣
Won úi-sang 元義常
Yang Ki-t'ak 梁起鐸
Yang Ki-t'ak t'ung Poanbop Uiban 梁起鐸 等 保安法 違反
事件
Yen-hai Chou 沿海洲
Yi Ch'øng-ch'øn 李青天
Yi Ch'øl-yöng 李哲榮
Yi Chae-su 李在洙
Yi Chong-ho 李鐘浩
Yi Chong-man 李鐘萬
Yi Chong-nok 李鐘祿