

John Foster Dulles's Beliefs and the Birth of Republic of Korea-Japan Relations

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Abstract | This paper analyzes the personal political beliefs of John Foster Dulles which were defined by his Christian faith and anti-communist convictions. It illuminates the significance of Dulles's belief system relative to his influence in stimulating relations between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japan after World War II. Dulles, who had personal experience of Chinese politics and international relations, envisioned a regional order in East Asia centered on Japan following the 1949 communist revolution in China. Although he considered Japan the most important state in the region, he advocated for aid to the ROK as it was also part of the regional bloc of pro-US countries. Dulles's emphasis on a proactive role in East Asia was consistent with the US approach to international affairs that was dominant in the late nineteenth century. This paper draws on resources such as Dulles's book *War or Peace*, to measure the influence of his religious faith and his relative concern with colonialism and communism. While he contributed to the formation of stable relations between the ROK and Japan as sovereign states, Dulles was also responsible for the continued projection of the legacy of Japanese colonization on bilateral relations between the two nations.

Keywords | John Foster Dulles, ROK-Japan relations, Treaty of Versailles, San Francisco Peace Treaty, *War or Peace*

Introduction

No person can singlehandedly change the course of world politics. Yet individuals, through their judgment and contributions, can affect how international political events unfold. The ideological conflicts that exist at an individual level within the international political arena require analysis relative to the context of international political history. Examining the ideas of significant individuals provides us with information to understand historical development at a regional level, and the formation of relations between countries. Thus, the study of

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significant individuals could be considered a basic research task of international politics.

This article contemplates the influence the personal beliefs of John Foster Dulles had on his diplomatic activities, convictions that were rooted in his religious faith and anti-communist sentiment. Specifically, this paper seeks to trace the formation and expression of his beliefs as they pertained to the formation of political relations to the between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japan following the end of World War II in 1945.

The dominant systems of belief within a given country exert influence in a variety of ways including how the nation approaches international relations, the scope of available foreign policy options, and the relative unity of its citizenry in supporting such choices (Jensen 1982, 72-75). The dominant belief systems within a state primarily derive from those of the citizenry. Beliefs, however, are not something that plays out in a systematic process or a fixed structure. Instead, they are created and recreated through accumulated experience and influenced by a range of factors such as education and empirical observation. Personal belief systems serve to sustain core notions of personhood, and can become further consolidated when they are combined with transcendental spiritual convictions such as religious faith.

Dulles was appointed Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Asia Policy and assigned the task of negotiating the San Francisco Peace Treaty in April 1950 by President Harry S. Truman. As the architect of the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the US and Japan, both signed on September 8, 1951, Dulles's beliefs and actions had a profound impact on post-war US-Japan relations and Japanese foreign policy. Therefore, the San Francisco Peace Treaty and US-Japan relations can be called "the world of John Foster Dulles" or "the world that Dulles built" (Calder 2009, 27). The San Francisco peace system which formed with the completion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty provided a crucial schema of the global Cold War order. This peace system not only served as the foundation of ROK-Japan relations during the Cold War but continues to regulate East Asia today.

This article focuses on Dulles's personal political and religious ideology and the formation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, as a key event that defined the historical trajectory of ROK-Japan relations. It also seeks to illuminate the relationship between Dulles's role in early ROK-Japan relations by examining those individuals around Dulles who impacted his beliefs, and the ideological influence of the long tradition of US international policy since the late nineteenth century. This exegesis of Dulles's beliefs is historically important as he was so influential in shaping the postwar international political landscape,

not just in East Asia, but also in Europe and the US.

This article, which looks at Dulles's life from his early years through to the signing of the San Francisco Peace treaty in 1951, bases its analysis on Dulles's book *War or Peace*. As this work was written by Dulles himself it is an important primary source. While not exactly a memoir, the book includes many personal recollections, and represents the writer's stated and considered perception of these important historical events at the time of the book's publication. Most importantly, *War or Peace* offers an important source to help us understand Dulles's beliefs just prior to the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 and the signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951 as it was published shortly before these major events.¹

Early Foreign Policy Experience and the Treaty of Versailles

Born in the US in 1888, most of Dulles's career was involved in US foreign policy and European affairs. While Dulles was largely ignorant of East Asia, he did have a few direct and indirect experiences with the region. Important in this context was his maternal grandfather John Watson Foster, whom Dulles was named after.²

Foster served as the US ambassador to Mexico, Russia, and Spain, and then as the Secretary of State for the Benjamin Harrison administration from June 1892 to February 1893. In addition, he served as a political adviser to Li Hongzhang, the Qing representative at the peace negotiations to end the First Sino-Japanese War in Shimonoseki in 1895, and had a hand in mediating the conditions of the peace treaty. John Watson Foster recognized the importance of the Chinese market prior to the initiation of the US "Open Door Policy" in 1899. However, instead of seeking to gain a monopoly for American influence, he thought it best to maintain a balance among the great powers while securing space for

1. *War or Peace* was first published in early 1950 and a revised edition was published in 1957.

2. Dulles's family history has some notable characteristics. Several members of the family served in the foreign service and government. Foster, Dulles, and Foster's son-in-law and Dulles's uncle Robert Lansing all served as Secretary of State. Dulles's little brother Allen Welsh Dulles was the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) from 1953 to 1961, and Eleanor Lansing Dulles also served in the State Department. Second, several members of the family had legal backgrounds. Foster, Lansing, Dulles, and Allen Dulles all spent time at Sullivan & Cromwell, a firm specializing in international law, gaining experience and learning about legal ideas. Third, Dulles's grandfather and father were pastors. Dulles's father Allen Macy Dulles was a pastor in the Northern Presbyterian Church. Dulles's son Avery Dulles also studied theology in the Catholic Church and became a cardinal in 2001.

American intervention and simultaneously preventing Japanese hegemony. Foster thus paved the way for US commercial and trade interests in China.

Foster published his memoirs, *War Stories for My Grandchildren*, in 1918. These included descriptions of the American Civil War, and as the title indicates the book sought to convey to his grandchildren the impact of war and the message of his life. Due to such concerns, Foster maintained a close relationship with his grandchildren and Dulles read his grandfather's book *American Diplomacy in the Orient* in 1903. With a shortage of expert research on East Asia in the US during the early twentieth century, this writing received attention and commensurate prestige (Reed 1983, 92). In his work, Foster highlighted the role the US should take in tutoring Korea, Japan, Qing China, and other East Asian states.

It has been seen that whenever the American representatives have approached the governments of China, Japan, Korea, and Siam, it was with the statement that their far-away people cherish no scheme of territorial aggrandizement in that region of the world, and that their only desire was to secure mutual benefit from the establishment of trade and to extend the influence of Christian civilization. (Foster 1903, 399)

The American Union has become an Asiatic power. It has new duties to discharge and enlarged interests to protect... Its task will be well done if it shall aid in giving to the world a freer market, and to the inhabitants of the Orient the blessings of Christian civilization. (Foster 1903, 438)

Foster wished to see Western international law applied to East Asia. He thought it important that America enter the East Asian sphere and play a role in spreading Christianity to the region. For Foster, both of these things would benefit Asia and thus justify American intervention. Furthermore, Foster studied the historical changes in the Monroe Doctrine in a book he wrote on US foreign policy in 1900. In this he argued that the Doctrine contributed to peace and stability as it invoked the right of self-defense under international law (Foster 1900, 445-56).³

3. Rhee Syngman identified with Foster's arguments. Rhee cited Foster's book in the conclusion of his own work entitled *Neutrality As Influenced by the US* which was published in 1912 and also served as his doctoral dissertation. Rhee (1912, 104) pointed out the following in his writings: "The declaration of the independence of the US in 1776 marks the introduction of a new era in the history of the laws of neutrality. 'From the beginning of its political existence,' says John W. Foster, 'it [the US] made itself the champion of a free commerce, of a sincere and genuine neutrality, of respect of private property in war, of the most advanced ideas of natural rights and justice; and in its brief existence, by its persistent advocacy, it has exerted a greater influence in the recognition of these elevated principles than any other nation in the world.' The most important questions, the settlement of which was largely influenced by the United States, were (1) the recognition of

Dulles's foreign policy career began in 1907 at the Second Hague Peace Conference which was held at the suggestion of the US. Foster participated in the conference while Dulles served as his assistant. The reason Foster had Dulles accompany him was that Dulles had a good command of the French language which was then used as the international language of diplomacy (Foster 1909, 212). Foster also arranged for Dulles to do some interpretation and protocol work for the Qing delegation (Beal 1957, 47).

It was suggested at the Second Hague Peace Conference in 1907 that a third conference be held in 1915, but that conference never took place given that World War I broke out in 1914. Instead, following the armistice agreed upon by Germany and the Allies on November 11, 1918, the Paris Peace Conference began on January 18, 1919, and presented a chance to end the war and create a new peace. The conference ran for over six months until June 28, and while much energy was spent defining the extent of Germany's responsibility and the amount of reparations to be paid, the conference also considered the issues of national self-determination, territorial dispute, and the foundation of the League of Nations, alongside various other questions.

In his Fourteen Points speech of January 8, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson highlighted the importance of reviving the countries victimized by the war, implicitly arguing that Germany should be responsible for paying reparations. Yet while discussing the peace conference in the American Capitol Building on February 11, Wilson said that the peace conference will not enforce territorial annexation, reparations, or punitive policies on Germany and Austria-Hungary (Wilson 2012, 475).

Ultimately the Allies did demand Germany pay reparations, and the concluding Treaty of Versailles is now known for its severity. The treaty itself, from the choice of Versailles as the location for the signing to the punitive nature of the reparations, left the Germans bitter and vindictive. During the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71), the Prussian forces overwhelmed the French, and Wilhelm I proclaimed a united German empire and held his coronation at the Palace of Versailles. For this and many other reasons, it was clear that the relationship between the victor and vanquished of the previous war was not unrelated to the circumstance of the proceeding conflict. As such, while the US led the writing of the Treaty, the final product substantially reflected the will of the French, with, for instance, article 227 of the Treaty calling for Wilhelm II to be put on

independence, (2) the inviolability of neutral jurisdiction, and (3) the freedom of neutral commerce." Moreover, Rhee (64) thought that the Monroe Doctrine "clearly defined the neutral position of the United States." However, the Monroe Doctrine according to Foster, as seen above, put peace and stability first.

trial. The most well-known clause of the Treaty of Versailles is Article 231. Typically known as the “War Guilt Clause,” it declared that Germany and its allies were legally responsible for all of the loss and damage inflicted on the Allies and the people of the Allied countries. Notwithstanding that Article 231 did not set a specific amount of reparations to be paid, the American position, represented by Wilson, had originally only considered demanding compensation for illegal actions during the war.

Dulles contributed to early drafts of this reparations provision. With his experience as a lawyer, Dulles was a consultant to the Reparations Commission and a member of the Supreme Economic Council. In the version of the reparations clause that Dulles wrote on February 21, he specified Germany’s responsibility for the losses of civilians and included a moral dimension in addition to the legal basis for their responsibility (Henig 1995, 21). Dulles’s arguments were supported by Norman Davis who served as the Financial Commissioner for the US delegation. Davis felt that all moral and legal responsibility for the war and the results of the war, including the loss of property by the nations and people of the Allies, fell upon Germany. This became the basis of Article 231 (Sharp 2008, 90-91).

Most research on the Versailles’ reparations mentions the role of John Maynard Keynes. He had attended the peace conference as a member of the British delegation and he expressed his concerns about the Allies’ demands for severe punitive reparations from Germany in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, published in December 1919. He made it clear that “my purpose in this book is to show that the Carthaginian Peace is not *practically* right or possible” (Keynes 2009, 27). He argued that it was not that Germany was free of responsibility for World War I, but that he was concerned that the financial burden placed on Germany was too great and the scope of the reparations too wide (Markwell 1995, 190-91). Keynes (2009, 21) stated, “It was the task of the Peace Conference to honor engagements and to satisfy justice; but not less to re-establish life and to heal wounds. These tasks were dictated as much by prudence as by the magnanimity which the wisdom of antiquity approved in victors.”

The official American position on this argument was given in 1920 by Bernard Baruch in *The Making of the Reparation and Economic Sections of the Treaty*. It was a refutation of Keynes and other critics of the Treaty of Versailles. While Baruch was nominally the author of the book, it was ghost written by officials who were involved in the Paris Peace Conference. Dulles’s views took up a significant portion of the book (Pruessen 1982, 516), and it has been argued that this work is best seen as having been written by Dulles himself (Keylor 1998, 487). In the book’s preface, it was acknowledged that all of Wilson’s hopes

were not included in the Treaty of Versailles, but it argued that Wilson was able to achieve his goal of suppressing and minimizing vengefulness in the treaty (Baruch 2007, 6).

While the Treaty of Versailles did not specify an amount of reparations to be paid, it did stipulate the legal standards that framed Germany's responsibility for the war and the principle that compensation should be paid. For Davis and Dulles, who provided the original draft of the "War Guilt Clause," the moral problem regarding Germany was clear solely because Germany had started the war (Schwabe 1985, 246).⁴ As a lawyer, Dulles felt the reparations clause proved Germany's responsibility and that, on the whole, the Treaty of Versailles was fair (Guhin 1972, 30; MacMillan 2002, 193).

Fusion of Christian Faith and Anti-communism

The year 1945 is a turning point at which a line can be drawn at the end of World War II to delineate the inception of the postwar period. Such turning points tend to highlight the ruptures rather than continuities in the basic structures that define the two epochs. The beginning of the Cold War is commonly seen as being defined by the split between the US and Soviet Union, the former allies, following the end of World War II. Generally, the Cold War is considered as a conflict between the US and Soviet Union who were the leading states within two opposing ideological, military, and territorial blocs. Yet when we interpret the Cold War as an ideological contest between communism and capitalism, it allows us to reconsider the origins of this global political struggle for postwar hegemony through the emergence of a new "Russian" state ideology that sprouted in 1917 with the Bolshevik Revolution. The subsequent new Soviet Republic was created through a revolutionary socialist dictatorship, the concerns of which directly contrasted the "liberal spirit" of free enterprise and individualism that the ruling elite of the US used to define their society (Fleming 1968, 3). The Cold War was a clash of ideologies, but it was also a clash between the people who espoused those ideologies. In this respect it is helpful to view the conflictual and competitive perceptions of Woodrow Wilson and Vladimir Lenin through the lens of political science which highlights the structures and forms of power both were disposed to (Mayer 1959; Williams

4. Dulles was surprised that by 1940 Article 231 was being regarded as the "War Guilt Clause" (Keylor 1998, 501). This can be taken as Dulles's refusal to admit a relationship between Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles and the outbreak of World War II in 1939 following Germany's invasion of Poland.

1971). In short, while the use of the phrase “Cold War” came into popular use after the end of World War II, the US hostility towards communism began well before 1945.

The first chapter of Dulles’s 1950 book *War or Peace* is entitled “The Danger.” While World War II was over, Dulles was conscious of a new situation in which war may arise due to the competition between the new dominant “free” bloc of the West and the “communist” Eastern bloc. While Dulles felt that war could be avoided and did not believe that such was impending, he did have several views on this hypothetical conflict. First, the crisis of conflict has to be observed exactly as it is. Second, all Americans need to understand and support existing policies. Third, at the same time, some policies are inadequate and need to be supplemented. Fourth, Dulles argued for the need to cultivate spiritual power, arguing that the US needed to make a “sustained effort for peace” if it were to overcome the Russian (Soviet) “creed that teaches world domination and that would deny those personal freedoms which constitute our most cherished political and religious heritage” (Dulles 1950, 2-4). In Chapter 2, entitled “Know Your Enemy,” Dulles criticizes the perceptions of Joseph Stalin as laid out in his book *Problems of Leninism* and the atheism of Soviet communism. In Chapter 3 “The Goal,” Dulles, taking a pacifist stance, disavows the use of force to reach a settlement and defines peace as “a condition where international changes can be made peacefully” (19). Dulles thus contrasts his own peaceful philosophy and objectives with the violence of communism. He also criticizes those who believe that “Soviet communism has changed; that it no longer seeks world conquest and no longer uses methods of fraud, secret penetration, and civil violence” (14).

In this work, Dulles’s consistent argument is that faith is important and he highlights this again in Chapter 21, “Our Spiritual Need,” as well as the concluding Chapter 22. According to Dulles, the US needs to maintain a basis in religion, and it was this Christian faith that made the country great.

Our nation was founded as an experiment in human liberty. Its institutions reflected the belief of our founders that men had their origin and destiny in God; that they were endowed by Him with inalienable rights and had duties prescribed by moral law, and that human institutions ought primarily to help men develop their God-given possibilities. (Dulles 1950, 254)

Dulles’s Christian faith was congruent with the foreign policy traditions of the US. From the 1760s, politicians such as Benjamin Franklin and John Adams had espoused the idea that the US was a superior nation built with the blessing of God. Such ideas gave rise to the notion of a national “manifest destiny” in 1845. This ideological directive that America’s destiny was ordained by God

reflected the particular influence of religion in shaping expansionist US policy, and justified the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the annexation of Hawaii. Manifest destiny was also interrelated with the Monroe Doctrine, a foreign policy approach developed by John Quincy Adams and pronounced publicly on December 2, 1823, by President James Monroe during his State of the Union Address. Then on the same date in 1845, President James Polk first used the term “manifest destiny” during his State of the Union Address, and proceeded to say that the Monroe Doctrine remained a fundamental principle guiding US foreign policy (Haynes 1997, 115-45).

Dulles inherited the traditional mantle of US foreign policy. However, the American approach espousing neutrality and anti-interventionist sentiment was increasingly challenged in the twentieth century by the rise of communism. Following the fruition of this ideological conflict into a full-blown global Cold War, *War or Peace*, published in 1950, was concerned with communism from beginning to end. Dulles was worried that, compared to its increasing material strength, America's spiritual power was weak. For Dulles, material strength referred to economic and military power, and this point was aimed to make a contrast with the Soviet Union which had assumed itself to offer substantive material progress for the masses.⁵

The materialistic, irreligious society, which denies the existence of God or of a moral law, cannot depend upon love of God and love of neighbor. It must depend on governmental compulsion rather than on voluntary controls. ... As a nation, although still religious, we have lost the connection between our religious faith and our practices. ... Once the connection between faith and works is broken, we can no longer generate a spiritual power that will flow throughout the world. (Dulles 1950, 259)

To break with this situation, Dulles argued the following:

We can, and must, reject totally the Marxian thesis that material things are primary and spiritual things only secondary. Slavery and despotism, even if they seem expedient, can never be right. We must not be afraid to recapture faith in the primacy of human liberty and freedom, and to hold to the religious view that man is destined by God to be more than a material producer, and that his chief end is something more than physical security. (Dulles 1950, 259)

Dulles defined the communist powers as “the enemy,” “materialistic,” and

5. Dulles cites the following words of Stalin: “The strength and vitality of Marxism-Leninism lies in the fact that it does base its practical activity on the needs of the development of the material life of society” (Dulles 1950, 257).

“atheist.” America on the contrary needed to strengthen its communal, “spiritual,” and “religious” aspects. Dulles wrote *War or Peace* based on his own experiences making foreign policy and while expecting to be appointed Secretary of State (Beal 1957, 20). It is likely that Dulles’s clear-cut dichotomy between the American and Soviet ways of life was designed to attract a wider audience to his work. In conclusion, Dulles had this to say about “beliefs”:

Our greatest need is to regain confidence in our spiritual heritage. Religious belief in the moral nature and possibilities of man is, and must be, relevant to every kind of society, throughout the ages past and those to come. It is relevant to the complex conditions of modern society. We need to see that, if we are to combat successfully the methods and practices of a materialistic belief. (Dulles 1950, 261)

Wilson and Lenin who had embodied the ideologies of their respective countries died in 1924. Their deaths ended their confrontation, but Lenin’s successor, Stalin, was rising. In a way, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who sought to develop Wilson’s League of Nations idea into the United Nations, was Wilson’s successor as president. However, it would be more appropriate to label Dulles as Wilson’s ideological successor. Wilson, who was the greatest contributor to the birth of the Versailles peace system which was formed by the Treaty of Versailles, wrote a short essay entitled “The Road Away from Revolution” in 1923. With communism having grown stronger since the end of the signing of the treaty in 1919, Wilson believed that the Bolshevik Revolution was essentially a refutation of capitalist society and that capitalism had not yet made the world safe from that materialistic revolution.⁶

Dulles inherited from Wilson this desire to guard capitalist society against communism. He bought into Wilson’s ideology of caution, and further reproduced it. Dulles entered Princeton University in 1904 and majored in philosophy, but he was also interested in political life and took a class on American politics taught by Wilson who was visiting the university at the time (Pruessen 1982, 9-13). In *War or Peace*, Dulles notes that Wilson, in his 1923 essay, saw the danger imminent in the revolutionary principles of communism. Dulles quoted verbatim the following passage written by Wilson:

The sum of the whole matter is this, that our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. ... Here is the final challenge to our churches, to our political organizations, and to our capitalists—to everyone who fears God or loves his country. (Dulles 1950, 261)

6. Wilson’s essay was modified and published in 1924 in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The religiosity of Dulles's anti-communist perspective resonated with Korean Christians as well as Americans. Following Dulles's death in 1959, an article entitled "The Death of Dulles" was published in the Korean language publication *Christian Thought* (*Kidokkyo sasang*). Here it was argued that Dulles was not just seeking peace for Americans, but peace for all of humanity. It also evaluated Dulles's life by citing the following words of his:

What we have to do is this: American preachers, doctors, educators, and tradespeople must reclaim the spirit of the crusaders and take the wealth of their experiences to all corners of the globe. (Pak Ch'ang-hwan 1959, 7)

The article would go on to say that Koreans and all people needed to learn from Dulles's convictions and carry on the work that he left behind (Pak Ch'ang-hwan 1959, 8). Although the author never uses the words communism or anti-communism owing to the fact that it focused on Dulles's religious faith, if we consider the anti-communist sentiment that was prevalent in Korean Protestant communities at the time, then the article can be considered as a memorial, lamenting the loss of an international figurehead whose work and words embodied both Christianity and an anti-communism.⁷

The idea that God "himself" was protecting the manifest destiny of America was one of the foundational ideas of US foreign policy, and Dulles succeeded directly in this tradition. Dulles's faith, which both enabled and compelled him to stand against Soviet atheist communists, became even more solidified with the times in which Dulles found himself. He considered himself a guardian of the traditional US approach to foreign policy, and he arrived on the stage during the Cold War as an ardent anti-communist.

The Birth of Republic of Korea and the Origins of the San Francisco Peace Treaty

1. The International Birth of the Republic of Korea

After the US-Soviet Joint Commission broke down in October 1947, the US turned the Korea question over to the United Nations (UN). On November 14, 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted UN Resolution 112 (II) entitled "The Problem of the Independence of Korea" which called for elections to be held in

7. Korean Protestants were in harmony with and supported US policies. They stood opposite to communism (Kang Wi-jo 2005, 123-24).

South Korea. The election was held on May 10, 1948 under the supervision of the UN Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK). The constitution was enacted on July 17, 1948 in South Korea and on August 15 the ROK was founded. Rhee Syngman, the first president of the ROK, sent a delegation headed by Chang Myŏn to the Third Meeting of the UN General Assembly in Paris to secure international recognition for the new country.

Rhee also appointed Cho Byŏng-ok as special representative of the president and sent him to several countries to ask for support to garner international approval for the ROK. Cho appointed Kim U-p'yŏng and Chŏng Il-hyŏng to his delegation and made Kim Chun-ku his personal assistant. Cho and his delegation visited Japan, China, the Philippines, the US, Canada, the UK, and other countries before meeting the other members of the Korean delegation, including Chang Myŏn, Chang Ki-yŏng, Chŏn Kyu-hong, Kim Hwal-ran, and others, in Paris (Cho Byŏng-ok 2003, 225).⁸ During the Third Session of the UN General Assembly at Palais de Chaillot, by a vote of forty-eight to six (three “no” votes from the Soviet Union and one each from Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia) with one abstention (Sweden), UN Resolution 195 (III) on the question of Korean independence was passed on December 12, 1948, thus extending international recognition to the ROK.

Behind the ROK's successful bid for international recognition was the hard work of the Korean delegation buttressed by solid American support. In this effort Dulles played no small role. He was a US representative at UN General Assembly from 1946 to 1949, and in 1948 was the head of the US delegation (Biographical Directory of the US Congress n.d.). The significance of his assistance was such that when Dulles passed away in 1959, Cho Byŏng-ok recalled the following in regards to the fierce struggle for the ROK's international recognition:

Korea owes Dulles a debt of gratitude. ... The resolution on recognizing Korea's independence was introduced just four days before the closing of the UN General Assembly session, and the communist bloc fell in line behind the Soviet representative [Andrei] Vyshinsky to block the proceedings and deny recognition of the ROK. Dulles then emphasized, during a UN Political Committee meeting, that the communist bloc representatives should stop their “filibuster” of the proceedings as “the passing of the resolution on the problem of the independence of Korea was one of the most important missions of this session of the General Assembly.” (Cho Byŏng-ok 1959)

Dulles is therefore not only connected to ROK security as the signer of the

8. Mo Yun-suk was also a member of the ROK delegation.

1953 US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty but was also involved in the ROK's endeavor to garner international recognition in 1948. Chang Myŏn even referred to Dulles as the ROK's savior.⁹

Dulles even mentioned this moment of international recognition for the ROK in his book *War or Peace*. Clearly exposing the structure of conflict between the “free” West and “communist” Eastern bloc during this era, Dulles explains that it was decided at the Cairo Conference of 1943 that Korea would receive its independence “in due course,” and there was an informal agreement at Yalta in 1945 that the nation would go through an interim period of trusteeship. However, things did not go as planned. Dulles goes on to explain the situation in the following manner:

The United Nations commission went to Korea and received full opportunity to conduct its investigations in the South. It was not, however, allowed to set foot in the Soviet zone of North Korea. Since South Korea formed about two-thirds of the country, both in area and in population, and since conditions there permitted a free and fair election, elections were held. A high percentage of the population voted, after a vigorous electoral campaign. The United Nations Assembly found that the resulting government was a “lawful government” and the “only” such government. That verdict was given on December 12, 1948, by a vote of 48 to 6. (Dulles 1950, 47-48)

The emphasis of “lawful government” and “only” in the passage above was placed there by Dulles himself. On US's Korea policy, Dulles held the following position:

In South Korea we have responsibilities due to the fact that we were in occupation of that area and primarily sponsored its transition to independence. ... But there is continuing need of economic support and of some military aid, if this young nation which we helped bring into the world is to survive. (Dulles 1950, 231)

While Dulles mentions the need for US support to be given to the ROK, he was unequivocal in his position that the most important nation in the region was Japan. Dulles argued that the traditional foundation of US's Asia policy had been friendly relations with China, however, since China had become an ally of the Soviet Union it was time to transition US policy in the region (Dulles 1950, 176). According to him, although the US had based its Asia policy on China by sending missionaries, doctors, and educators to the country, the communist

9. Following Dulles's death on May 24, 1959, Chang Myŏn (1959a, 1959b) published a eulogy of Dulles on June 1.

revolution in China signaled that it was time for a strategic change (224). Dulles thought that the particular characteristics of Asian religions and culture should be recognized. For example, although Asians were not Christians, their strong religious adherence to Buddhism and Shintoism was equally incompatible with the materialism or atheism of communism. For Dulles, who believed that a faith-based policy of cooperation between the US and Asia was therefore possible, Japan was the logical choice to become the geopolitical center of US Asia policy.

Already the United States has special responsibilities towards certain Eastern countries which it must make good. In doing so, it can set an example which will be influential throughout Asia and the Pacific, and can recapture some of its lost prestige.

Our particular opportunity and responsibility in that respect is Japan. We can, if we will, help Japan to be an exhibit in Asia of what a free society can develop in spiritual and intellectual richness and material well-being. ... If we can help the Japanese to satisfy their needs, material and spiritual, that of itself will exert an influence throughout Asia and the Pacific. (Dulles 1950, 230)

Thus, with the end of World War II, US strategy in Asia shifted from China to Japan.

2. The Birth of the San Francisco Peace Treaty

Dulles believed the responsibility for World War I lay with Kaiser Wilhelm II and for World War II with Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Shōwa Emperor Hirohito, and noted that while initially all these aggressors had succeeded militarily, they were eventually defeated (Dulles 1950, 240). While Dulles does not mention it in his book, Kaiser Wilhelm II was not put on trial after seeking asylum in the Netherlands, Hitler committed suicide before World War II ended, and Mussolini was executed by partisans in Italy. However, Hirohito, who was responsible for the outbreak of the Pacific War, was spared to protect the national essence (*kokutai*) by Japanese politicians and in accordance with US foreign policy objectives. Dulles attended the World Council of Churches (WCC) meeting in Geneva in 1939 as a US representative and advocated for achieving world peace through the church. He was the chairperson of the Just and Durable Peace Committee which was founded by the WCC. Dulles at this time noted that Germany and Japan were countries taken over by “evil faiths” (Dulles 1942, 7), but with the intensification of the Cold War he came to support the rebirth of Japan relative to its established tradition of imperial spiritual leadership. By 1948, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (also

known as the Tokyo Trials) had ended, and by 1951 the possibility of including a clear statement noting that the responsibility for the Pacific War lay with Hirohito was thin.

Unlike the Treaty of Versailles, the San Francisco Peace Treaty did not charge the heads of state with responsibility for the war, but, also unlike the Treaty of Versailles, the leaders of the war were put on trial. In Article 11 of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Japan accepted the Tokyo Trials. Yet while Article 14 acknowledged that Japan should pay reparations, it also stated that Japan lacked sufficient capacity to meet obligations to pay such reparations if it were to also “maintain a viable economy.” As a result, the San Francisco Peace Treaty is often considered a “generous peace treaty” compared to the Treaty of Versailles in large part thanks to the difference in the reparations cause.

Dulles clearly had memories of the Treaty of Versailles. Regarding this, he thought that while securing compensation for the costs of war should be a priority, demanding excessive reparations from an opponent might result in the creation of a further desire for retribution on the part of the defeated. He also believed that with the US preparing a mutual defense treaty with Japan, demands for extreme reparations from an alliance partner would create tension (Miyasato 1990, 193-94). For Dulles, ever the anti-communist, the most important aspect of the San Francisco Peace Treaty was ultimately to secure the defense treaty that would ensure the presence of US military bases in Japan.

Dulles expressed his views on Japanese reparations in a speech he gave on March 31, 1951 at Whittier College in California (Scheiber 2002). He believed that it was justified to demand reparations from Japan for the damage inflicted by the war, but he also insisted that reparations were not simply about justice and must be deemed viable and avoid devastating the domestic economy. He was convinced that, if Japan becomes a member of the “free world” through the conclusion of the US-Japan Mutual Defense Treaty, then it could also become economically self-reliant. Therefore, the peace treaty with Japan must bring about a “peace of trust.” Having witnessed the violence of communism during the unfolding of the Korean War, Dulles had become increasingly pragmatic in his anti-communist mission. Therefore, while the UK was skeptical of the US position to seek a lenient peace during the drafting of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, Dulles emphasized Article 11 of the Potsdam Declaration.¹⁰ This article

10. Text of Article 11 of the 1945 Potsdam Declaration: “Japan shall be permitted to maintain such industries as will sustain her economy and permit the exaction of just reparations in kind, but not those which would enable her to re-arm for war. To this end, access to, as distinguished from control of, raw materials shall be permitted. Eventual Japanese participation in world trade relations shall be permitted.”

described how Japan's economy would have to be allowed to revive before it could be expected to pay reparations and that eventually Japan should be allowed to freely engage in international trade. Dulles argued that while peace treaties should be "Carthaginian" in nature, there was also a need to think about the dignity and the equality of the defeated state in respect of the international community. Dulles, after explaining his experience as a member of the US delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, stated that because the Treaty of Versailles reflected both Wilson's hopes and Clemenceau's fears and hatred toward Germany, the Germans viewed the treaty as a humiliation, one that conversely gave rise to the Nazis. For Dulles the Treaty of Versailles was therefore a dangerous mix of both liberal and illiberal principles, and a precedent not to be followed.

Dulles's explanation for the conditions of the San Francisco Peace Treaty was presented in a condensed format during the San Francisco Peace Conference in September 1951.¹¹ First, President Truman had the following to say during his speech at the ceremony to mark the opening of the conference:

There are other steps which need to be taken. The most important of these is the restoration of peace and security in Korea. With Japan returned to its place in the family of nations, and with the people of Korea secure, free, and united, it should be possible to find ways to settle other problems in the Pacific which now threaten the peace. (Truman 1951)

Truman's remarks are important considering the power structure around the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Truman tied Korea's security to Japan's reentry into the international community. Truman sought a change in the Korean War through the signing of the US-Japan Mutual Defense Treaty and the restoration of Japan's sovereignty. In his speech, Truman explained that upon his orders Dulles had begun negotiations with each country's government to conclude the peace treaty. He said that Dulles had displayed the "highest traditions of statesmanship" and completed his task "faithfully and well" (Truman 1951).

Dulles followed Truman on the next day (September 5) with an explanation of the significance of the San Francisco Peace Treaty. He mentioned that Korea

11. During Dulles's April 1951 meeting with Yoshida Shigeru, the Japanese delegation remarked that if Korea was a signatory of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, then Japan worried that "Koreans living in Japan would receive the right, as citizens of Allied country, to compensation and restoration of property as defined by the treaty" (Gaimushō 2007, 413-15). On July 19, ROK Ambassador to the US Yang Yuch'an appealed to the US government to participate in the peace conference as a signatory state. Yang insisted that there are many "Koreans in Japan," but Dulles argued that they were from "North Korea" and were building up communism in Japan and could possibly take action against the government ("Memorandum of Conversation" 1951, 1202-206). Given the series of events, it is possible that Dulles's remarks were influenced by Japan.

had been “under Japanese control since 1905,” and made the distinction between “Korea” that appears in the San Francisco Peace Treaty from the “Republic of Korea.”

Article 21 makes special provision for *Korea*. The *Republic of Korea* will not sign the Treaty of Peace only because Korea was never at war with Japan. It tragically lost its independence long before this war began, and did not regain independence of Japan until after Japan surrendered. *Many individual Koreans steadfastly fought Japan. But they were individuals, not recognized governments.* (“John Foster Dulles’s Speech” 1951; emphasis added)

In the twenty-seven articles of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the word “Korea” appears three times. It appears twice in Article 2 of the treaty and a third time in Article 21, which states that “Korea [shall be entitled] to the benefits of Articles 2, 4, 9 and 12 of the present Treaty.”¹² Dulles exerted great influence by making the final decision on two critical articles which later became the cause of heated debates during the ROK-Japan normalization negotiations that began in 1951; namely Article 4, which dealt with “property claims,” and Article 14, which addressed the issue of reparations. The ROK was not granted permission to sign the San Francisco Peace Treaty, and discussions regarding property claims between the ROK and Japan were to begin during the ROK-Japan negotiations. In the end, the question over the meaning of the contents of Article 4 for Korean property claims became the biggest issue during the fourteen years of negotiations between the ROK and Japan (Kim Myongsob and Kim Soongbae 2009).

From within Dulles’s speech the following passage described the current situation of Korea and the existence of North Korea:

Korea has a special claim on Allied consideration, the more so as it has not yet proved possible for the Allies to achieve their goal of a Korea which is free and independent. Korea is, unhappily, only half free and only half independent: and even that fractional freedom and independence has been cruelly mangled and menaced by armed aggression from the North. (“John Foster Dulles’s Speech” 1951)

Here Dulles is pointing out that Korea is not a completely free and independent single country but a fragmented former state, within which the emergent freedom and independence of South Korea is being threatened by the North’s invasion.

12. Article 2 refers to the territories of Japan, Article 4 to issues regarding property, Article 9 to issues regarding fishing, and Article 12 to trade relations.

This speech was given as the Korean War raged on, and Dulles here is calling international attention to the fact that the ROK was being attacked by North Korea.

Next, this following passage from Dulles's speech mentions the territorial relationship between Korea and Japan, and comments on the problem of property as it relates to the Japanese colonization of the peninsula.

Most of the Allied Powers have been seeking to make good their promise of freedom and independence and, as members of the United Nations, to suppress the aggression of which Korea is the victim. By this treaty, the Allies will obtain for Korea Japan's formal recognition of Korea's independence, and Japan's consent to the vesting in the Republic of Korea, of the very considerable Japanese property in Korea. ("John Foster Dulles's Speech" 1951)

In *War or Peace*, Dulles acknowledges that "South Korea" is the "only" "lawful government" (Dulles 1950, 47). In this speech, Dulles uses the official designation of the "Republic of Korea" but never uses North Korea's official name—the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea."

As he continued to explain the significance of the treaty, Dulles, while admitting that discussions on reparations always accompany the conclusion of a peace treaty, said that the US had incurred a large economic burden in order to support the defeated Japanese. Ultimately, he hoped that Japan would no longer depend on the US and would become a self-reliant state.

The difference between this 1951 accord and the historical peace treaties of the past was the perception of the ongoing threat of communism. Therefore, it is valid to argue that the San Francisco Peace Treaty, characterized by its exceptionally generous treatment of Japan, was an important foundation of the architecture of the Cold War order. The following passage from Dulles's speech highlights that the San Francisco Peace Treaty originated against the backdrop of the Korean War—a conflict which was ignited by the Cold War struggle between the great powers of East and West and provided a brutal physical manifestation of the inherent danger that underlay their clash of ideologies.

... if the treaty validated, or kept contingently alive, monetary reparation claims against Japan, her ordinary commercial credit would vanish, the incentive of her people would be destroyed and they would sink into a misery of body and spirit which would make them an easy prey to exploitation. *Totalitarian demagogues would surely rise up to promise relief through renewed aggression with the help of those nearby who, as we have seen in Korea, are already disposed to be aggressors.* ("John Foster Dulles's Speech" 1951; emphasis added)

Here Dulles is connecting the issues of communism, security, reparations, and ROK-Japan relations. Large-scale immediate monetary reparations would make Japanese economic self-sufficiency difficult, and eventually this would impact the US economy as well. Additionally, economic difficulties in Japan would fuel support for totalitarian movements and “demagogues,” making the danger of Japan succumbing to communism more probable. The reparations issue was thus directly related by Dulles to the problem of the spread of communism, with the ongoing Korean War serving to illuminate the extent of this threat. In Dulles’s mind, the demands for strict reparations for Japan would simply turn the Japan of tomorrow into the Korea of today.

However, Dulles, due to his dichotomic conception of war and peace, and liberal capitalism and communism, did not sufficiently reflect on the problematic nature of the recent Japanese control of the Korean Peninsula. Specifically, the role of Japanese colonialism in fomenting Korea’s contemporary war, by directly fomenting locally based communist resistance to capitalist inequality and exploitation at the hands of the Japanese colonists and their elite Korean collaborators. It is possible to grasp Dulles’s alternative perception of colonialism as a benign force in Chapter 7 of *War or Peace*, entitled “Colonial Evolution vs. Violent Revolution.” In this, Dulles states his belief that, compared to the violent revolutions sought by the Soviet Union through propaganda and infiltration, individuals, based on their Christian faith, should promote the general good by constraining their desire for individual material interests. Dulles considered that Western colonialism was different from previous forms of colonialism in that it possessed a “self-liquidating feature” based on its economic, social, and specifically religious philosophical rationale. In short, his perception was that colonialism would sooner or later serve to spiritually and socially elevate and enlighten the colonized population to the degree where they could bloodlessly transition to self-rule. He therefore had a positive view of national trusteeship as regulated by the UN as he believed it also included this self-liquidating feature. This quality he saw as inherent to all governance based on Christian values (Dulles 1950, 75-77). Although Dulles thought that many non-Western cultures and peoples had been devastated and destroyed because the colonial structure of the former Western empires strove towards materialistic ends, the laudable parallel between present day Western civilization and its former Imperial condition remained the positive influence of religion (87).

Conclusion

Relations between the ROK and Japan were normalized in 1965, and the current relationship between the two countries is referred to as “the 1965 system.” However, for the 1965 system to have come into existence as a realized concept in international relations, then the preceding “1948 system” and “1951 system” must also be explored. The importance of these preceding systems is indicated within the preamble of the Treaty on the Basic Relations between the Republic of Korea and Japan. This passage recalls the Resolution 195 (III) of the UN General Assembly adopted on December 12, 1948, and the San Francisco Peace Treaty signed on September 8, 1951, which provided a guarantee of international recognition to the ROK. What underlies the 1965 system is the birth of a sovereign state in 1948 and the confirmation of that sovereignty through the 1951 Peace Treaty. As we have established here, Dulles was a major actor in both historic events.

This understanding of Dulles’s contribution to the formation of post-war US-Japan relations and the drafting of the San Francisco Peace Treaty does not fully encompass the view that Dulles had a hand in creating the early Cold War relationship between the ROK and Japan. Dulles was a proponent of international recognition for the ROK at this moment of internal conflict across the Korean Peninsula. In this respect, while the wider Cold War certainly impacted the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which sought to officially end the Pacific War and bring about a new peace, it was the “hot war” in Korea that hastened the birth of the accord. And it was Dulles in particular who projected the significance of the Korean War onto the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

Dulles is known for his role in encouraging the practice of “pactomania,” diplomatically aligning the US with any and all friendly states during the 1950s, inspired by his fierce anti-communist convictions. His religious beliefs, as expressed in his book *War or Peace*, were also very influential in shaping Dulles’s approach to countering the threat of international communism. Essentially, Dulles believed in the inherent spiritual power of his Christian faith. This led him to the conclusion that these beliefs were a necessary and useful weapon to be used in confronting an extreme communist ideology which denied religious freedom. Dulles’s belief in the appositeness of the union between his religious and political concerns only deepened as the Cold War intensified.

Following these spiritual and political convictions, Dulles’s role enabled him to deeply influence the regional order in East Asia. Following the rise of Maoism in China, Dulles mapped out a new pro-US Asian community centered on Japan. Although Dulles did not believe that Japanese society was imbued with

the Christian spirit, or likely to be so, he thought that the country's popular and ancient religious traditions would help deny the advances of communism and enable a cooperative relationship with the US. While for Dulles Japan was now at the center of East Asia, he also appreciated the need to provide aid to the ROK as it was similarly aligned, and poised to develop as a client state within the US global political and economic order. His emphasis on the US playing the role of tutor or guardian within postwar East Asia harkened back to the foreign policy traditions of late-nineteenth century America. And, if we consider Dulles's memories, experiences, and family relationships in conjunction with his writings, the links between his beliefs and this national tradition become easily apparent.

However, Dulles's Christian and anti-communist convictions were also grounded in a lack of introspection about colonialism. He failed to critically engage with the legacy of colonialism in his visions for global peace. Believing in the self-liquidating feature of Christianity and therefore colonialism in general, he was insensitive to the problems that the former colonies had suffered due to their subjugation by imperial powers. When considering how all these factors informed Dulles's approach to the ROK and Japan, one might assume his combination of fervent anti-communist and Christian beliefs would have led him to strengthen US-ROK relations. However, his lack of critical concern with colonialism led him to favor the former empire of Japan rather than colonized Korea. This tendency toward Japan over Korea is illustrated by the outcome in the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Ultimately it should also be noted that Dulles's beliefs about colonialism were not exceptional in post-1945 international politics, where many "unrepentant imperialist" perspectives were common in both the capitalist Western and communist Eastern blocs.

Given Dulles's contribution to ensuring the ROK's international recognition as a sovereign state and the restitution of Japan's sovereignty, his importance in the inception of the relations between the two sovereign states in the immediate postwar period cannot be overstated. Yet, Dulles promoted his brand of international politics centered on war and peace without any concern for the legacy of colonialism. As the guardian and executioner of American foreign policy, he was therefore as responsible as anyone for the persistent projection of the legacy between colonizer and colonized onto "the future history" of ROK-Japan relations.

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