

The Japanese Military and Regular Police's Placement and Suppression of the March First Independence Movement

Myung-hwan KIM

Research Institute of the Independence Hall of Korea

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Introduction

The March First Movement in 1919 was the largest event in the history of Korean independence activities. According to Bak Eun-sik (1859-1925), a total of 2,023,098 people took part in 1,542 rallies at 211 lower administrative districts, called *bu* or *gun*, between March and May 1919. Japan consistently used force to suppress the movement through which many Koreans suffered severely. The number of Korean deaths amounted to 7,509 while 15,961 were injured and 46,948 were incarcerated.¹ The police system in colonial Korea, occupied mainly by the Japanese military police (J. *Kenpeitai*), played a major role in suppressing the March First Movement.² By the time the movement occurred, the Japanese military police had al-

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¹ Bak Eun-sik, *Hanguk Dongnip Undong Jihyeolsa* [A Bloody History of the Korean Independence Movement]. Kim Do-hyung, trans. (Seoul: Somyeong chulpan, 2008).

² The term “military police” here refers to Japanese military policemen who performed regular police duties during the period of Japanese colonialization.

ready experienced a war with righteous armies in late Joseon (1392-1910) and served as the foundation of Japan's military rule over colonial Korea. Moreover, it had the civilian police under its command. Apart from the police system, Japanese occupation forces in colonial Korea also contributed to the suppression of the independence movement³ and other Japanese self-defense units took action against the independence movement.⁴

Japanese suppression of the March First Movement has been a major target of criticism ever since its beginning and many studies have so far managed to reveal the extent of the suppression and the degree of brutality at the time. As a result, the overall circumstances of Japanese suppression, including the size and structure of the oppressive agencies, the extent of damage Koreans suffered, and details related to the mobilization and the involvement of the Japanese occupation forces in Korea, have been generally known.⁵

However, when it comes to the studies on the Japanese police system of the time, some ambiguities have still remain. Few studies have been devoted to determining exactly how Japanese police forces were involved in suppressing the March First Movement. It is easier to locate studies on the damage Japanese authorities and government offices sustained from at-

³ Yi Yang-hi, "Ilbongun ui 3.1 undong tanap gwa Joseon tongchi bangan" [The Japanese Army's Suppression against the 1919 Independence Movement and Colonial Administration Plans], *Journal of Korean Modern and Contemporary History* 65 (2013): 104-36; Kim Sang-gyu, "1915-1921 nyeon Joseon judun Ilbongun ui sangjuhwa wa 3.1 undong tanap" [The Stationing of Japanese Occupation Forces in Joseon between 1915 and 1921 and the Suppression of the March First Movement], in *Junsasa yeongu chongseo* [Military History Research Series] 6 (Seoul: Institute for Military History, 2017).

⁴ Yi Yang-hi, "Jaechan ilbonin jawidan ui 3.1 undong tanap" [Suppression of the March First Independence Movement by the Self-Defense Force of Japanese Residents in Korea], *Journal of Korean Modern and Contemporary History* 76 (2016): 121-50; Yi Yang-hi, "3.1 undonggi ilje ui hangugin jawi danche jojik gwa unyong" [Organization and Management of Korean Self-Defense Corps by the Japanese Empire in the March First Independence Movement], *Journal of Korean Modern and Contemporary History* 83 (2017): 173-204.

⁵ The oldest, most extensive collection of papers was published by Dong-a Ilbo to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the March First Movement. The collection holds a total of eighty-one papers, memoirs, lists, and daily logs. Han Wu-geun et al., *Samil undong 50 junyeon ginyeom nonjip* [Collection to Commemorate the March First Movement's 50th Anniversary] (Seoul: Dong-a Ilbosa, 1969).

tacks by Koreans during the movement.⁶ Their analyses are geared to demonstrating how fiercely Koreans resisted Japanese suppression at the time. Some studies tend to convey vague descriptions about the Japanese authorities involved in suppressing Koreans. For instance, instead of offering specific names such as military police, regular police, Japanese army, or Japanese self-defense forces, ambiguous terms such as “the military and police” or “police officials” have often been used. This issue, it seems, has bearing on the inexplicit descriptions about Japanese authorities in historical sources or shows neglect of how each oppressive agency operated its network within colonial Korea.

Another matter for further examination concerns the Japanese military and regular police. During the 1910s, a military police system was being operated in colonial Korea so that when it came to public order, the Japanese military police wielded powerful influence. Yet, the Japanese regular police were involved in maintaining public order as well. Though not as extensive as the military police, the regular police also had a widespread network and numerous human resources. The military police undoubtedly played a leading role in handling matters of public order, but it is still necessary to consider how the regular police, managed by civil servants, strove to treat such matters.

This paper therefore seeks to examine how the Japanese military and the regular police forces were organized during the Japanese suppression of the March First Movement. Previous studies have managed to suggest the size and the status of the military police and the regular police, but they have failed to perform a more in-depth analysis on their structure during the March First Movement. The National Institute of Korean History has been digitalizing the extensive collection it has thus far amassed, which now includes historical sources such as Documents Related to the Korean Commotion (*Chōsen sōjō jiken kankei shorui* 朝鮮騷擾事件關係書類), Pro-

⁶ Kim Jin-bong, “Samil undong gwa minjung” [The March First Movement and the People], in *Samil undong 50 junyeon ginyeom nonjip* (Seoul: Dong-a Ilbosa, 1969), 358-60; Matsuda Toshihiko, *Nihon no Chōsen shokuminchi shihai to keisatsu* [Japan's Colonial Rule of Korea and the Police] (Tokyo: Azekura shobō, 2009), 233-40.

vincial Governor Report on the Korean Commotion (*Taishō hachinen sōjōjiken ni kansuru dōchoukan hōkokutsuzuri* 大正八年 騷擾事件ニ關スル道長官報告綴), Miscellaneous Cases Involving Insubordinate Groups (*Futeidan kankei jakken* 不逞團關係雜件), Gyeongseong District Court's Prosecution Bureau Documents (*Keijō chihōhōin kenjikyoku bunsho* 京城地方法院 檢事局 文書), court rulings, and reports from missionaries in Korea. Such historical sources have been used in combination with geographic information and information on administrative districts as well as military and regular police units in order to establish the “March First Movement Database” suitable for more diverse and constructive research methods.

This paper attempts to utilize information gathered from the March First Movement Database to explore how the colonial police authorities in Korea suppressed the March First Movement in 1919. First, beyond mere numerical observations, the structure and the geographic placement of military and regular police units around the time will be analyzed from various angles in which to trace the density of their network in different areas, determine the circumstances of individual units, and highlight the way the colonial apparatuses reacted to the Movement. And, the paper charts multiple aspects of the Japanese military and the regular police's suppression of Koreans. Those aspects include actual acts of suppression by the military police and the regular police, the frequency of each agency's involvement in protest suppression, and cases of simultaneous dispatch by the two public police organizations. By so doing, we can have a better understanding of the pattern in which the two organizations tried to subdue the nationwide anti-Japanese resistance and these two oppressive agencies make a difference to each other.

The Organization and Placement of Japanese Police Forces in Korea

1. The Organization of Japanese Police Forces in Korea

In the 1910s, the Japanese military police and regular police were jointly in

charge of maintaining public order on the Korean peninsula. Leadership roles, however, were held by the military police. Ahead of its forced occupation of Korea, Japan consolidated the military police and the regular police⁷ and appointed the military police commander as the police commissioner while the provost marshal additionally oversaw police affairs at the provincial level.⁸ This consolidation placed the military police on ordinary police duties so that while 26.6 percent, or 2,019 out of 7,582 military policemen handled ordinary police affairs as of 1910, that percentage surged to 98.9 percent, or 7,978 out of 8,066 military policemen by 1918.⁹ In other words, just one year before the March First Movement in 1919, the majority of the military police stationed on the Korean peninsula performed ordinary police duties. Although the military police and the regular police constantly restructured specific departments or individual units throughout the 1910s, the military police continued to play a central role in maintaining public order in Korea. By the time the March First Movement occurred, the military police and the regular police had formed dense networks across the Korean peninsula. The organization of the military police and the regular police reconstructed through the March First Movement Data-

⁷ Lee Sung-hee, “Hanguk byeonghap joyak jeonhugi ui juhan ilbongun heonbyeongdae yeongu: Hyeongyeong tongil munje reul jungsimeuro” [A Study of the Japanese Military Police in Korea during the Japanese Annexation of Korea], *Journal of Japanese History* 26 (2007): 165-92.

⁸ Ryu Yeong-ik, “Joseon chongdokbu chogi ui gujo wa gineung” [The Structure and Operation of the Japanese Government-General of Korea in Its Early Stages], in *Samil undong 50 junyeon ginyeom nonjip* (Seoul: Dong-a Ilbosa, 1969), 102; Yi Hyeon-hi, “Samil undong ijeon heonbyeong gyeongchalje ui seonggyeok” [The Nature of the Military Police System Prior to the March First Movement], in *Samil undong 50 junyeon ginyeom nonjip* (Seoul: Dong-a Ilbosa, 1969), 114-15.

⁹ Matsuda Toshihiko, “Kaisetsu Chōsen kenpeitai shōshi” [Commentary on a Brief History of the Japanese Military Police in Korea], in *Chōsen kenpeitai rekishi* 1 (Tokyo: Fuji shuppan, 2000), 8.

〈The Number of Japanese Military Police Performing Regular Police Duties〉

Year	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918
Number Performing Regular Police Duties	2,019	7,749	7,769	7,958	7,971	7,929	8,041	8,123	7,978
Total Number of Military Police	7,582	7,482	7,754	8,002	8,074	8,031	8,167	8,164	8,066

Table 1. The Organization of Police Forces (March 1919)

Military Police	Command	Headquarters	Squad	Outstation	Substation	Station	Total No. of Units
	1	13	78	98	879	6	
Regular Police	Government-General Police Bureau	Police Administrative Bureau	Station	Substation		Box	Total No. of Units
	1	13	99	528		108	
				636			
Total	2	26	177	1,619			1,824

base has been summarized in the table 1.

The organizational formation in the table displays minor discrepancies compared to what has so far been quoted in previous studies on police forces from the 1910s. The number of units at the squad/station level or above match previous records, but those below that level do not. The military police appear to have had twenty-five stations less than previously known while the regular police had two stations less.¹¹ Such discrepancies suggest that a gap existed between record and reality and while it remains unclear as to why such a gap emerged, the constant restructuring of police forces throughout the 1910s could have been a contributing factor.

After forcibly occupying Korea, Japan restructured police forces in

¹⁰ According to the March First Movement Database, the total number of regular police units was 757. This number included eight units (one station and seven substations) installed beyond the March First Movement on April 1, 1919, which is why those eight units have been excluded from the total in Table 1.

¹¹ The following table juxtaposes previous and updated data on the basic units of the Japanese military police and regular police.
 (Data Comparison on the Number of Basic Units)

Previous numbers	Military Police Outstation	Military Police Dispatch Station	Military Police Annex	Total	Police Substation	Police Station	Total
		98	877	43	1,018	532	106
Corrected numbers	Military Police Outstation	Military Police Substation	Military Police Station	Total	Police Substation	Police Station	Total
		98	879	6	983	528	108

* The previous data was collected through the Korean Statistical Information Service's web portal (<http://kosis.kr/index/index.do>).

Korea several times. The Government-General Ordinance No. 125 issued on August 27, 1914 assigned precincts for the Japanese military police to be stationed in Korea. This was followed by the Government-General Ordinance No. 126, which announced the military police squads that would be handling police affairs as well as the names and locations of outstations. A separate announcement was made for dispatch stations and smaller units. The names and locations of police bureaus, police stations, substations, and boxes were announced on the same day through the Government-General Ordinances no. 127 and 338.¹² Restructurings beyond this point were all carried out in the form of revising the aforementioned Ordinances No. 125, 126, 127, and 338.

Until the March First Movement, the Japanese Government-General of Korea (hereinafter the Government-General) often revised ordinances and announcements and more frequently reorganized the precincts of police stations and substations. Even at the height of the movement, a reshuffle was carried out on April 1, 1919, which included the establishment of the Gyeomipo Police Station.¹³ The precincts of the military police and the regular police had changed whenever necessary. For instance, the military police and the regular police each covered six of the twelve administrative districts defined as a *myeon* in Goyang-gun, Gyeonggi Province until the ordinance revision on September 6, 1916 placed all twelve of the *myeons* of Goyang-gun under the control of the military police.¹⁴ The Government-General thus frequently reorganized the assignment of precincts throughout the 1910s and this is perhaps the reason why a mismatch occurred between the number of units in official statistics and the number of units that were actually operating at the time.

According to Table 1, police forces operated a total of 1,824 units

¹² *Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* [Official Gazette of the Japanese Government-General of Korea], August 17, 1914, Extra Edition.

¹³ *Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* 1991, August 17, 1914. This reshuffle closed three substations and newly installed one police station and seven substations.

¹⁴ Ordinance, no. 75 and Ordinance, no. 76 of the Japanese Government-General of Korea were issued on September 6, 1916 (*Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* 1229, September 6, 1916).

when the March First Movement took place. Military police squads, outstations, substations, and stations equally contributed to the maintenance of public order in each region alongside regular police stations, substations, and boxes.¹⁵ Police forces at the time consisted of 7,978 military policemen and 5,402 regular policemen,¹⁶ meaning that there were 1,576 more military policemen (59.63%) than regular policemen (40.37%).

In terms of the number of units, the military police operated 326 more units than the regular police. While the regular police had 21 more mid-sized units than the military police, the military police ran far greater numbers of smaller-sized units than the regular police. The military police operated 983 units smaller than outstations, which was approximately 347 more than the 636 substations and boxes operated by the regular police. This suggests that the military police interacted more broadly with the lower stratum of colonial Korean society than the regular police.

In 1919, Korea was administratively divided into thirteen provinces, 232 *bus* (府) and *guns* (郡), 2,150 *myeons* (面), and 28,294 *lis*, *dongs*, and *jeongs*.¹⁷ A military police squad and a provincial police agency were installed in each province. A total of 177 military police squads or police stations covered areas at the *bu* or *gun* level, which meant that an average of two police stations covered around three *bus* or *guns* or each *bu* or *gun* was covered by 0.76 stations. Units smaller than outstations or substations totaled 1,619 so that seven of such units were installed at each *bu* or *gun*. The number of units smaller than a regular police station totaled 1,796,

¹⁵ The Korean Statistical Information Service's web portal lists outstations (*bungyeonso*), dispatch stations (*paygyeonso*), and annexes (*chuljangso*) as basic units of the military police whereas such units are listed as outstations (*bungyeonso*), substations (*jujaeso*), and stations (*pachulso*) in the March First Movement Database. Regarding the names of the military police's basic units, the Government-General issued Ordinance No. 24 on March 30, 1918 so that from April 1 of the same year, dispatch stations were to be called substations (*Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* 1692, March 30, 1918). Accordingly, annexes within the Yongsan Military Police Squad's jurisdiction were renamed as police stations while other dispatch stations and annexes were renamed as substations (*Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* 1698, April 8, 1918).

¹⁶ Korean Statistical Information Service's web portal (<http://kosis.kr/index/index.do>).

¹⁷ Refer to the Administrative District Section of the March First Movement Database by the National Institute of Korean History.

which placed 7.7 of such units in each *bu* or *gun*. This meant that at the *myeon* level, 1,796 units smaller than a regular police station covered 2,510 *myeons*, so that each such station covered 1.4 *myeons*. As for administrative districts at the *li*, *dong*, and *jeong* level, which amounted to 28,294, each unit covered 15.8 *dongs*. Not all administrative districts larger than a *myeon* each had a unit, but it would be safe to say that most areas were under the direct influence of police forces.

As of 1919, 16,783,510 people formed a total of 3,152,228 households on the Korean peninsula.¹⁸ In terms of units smaller than a police station, each unit had to cover 9,345 people from 1,755 households. Since there were 13,380 military and regular policemen at the time, each policeman likely had to oversee 1,254 Koreans. The personnel size is likely to have differed to the status and the location of each unit. Dividing the number of policemen with the number of units, the military police and the regular police each had a similar personnel size per unit, which averaged 7.3. For the military police, 7,421 people served at each unit by dividing 7,978 policemen among 1,075 units while 7.212 people served at each regular police unit by dividing 5,402 policemen among 749 units. Considering the fact that 117 people worked at the Government-General Police Bureau in 1919, more personnel is likely to have been assigned to the 205 units equivalent to a police station or larger.

As for units smaller than substations, they are likely to have been staffed with no more than five people regardless of whether a unit belonged to the military or to the regular police. Through an organizational reform on July 1, 1910 shortly before Japan's forced occupation of Korea, the military police had a headquarters, 13 corps, 77 squads, 525 outstations, and three dispatch stations. Each substation was assigned with one

¹⁸ For more information, please refer to the Korean Statistical Information Service's web portal (<http://kosis.kr/index/index.do>). The census results provided by the web portal is based on the Statistical Yearbook of the Japanese Government-General of Korea.

〈Number of Korean Households and Population as of 1919〉

Households	Population	Males	Females
3,152,228	16,783,510	8,632,605	8,150,905

staff sergeant, three corporals, and six military police assistants.¹⁹ The number of basic military police units nearly doubled from 528 in 1910 to 938 by early 1919. However, the number of military policemen merely increased by 484 over the same period. While the number of military police units almost doubled, the size of the military police force barely changed. Considering that each basic military police unit previously operated with about ten policemen soon after the Japanese annexation of Korea, the per-unit number must have dropped to one-half by the time the March First Movement occurred. As for the regular police, one or two Japanese officers and two to four assistants to the officers were assigned to each substation.²⁰ The number of basic regular police units rose from 354 in 1910 to 636 at the time of the March First Movement.²¹ The number of regular policemen, however, decreased from 5,694 to 5,402 over the same period.²² These circumstances indicate that basic units of both the military police and the regular police most likely operated in teams of about five people on average.

The general characteristics of police forces in Korea in the 1910s can be summarized as follows. The Japanese military police was a larger organization than the regular police in terms of the number of personnel and units. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that 60.7 percent of the 1,619 basic police units belonged to the Japanese military police. This can be interpreted as the clear evidence that the military police interacted more broadly with the lower stratum of colonial Korean society than the regular police. The personnel size of substations or smaller units, regardless of whether they belonged to the military police or to the regular police, is estimated to

¹⁹ Lee, “Hanguk byeonghap joyak jeonhugi ui juhan ilbongun heonbyeongdae yeongu,” *Journal of Japanese History* 26 (2007): 176.

²⁰ Lee Yun-jeong, *Hanguk gyeongchalsa: Geungyeonhae pyeon* [A History of the Korean Police: From the Modern to Contemporary Period] (Seoul: Somyeong chulpan, 2015), 121.

²¹ Shortly before Japan’s forced occupation of Korea, the regular police consisted of 111 police stations, one substation, and 375 basic units. The reshuffle on August 5, 1910 restructured the organization into ninety-seven police stations, four substations, and 354 basic units. Hanguk gyeongchalsa pyeonchan wiwonhoe, *Hanguk gyeongchalsa* [Korean Police History] 1 (Seoul: Ministry of Home Affairs (Security Bureau), 1972), 724-27.

²² Matsuda Toshihiko, *Nihon no Chōsen shokuminchi shihai to keisatsu*, 24-25.

have been as many as five per unit. Units that interacted directly with the lower social stratum were units equivalent to or smaller than military police squads and police stations. Around two regular police stations would cover approximately three *bus* or *guns*. By including all units smaller than police stations, 7.7 units would have been installed in each *bu* or *gun* and each unit would have covered 1.4 *myeons*. These estimations suggest that a dense Japanese police presence was formed at each *bu*, *gun*, and *myeon* in Korea by 1919, although each unit or policeman had to handle an extensive number of Koreans.

2. The Placement of Japanese Police Forces in Korea

Even while consolidating the military police and the regular police in June 1910, Japan sought to separate their respective precincts to prevent the police presence from overlapping anywhere. The regular police was mostly assigned to major cities, open port areas, and areas along railways whereas the military police was assigned to areas strategically important or vital to the suppression of Korean righteous armies.²³ During the 1910s, the military police and the regular police were each overseen by the Military Police Command and the Government-General Police Bureau both located in Gyeongseong-bu. A provost marshal's office and provincial police agency were installed at each Korean province to oversee smaller police units such as military police squads and police stations maintaining public order at the *bu* and *gun* levels.

Major cities and townships designated as a *bu* or a *jijeongmyeon* certainly seem to have been under the regular police's jurisdiction. All twelve *bus* were controlled by the regular police around the time the March First Movement occurred.²⁴ Military police squads were stationed at cities such

²³ Ryu Yeong-ik, "Joseon chongdokbu chogi ui gujo wa gineung" in *Samil undong 50 junyeon ginyeom nonjip* (Seoul: Dong-a Ilbosa, 1969), 102; Lee, "Hanguk Byeonghap Joyak Jeonhugi ui Juhan Ilbongun Heonbyeongdae Yeongu," *Journal of Japanese History* 26 (2007): 172.

²⁴ Through the Government-General Ordinance No. 100 issued on April 1, 1914, twelve *bus* and fourteen *myeons* were designated as urban districts (*Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* 499, April 1,

as Daegu and Pyeongyang where provincial government buildings were located, but the regular police was in charge of maintaining public order in those areas as well. Gyeongseong-bu appears to be an exception because the Imperial Japanese Army's 20th Division was stationed. Out of the twenty-three townships designated as a *jjeongmyeon*,²⁵ sixteen of them were under the jurisdiction of the regular police. Eight of the *jjeongmyeons* accommodated a provincial government building including Cheongju-myeon (North Chungcheong Province), Gongju-myeon (South Chungcheong Province), Jeonju-myeon (North Jeolla Province), Gwangju-myeon (South Jeolla Province), Jinju-myeon (South Gyeongsang Province), Haeju-myeon (Hwanghae Province), Uiju-myeon (North Pyeongan Province), and Hamheung-myeon (South Hamheung Province). Except for Uiju-myeon, the other seven townships were under the regular police's jurisdiction. The military police had control over seven *jjeongmyeons*, which were Jochiwon-myeon, Iksan-myeon, Gimcheon-myeon, Pohang-myeon, Uiju-myeon, Hoeryeong-myeon, and Nanam-myeon.²⁶

1914). The twelve *bus* were Gyeongseong-bu, Incheon-bu, Gunsan-bu, Mokpo-bu, Daegu-bu, Busan-bu, Masan-bu, Pyeongyang-bu, Jinnampo-bu, Sinuiju-bu, Wonsan-bu, and Cheongjin-bu. The fourteen *myeons* were Suwon-myeon, Songdo-myeon, Cheongju-myeon, Gongju-myeon, Daejeon-myeon, Ganggyeong-myeon, Jeonju-myeon, Naju-myeon, Gwangju-myeon, Gimcheon-myeon, Jinju-myeon, Haeju-myeon, Uiju-myeon, and Hamheung-myeon. These designations remained valid when the March First Movement occurred.

²⁵ Through the Government-General Ordinance No. 67 on September 19, 1917, the following townships were designated as a *jjeongmyeon*: Suwon-myeon, Songdo-myeon, and Yeongdeungpo-myeon in Gyeonggi Province; Cheongju-myeon in North Chungcheong Province; Gongju-myeon, Daejeon-myeon, Ganggyeong-myeon, and Jochiwon-myeon in South Chungcheong Province; Jeonju-myeon and Iksan-myeon in North Jeolla Province; Gwangju-myeon in South Jeolla Province; Gimcheon-myeon and Pohang-myeon in North Gyeongsang Province; Jinju-myeon, Jinhac-myeon, and Tongyeong-myeon in South Gyeongsang Province; Haeju-myeon in Hwanghae Province; Uiju-myeon in North Pyeongan Province; Chuncheon-myeon in Gangwon Province; Hamheung-myeon in South Hamgyeong Province; Hoeryeong-myeon, Nanam-myeon, and Seongjin-myeon in North Hamgyeong Province (*Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* 1539, September 19, 1917).

²⁶ Nanam-myeon used to be a secluded rural area that belonged to Ochon-myeon of Gyeongseong-gun until the Japanese army settled there, causing the area to develop rapidly and become sectioned off as a separate myeon. In September 1917, Nanam-myeon was designated as a *jjeongmyeon* (*Maeil Sinbo*, October 3, 1917). North Hamgyeong Province's government building was originally located in Ochon-myeon, Gyeongseong-gun, but the decision was made to relocate

The military police and the regular police seem to have been involved in policing areas along railways running through the Korean peninsula. By 1919, all sections of the Gyeongbu Line, Gyeongin Line, Gyeongui Line, Gyeongwon Line, Honam Line, Gunsan Line, and Gyeomipo Line were in service. The railways connecting Iksan and Jeonju, Samnangjin and Masan, Daegu and Pohang, Cheongjin and Hoeryeong, Sinanju and Gaecheon, and Pyeongyang and Jinnampo were already under operation as well. While the Gyeongin Line, Gyeongbu Line, and Gyeongui Line were completed under the reign of the Korean empire, the Gyeongwon Line, Honam Line, Daegu Line, and Hambuk Line had all opened in the 1910s.

The regular police were not necessarily predominant in terms of its coverage of areas along railways in the 1910s. Among the twenty-one *bus* and *guns* where Gyeongbu Line passed through, eight were controlled by the military police, nine by the regular police, and four jointly by the military police and the regular police alike. The situation was similar for the Gyeongui (Seoul-Uiju) Line so that among the twenty-two *bus* and *guns* it passed through, nine were covered by the military police, eleven by the regular police, and two were jointly covered. As for the Gyeongwon (Seoul-Wonsan) Line and the Hambuk (Hoeryong-Najin) Line that ran through mountainous regions, the military police covered a broader area than the regular police. Among the fourteen *bus* and *guns* the Gyeongwon Line passed, nine were covered by the military police, three by the regular police, and two were jointly covered. Such a mixture of military and regular police presence applied to other railways as well, such as for the Honam (Daejeon-Mokpo) Line that passed through eleven *bus* and *guns*, five of which were covered by the military police, five by the regular police, and one jointly by both the military police and the regular police.

A review of the distribution of police stations or smaller units reveals

the building as well as the provincial police bureau, free clinic, and police station to Nanamyeon according to an announcement made on June 30, 1917 (*Maeil Sinbo*, July 5, 1917). The relocation was supposed to be finished by December 1919, but it took far longer until May 29, 1921 (*Maeil Sinbo*, June 1, 1921).

another pattern. The distribution of police units differed among the northeastern, central, and southern regions on the Korean peninsula. Far more military police units were assigned to the northeastern regions such as Pyeongan, Hamgyeong, Hwanghae, and Gangwon Provinces. The mid to southern regions, on the other hand, such as Gyeonggi, Chungcheong, Jeolla, and Gyeongsang Provinces, had as many or more regular police units than the military police. In the northeastern regions, there were at least thirty-eight more or as many as eighty-six more military police units. This concentration of military police units in the northeastern regions while maintaining at least as many units as the regular police in the mid to southern regions explains why the military police operated a total of 1.4 times more units than the regular police on the Korean peninsula.

Table 2. Provincial Distribution of Police Units in Korea (March 1919)

Province	No. of Bu, Gun	Military Police	Regular Police	Military + Regular	Military - Regular
Nationwide	232	1,061	735	1,796	326
Gyeonggi	22	107	113	220	-6
North Chungcheong	10	42	42	84	0
South Chungcheong	14	52	55	107	-3
North Jeolla	15	56	57	113	-1
South Jeolla	23	61	73	134	-12
North Gyeongsang	24	87	88	175	-1
South Gyeongsang	21	50	70	120	-20
Hwanghae	17	99	45	144	54
South Pyeongan	16	87	49	136	38
North Pyeongan	20	103	47	150	56
Gangwon	21	110	34	144	76
South Hamgyeong	17	115	29	144	86
North Hamgyeong	12	92	33	125	59

The southwestern coastal regions and nearby islands, on the other hand, were mostly covered by the regular police. Except for Hampyeong-gun in South Jeolla Province, the entire southwestern coast between Gimpo and Ganghwa in Gyeonggi Province down to Gangjin and Wando in South Jeolla Province fell under the regular police's jurisdiction. The regular police also controlled the islands off the coast with some exceptions.²⁷ Meanwhile, the military police controlled all the regions around the Amnok River and the Duman River that bordered Manchuria. The east and the south coasts of Korea displayed a mixture of districts under either the military police or the regular police. The inlands of the Korean peninsula's north-central areas were largely under the jurisdiction of the military police. The regular police mainly covered coastal and urban areas in the north-central region in addition to a few inland areas in North Pyeongan Province such as Taecheon, Bakcheon, Unsan, and Yeongbyeon. Compared to the north-central region, there was a heavy mixture of military and regular police presence at inlands belonging to the southern provinces.

Although the military police and the regular police each took charge of different districts, they jointly covered the following *bus* and *guns*: Gyeongseong-bu, Gaeseong, Suwon, Cheongju, Yeongdong, Daejeon, Jeonju, Daegu, Sacheon, Changwon, Tongyeong, Busan, Pyeongyang, Pyeongwon, Uiju, Chuncheon, Hamheung, and Gyeongseong.²⁸ And, in the case of Gaeseong, Daejeon, Changwon, and Tongyeong, they were basically under the military police's jurisdiction, but they each had two regular po-

²⁷ The islands with military police presence were Geogeum-do and Naro-do of Goheung-gun in South Jeolla Province; Geoje-do of Tongyeong-gun and Gadeok-do of Changwon-gun in South Gyeongsang Province. A military police substation was installed at Geogeum-do, Naro-do, and Gadeok-do while three substations were installed at Geoje-do.

²⁸ Only the *bus* and *guns* jointly covered by basic units of the military police and the regular police are listed here. Daegu, Busan, and Pyeongyang have therefore been excluded for being regular police districts where a military police unit was installed. Among the places where a provincial government building was located, a military police squad and a regular police station were both installed in seven *bus* or *guns* of Gyeongseong-bu, Cheongju, Daegu, Pyeongyang, Chuncheon, Hamheung, and Gyeongseong. The six *guns* with only a regular police station were Gongju, Jeonju, Gwangju, Jinju, Haeju, and Uiju.

Table 3. Military Police Stations and Regular Police Stations in Gyeonggi Province and Their Respective Districts

Type	Supervising Unit	Unit (Precinct)
Military Police	Gyeongseong Military Police	Gyeongseong Military Police Squad (Goyang, Yangju, Gapyeong), Yongsan Military Police Squad (Yongsan of Gyeongseong-bu), Yongin Military Police Squad (Suwon, Yongin, Gwangju), Yeosu Military Police Squad (Yeosu, Icheon, Yangpyeong), Yangju Military Police Squad (Yangju, Pocheon, Yeoncheon), Gaecheon Military Police Squad (Gaecheon, Jangdan, Paju)
Regular Police	Direct Control of the Government-General Police Bureau	Changdeok Palace Police Station, Gyeongseongbon-jeong Police Station, Gyeongseong Jongno Police Station (all within Gyeongseong-bu)
	Gyeonggi Province Police Bureau	Incheon Police Station (Incheon, Bucheon), Yeongdeungpo Police Station (Siheung), Suwon Police Station (Suwon), Jinwi Police Station (Jinwi), Anseong Police Station (Anseong), Gimpo Police Station (Gimpo), Ganghwa Police Station (Ganghwa), Gaecheon Police Station (Gaecheon)

lice units as well.²⁹ On the other hand, there was a military police substation in Suwon-gun even though the district was covered by the regular police.

Gyeongseong-bu, Cheongju, Yeongdong, Jeonju, Sacheon, Pyeongwon, Uiju, Chuncheon, Hamheung, and Gyeongseong were covered by both the military police and the regular police. Military police squads and regular police stations as well as smaller units of each force were separately installed in those ten areas.³⁰ Provincial government buildings were also

²⁹ The Gaecheon Police Station and the Nambon-jeong Police Box were in Gaecheon; the Daejeon Police Station and the Daejeon Market Police Substation were in Daejeon; the Jinhae Police Station and Gyeonghwa Police Substation were in Changwon; and the Tongyeong Police Station and Yokjido Police Substation were in Tongyeong.

³⁰ The number of basic military and regular police units simultaneously installed in each *bu* or *gun* are listed in the following table.

Basic Units	Gyeongseong-bu	Cheongju	Yeongdong	Jeonju	Sacheon	Pyeongwon	Uiju	Chuncheon	Hamheung	Gyeongseong
Military Police	6	5	3	4	3	4	7	5	7	13
Regular Police	50	6	4	8	3	4	5	3	5	4

located in some of those areas including Gyeongseong-bu, Cheongju, Jeonju, Uiju, Chuncheon, Hamheung, and Gyeongseong. It seems to me that the military police stayed in certain areas because they served as major bases for the Japanese occupation forces such as Gyeongseong-bu (Imperial Japanese Army's 20th division in Yongsan), Gyeongseong in North Hamgyeong (Imperial Japanese Army's 19th division in Nanam), and Hamheung in South Hamgyeong Province (74th infantry). Other areas such as Yeongdong, Sacheon, or Pyeongwon did not exhibit any distinct characteristics.

Meanwhile, there was a difference between military police squads and regular police stations in the range of districts they covered, as is the case with Gyeonggi Province. Before the movement in 1919, there were twenty-two *bus* and *guns* in Gyeonggi Province. Fifteen of them were covered by the military police while the regular police covered ten of them. The three areas where the military police and the regular police presence overlapped were Gyeongseong-bu, Suwon-gun, and Gaeseong-gun. While there were nearly twice as many regular police stations (eleven) compared to military police squads (six), each force maintained an identical number of basic units within Gyeonggi Province. Each police station was charged with covering a single *gun*, and each military police squad was expected to cover three *guns* except for the squad in Yongsan. Military police squads therefore tended to cover broader districts than regular police stations.

Hence, in terms of the areas the military police and the regular police each covered throughout the Korean peninsula, the regular police seem to have been mainly assigned to major cities or areas along railways. This trend remained unchanged in major cities, but the coverage of some areas along railways seems to have been transferred to the military police by 1919. Such a change is likely to be related to the fact that far more railroad construction was done than before Japan's forced occupation of Korea. The military police established a dense network in the northeastern regions of the Korean peninsula whereas it showed a presence equal to the regular police in regions south of Gyeonggi Province. While the northern regions bordering Manchuria all fell under the military police's jurisdiction, the southwestern coastal areas and islands were mostly covered by the regular

police. In some areas, the military police and the regular police were both present, but they basically covered separate districts although the districts military police squads covered tended to be larger than those assigned to regular police stations.

3. The Military Police and the Regular Police's Suppression of the March First Movement

1) An Overview of Protest Suppression

A movement for independence launched in major Korean cities on March 1, 1919 and soon spread nationwide. By late April, 212 out of 232 *buses* and *guns* on the Korean peninsula joined the movement so that approximately 1.1 million people participated in 1,214 protests.³¹ To suppress the movement, Japan not only mobilized the military police and the regular police but the army as well. And even during the movement, self-defense units were organized to subdue protests.³² Because the Japanese military police and regular police had each established a dense network across Korea by 1919, basic police units in direct contact with the lower social stratum came to stand at the forefront of suppressing protests when the independence movement occurred.

Although a total of 1,214 protests are known to have occurred during the March First Movement, a far greater number of incidents seem to have occurred at the time.³³ According to the data from the National Institute of Korean History, 2,297 out of the 2,464 incidents occurred domestically in 1919. The following table shows the different types of incidents that occurred around the time of the March First Movement.

³¹ Kim, "Samil undong gwa minjung," 362.

³² The National Institute of Korean History's March First Movement Database offers various details about specific incidents such as where they occurred, the forces involved in suppressing protests (regular police, military police, army), and sources including maps. The profile of each incident includes information about the type of weapons (firearms, swords, arson etc.) that were employed for suppression.

³³ Incidents registered in the March First Movement Database are basically classified into protest, business suspension, strike, class suspension, conspiracy, and other activities.

Table 4. Types of Incidents during the 1919 March First Movement

	Protest	Business Suspension	Strike	Class Suspension	Conspiracy	Other Activities	Total
Total	1,692	25	3	61	350	333	2,464
Domestic	1,593	25	2	58	320	299	2,297

Among the types of incidents, protests occupied the highest proportion at 68.7 percent, proving that protesting was indeed the most common form of resistance during the March First Movement. Conspiring was the second most frequent case type that amounted to 350 or 14.2 percent. This demonstrates that many attempts to launch a protest failed from being detected in advance. 333 incidents fell under the category of other activities which involved delivering letters or distributing the declaration of independence as well as other manifestos. Through sixty-one incidents, classes were boycotted or schools were closed, indicating how actively students took part in protests at the time. Merchants and laborers also participated in the movement in their own way by suspending their business or going on strike. 2,339 incidents, or 94.9 percent of all incidents at the time occurred over the two months, or March and April. To add further dimension to this study and compare it with previous studies, the 1,692 protests have been sorted by province in the following table.

The highest number of protests occurred in Gyeonggi Province (397), followed by Hwanghae Province (177), North Pyeongan Province (148), and South Gyeongsang Province (140). These numbers are somewhat dif-

Table 5. The Number of Protests in Each Province

Province	Gyeonggi	North Chung-cheong	South Chung-cheong	North Jeolla	South Jeolla	North Gyeong-sang	South Gyeong-sang
No. of Protests	397	84	117	44	36	118	140
Province	Gangwon	North Hamgyeong	South HamGyeong	Hwang-hae	North Pyeongan	South Pyeongan	Overseas
No. of Protests	79	58	83	177	148	112	99

ferent from previous findings. According to the data Kim Jin-bong amassed on the extent of the movement, a total of 1,214 protests occurred over March and April in 1919. The highest number of protests occurred in Gyeonggi Province (288), Hwanghae Province (137), South Gyeongsang Province (121), North Pyeongan Province (114), and South Pyeongan Province (85).³⁴ While the hierarchy remains identical for the provinces of Gyeonggi and Hwanghae, there are slight discrepancies for the provinces of North Pyeongan, South Pyeongan, and South Gyeongsang. In the case of North Gyeongsang Province, however, 118 protests listed in the table above is nearly twice as many as the number from previous studies, which was 62.

Generally speaking, the independence movement in 1919 was carried out peacefully for the most part, which can be gathered from the types of action protesters took at the time.³⁵ Among the 1,593 domestic protests, 1,146 have been classified as “Long Live Korean Independence (*manse*) protests” that involved chanting the word “*manse*,” an abbreviation of ‘Long Live Korean Independence.’ This means that 71.9 percent of protests in Korea involved chanting. Adding the number of mass outcries to the number of *manse* protests brings the total of non-violent protests up to 1,287, or 80.8 percent of all domestic protests. On the contrary, the number of violent protests, related to vandalism, assault, murder or arson, amounted to 252, or 15.8 percent of all protests.³⁶

Meanwhile, the military police and the regular police’s suppression of the March First Movement can be examined through the methods of suppression they employed.³⁷ Among the 1,593 protests that occurred in Korea, 269, or 16.9 percent of them seem to have suffered suppression.³⁸

³⁴ Kim, “Samil undong gwa minjung,” 362.

³⁵ The six types of action listed in incident profiles were *manse* protest, mass outcry, vandalism, assault, murder, and arson.

³⁶ The type of action was not listed in fifty-four incidents (3.4%).

³⁷ Incident profiles listed five types of weapons that were employed for protest suppression including firearms, swords, arson, vandalism, and other weapons.

³⁸ A total of 271 incidents involved suppression, and only two took place outside Korea.

Table 6. Methods of Suppression by the Japanese Police and Army

	R	R+S	R+S+V+A	R+V+A	R+S+O	R+O	S	S+O	V	V+A	O	Total
Military Police	141	7	0	0	0	2	6	0	0	0	1	157
Regular Police	74	10	1	1	1	1	12	1	1	0	3	105
Army	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6
Total	220	17	1	1	1	3	19	1	1	1*	4	269

- R (Rifle), S (Sword), V (Vandalism), A (Arson), O (Other Weapons)

- Sources with the term "policeman" have been classified as pertinent to the regular police.

* The suppressor in the case of vandalism and arson remains unclear.

Japanese suppression appears to have been initiated regardless of the type of action Koreans took to protest. 127 out of the 1,287 non-violent protests that involved chanting or mass outcries experienced suppression. As for the 252 incidents in hostile modes of protest, 137 of them met with suppression. In 54 cases of suppression, it remains unclear as to what kind of action Koreans took to protest. These numbers illustrate that Japan mobilized force to suppress Korean protesters regardless of whether the protesters' actions were peaceful or not. The table below features the methods of suppression each force employed against 269 protests in Korea.

Among the 269 incidents of suppression, 220, or 81.8 percent of them purely involved direct firing of rifles and by including the twenty-three incidents that accompanied sword stabbing, vandalism, and arson, 90.3 percent involved firing of rifles in varied ways. So, it is safe to say that almost all incidents of armed suppression involved rifles. Swords were used to a far lesser degree than rifles. Only 19 incidents involved the sole use of swords and the number of incidents in which swords were used in combination with other weapons was 39. Swords appear to have been employed in incidents where the military police and the regular police were entangled with a throng of protesters. Only six incidents of suppression involved weapons other than rifles or swords. These proportions suggest that the military police and the regular police mostly maintained a distance from protesters when suppressing them and fired their rifles whenever necessary. 157 incidents, or 59.9 percent was carried out by the military po-

lice; 105 incidents, or 40.1 percent was carried out by the regular police. The proportion of units and personnel involved was 59.6 for the military police and 40.4 percent for the regular police, showing that both forces contributed similarly to the suppression of Korean protesters.³⁹

The most notable aspect of the above analysis pertains to the use of firearms for suppression. 243 out of the 269 incidents of suppression involved the firing of rifles. This mainly seems to have been caused by the greater amount of force rifles and the small size of units assigned to each region for the purpose of maintaining public order. As previously mentioned, any unit, assigned to a particular area, typically had five members, which far outnumbered the hundreds and thousands of people that gathered to protest. Small units of policemen therefore must have had to resort to the use of firearms available against large numbers of protesters.

On the other hand, there appears to be far fewer records on the use of swords or other weapons. Nevertheless, quite a few instances of suppression did in fact involve the use of swords or clubs. One example would be the case of Gu Nak-seo who was stabbed to death by the police in Anguk-dong, Seoul. There have also been reports about having been stabbed or clubbed in Seoncheon, North Pyeongan Province. While working as a missionary in Pyeongyang, Sadie N. Welbon described, in a letter, how the Japanese military police and regular police used rifles and swords to subdue Koreans.⁴⁰ There are plenty of other historical sources to prove that the Japanese military police and regular police simultaneously used firearms, swords, and other weapons such as clubs together in order to suppress Koreans during the movement. Reports about the movement's suppression at

³⁹ Below is a comparison of the number of suppressed manse protests as well as the number of military and regular police units and personnel involved.

	No. of Suppressed Protests	No. of Units Involved	No. of Personnel Involved
Military Police	157 (59.9%)	1,110 (59.6%)	7,978 (59.6%)
Regular Police	105 (40.1%)	751 (40.4%)	5,402 (40.4%)
Total	262	1,861	13,380

⁴⁰ Lee Jeong-eun, *Ilbon jegukjuui neun 3.1 undong eul eotteoke tanap haenna?* [How Did Japanese Imperialism Suppress the March First Movement?] (Cheonan: Hanguk dongnip undongsa yeonguso, 2018), 84-96.

the time therefore seem to have been focused on the use of firearms and neglected to mention incidents in which swords or other weapons were employed. Other circumstances also suggest that various details were frequently omitted from certain reports about the March First Movement's suppression. The reports indicate that a total of 159 protests during the movement directly caused deaths, but the circumstances of suppression remain ambiguous in 23 cases. Although reports do state the total number of deaths, they lack details on how Japan responded to protests, triggering the suspicion that many cases of suppression may have been omitted from such reports.

The predominant use of firearms to suppress protests is likely to have brought devastating consequences for Koreans. In fact, 136 of the 269 incidents of suppression resulted in deaths. Except for the three incidents in which swords caused deaths and one incident in which a weapon other than a rifle or sword caused deaths, firearms were employed through 132 incidents of suppression and caused deaths.

Table 6 shows that there were relatively fewer incidents where the Japanese army solely engaged in the armed suppression of independence protests. According to the table, the Japanese army was only involved in five incidents of firearm discharge and one incident of sword use. These numbers, however, do not mean that the Japanese Army played a passive role in suppressing the independence movement. Instead of conducting independent operations, the army often collaborated with the military police and the regular police to suppress protests. Whenever the military or regular police found it difficult to suppress protests on their own, they would turn to the army for reinforcements. The Japanese army was hence involved in 108 of the 269 incidents of protest suppression. The following table offers a summary of how the Japanese army joined forces with the Japanese military police and regular police to suppress the protests.

While the military police showed a high percentage of solely engaging in protest suppression, the regular police cooperated with the Japanese army in many cases, which amounted to 102 incidents, or 38 percent of the 269 incidents of protest suppression. This suggests that the Japanese army primarily offered reinforcements upon the military or the regular police's

Table 7. Cooperation between Japanese Army, Military Police, and Regular Police

	Military police	Military police+ Army	Military police+ Regular police	Regular police	Regular police+ Army	Regularpolice+ Military police + Army	Army	Total
No. of incidents	117	40	1	42	58	4	6	269

request, most likely because it basically served a purpose different from the police that was mainly responsible for maintaining public order. The military police, on the other hand, was most active in responding to protests based on the fact that it conducted far more independent operations instead of seeking reinforcements from the Japanese army.

The frequency of deaths during suppression also hints at how heavily the military police was committed to suppressing protests. Among 117 incidents in which the military police solely engaged in protest suppression, 61 incidents directly led to deaths. This contrasts with the 10 out of 42 incidents that resulted in deaths when the regular police were solely engaged in protest suppression. Even considering the fact that military police had twice as many personnel than the regular police, still, the proportional difference between them in causing deaths implies that the military police were relatively more aggressive in suppressing protesters.

Another noteworthy aspect is that the military police and the regular police joined forces on only five occasions of protest suppression. Those five incidents mainly occurred when the regular police failed at suppression or were absent during the outburst of a protest, which prompted military policemen or Japanese soldiers nearby to intervene. It seems extraordinary that there were such few cases of cooperation between the military police and the regular police at a time when 1,824 military and regular police units were available across the Korean peninsula to deal with 1,593 protests during the March First Movement. The reason why cooperation was rare might be due to the fact that their districts were completely separated, which made it challenging for any of them to entirely abandon their own districts to deal with protests that were taking place simultaneously in different areas.

Hence, in terms of inter-organizational cooperation, the military po-

lice and the regular police each cooperated with the Japanese army on individual occasions to suppress independence protests, far more frequently than the number of instances in which the military police and the regular police cooperated with each other. Apart from the fact that districts were strictly divided between the two organizations, the military police had a considerably larger number of units and personnel at its disposal, by which means it was capable of suppressing more protests on its own than the regular police.

2) Specific Cases of Protest Suppression

The protest at Songdo-myeon, Gaeseong-gun, Gyeonggi Province on March 3, 1919 can be considered a rare case of cooperation between the Japanese military police and the regular police for the purpose of protest suppression. The students from Holston Girl's High School, a mission school in Songdo-myeon, Gaeseong-gun, took to the streets around 2 p.m. on March 3, singing hymns and songs yearning for Korea's independence. As commoners as well as students from Songdo Higher Common School joined the protest, the number of protesters amounted to 1,000. Meanwhile, another crowd of 1,500 launched a separate protest led by Yi Hyeong-sun, a resident of Namsan-jeong in Songdo-myeon. The protesters continued to wave the Korean flag and chant the slogan of 'Long Live Korean Independence' after sunset and went as far as to burn the Japanese flag and attack a regular police box. This protest carried on until nearly midnight.⁴¹

At the time, Gaeseong-gun was mostly under the military police's jurisdiction. Eight substations belonging to the Gaeseong Military Police Squad were installed throughout the Gaeseong-gun.⁴² Songdo-myeon, however, was under the Gaeseong Police Station's jurisdiction. Songdo-myeon, where the district office of Gaeseong-gun was located, was further

⁴¹ Lee Jeong-eun and Kim Jeong-in, *Gungnae 3.1 undong* [The March First Movement in Korea] 1 - Central to Northern Regions (Cheonan: Hanguk dongnip undongsa yeonguso, 2009), 20.

⁴² "Revision of Military Police Command Notice No. 1 (Notice No. 2, August 1, 1917)," *Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo* 1512, August 17, 1917. The Gaeseong Military Police Squad covered Gaeseong-gun, Jangdan-gun, and Paju-gun.

divided into thirteen *jeongs*, nine of which were directly covered by the Gaeseong Police Station while four were covered by the police box at Nambon-jeong.⁴³ The protest on March 3 took place at Gaeseong-cup, a district controlled by the regular police. This is why the regular police initially responded when the protest occurred. The regular police took the female students over to a police station to try to interrogate them, and when other protesters rushed to the police station, policemen did their best to stop them. Thanks to the efforts of the police station chief and county governor, the protest led by the female students finally began to die down.⁴⁴

The other protest developed until after sunset a hostile streak as protesters threw stones and broke the windows of the Nambon-jeong Police Box.⁴⁵ With a personnel of about five at the police box and no more than sixty at a nearby police station, their combined forces would not have been enough to handle a crowd of more than two thousand protesters.⁴⁶ To disperse them, the regular police requested military aid from the railroad guards that dispatched a platoon of twenty-seven soldiers.⁴⁷ It ultimately

⁴³ "Government-General Notice No. 197 (August 26, 1918)," *Joseon chongdokbu gwanbo*, Extra edition, August 27, 1918.

⁴⁴ "Important No. 5725 On the Independence Movement 5 (March 4, 1919), from the Higher Police Division of the Government-General Police Bureau to the Governor-General Hasegawa Yoshimichi (長谷川好道), etc.," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-7.

⁴⁵ Regarding the police unit that attacked at the time, some rulings indicate that both a military police squad and the police station were attacked (*Ruling on Shin Dong-yun*, Gyeongseong District Court, April 11, 1919). However, other rulings (*Ruling on Seventeen Defendants including Han Jong-seok*, Gyeongseong District Court, May 6, 1919) as well as multiple documents in the collection *Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* note that a regular police box was attacked.

⁴⁶ According to the Korean Statistical Information Service's web portal, 117 people worked for the Government-General Police Bureau as of 1919. Each province had a police bureau that oversaw police stations within the province. As of 1925, 61 people worked for the Gaeseong Police Station. For more information, refer to Misa Daizo, *Taishō 14-nen Chōsen keisatsu shokuinroku* [1925 Joseon Police Staff Directory] (Chōsen keisatsu shinbunsha, 1925), 37-38. There were 2,726 regular police units as of 1925, which was 865 more than at the time of the March First Movement when there were 1,861 units. The total number of regular police personnel was 18,458 in 1925, which was 5,078 more than 13,380 at the time of the March First Movement. The proportional increase in police personnel was slightly less than that in police units.

⁴⁷ Confidential No. 102 Article 18/Morning Special No. 12/No. 66, "Telegram: Protests and Dispatch Status in Suan, Uiju, Gaeseong, Anju, and Hamheung (March 4, 1919) from

took the combined forces of regular policemen and railroad guards to terminate the protest without any serious clashes with the protesters.

What seems rather unusual is the fact that the military police did not take part in subduing the protests. To be sure, Songdo-myeon did not fall under its district; even, when the regular police found themselves compelled urgently to request military aid, the military police squad at Daehwa-jeong, where the Gaeseong Regular Police Station was also located, took no action at all. Moreover, the regular police reached out to the railroad guards instead of the military police, which proved to be effective in dispersing the protesters.

The case of Songdo-myeon reveals a certain divide between the military police and the regular police, but that did not necessarily apply to all areas on the Korean peninsula. An example of cooperation between the military police, regular police, and army can be found in the joint suppression of a protest that took place on March 19 at Yeonghae-myeon in Yeongdeok-gun, North Gyeongsang Province.⁴⁸ The protest in Yeonghae-myeon actually began a day earlier on March 18 at a marketplace where approximately three thousand people gathered to chant the slogan 'Long Live Korean Independence.' After marching around the market, the protesters headed to a police substation to urge the policemen there to join the protest. And by the time the protesters marched again around the market and returned to the substation, they were ordered to be disbanded by the substation's Japanese chief. The protesters refused to follow the substation chief's orders and when he tried to confiscate the Korean flags in their hands, the agitated protesters forced their way into the substation. The

Utsunomiya Tarō (宇都宮太郎), Commander of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea, to Tanaka Giichi (田中義一), Japanese Minister of the Army," 1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon 7-1.

⁴⁸ For further details on the *manse* protest in Yeonghae-myeon and its suppression, refer to Kim Hee-gon et al., *Yeongdeok ui dongnipsa* [A History of Independence Movements in Yeongdeok] (Yeongdeok: Yeongdeok-gun, 2003), 21-25. While previous studies have been based on rulings and some public records, no sources directly supporting descriptions on the development and suppression of *manse* protests have so far been presented. This paper seeks to reconstruct and examine *manse* protests and their suppression based on administrative sources.

chief of the Yeongdeok Police Station arrived at the scene with four of his subordinates to help suppress the protest but ended up being disarmed and confined. As the protest showed no sign of mitigation, the officer of the Eightieth Infantry Regiment came to aid with seventeen men under his command and cooperated with the military police to suppress the protesters. In the process of suppression, eight protesters were killed, sixteen were injured, and 170 were brought before the court.⁴⁹

Yeongdeok-gun was under the regular police's jurisdiction with seven substations overseen by the Yeongdeok Police Station. Yeongdeok-gun was divided into nine *myeons* at that time thus there was a police unit at nearly every *myeon*. The Yeonghae Police Substation was charged with the task of maintaining public order in Yeonghae-myeon.⁵⁰ The substation, however, appears to have lost its function during the protest on March 18. The five or so policemen on duty at the substation are likely to have been incapable of subduing a crowd of more than one thousand protesters.⁵¹ The substation's failure prompted the Yeongdeok Police Station to step in. The police station's chief took four policemen and headed to Yeonghae-

⁴⁹ Kim et al., *Yeongdeok ui dongnipsa*, 21-25; Kim Jin-ho, Park Yi-jun, and Park Cheol-gyu, *Gungnae 3.1 undong* [The March First Movement in Korea] 2 - *Southern Regions* (Cheonan: Hanguk dongnip undongsa yeonguso, 2009), 318-19; Kim Hee-gon, *Gyeongbuk dongnip undongsa* [A History of Independence Movements in North Gyeongsang Province] 3 - *March First Movement* (Gyeongsang Bukdo, 2013), 405-16.

⁵⁰ The Yeonghae Police Substation seems to have covered Yeonghae-myeon and Chuksan-myeon. Chuksan-myeon and Obo-myeon were the only *myeons* in Yeongdeok-gun without a regular police substation. Adjacent to Yeonghae-myeon, Chuksan-myeon used to be part of Yeonghae-gun before administrative districts became reshuffled while Obo-myeon was previously under Yeongdeok-gun's jurisdiction.

⁵¹ At the time, there was one Japanese police chief, one Japanese police officer, and three Korean police assistants at the Yeonghae Police Substation, which coincides with the previous section's analysis indicating that each basic police unit operated with an average of five people. The Japanese authorities estimated that the number of protesters amounted to around one thousand. Confidential No. 102 Article 83/Morning Special No. 43/No. 122, "Telegram: Protests and Dispatch Status in Yeonghae and Andong (March 19, 1919) from Utsunomiya Tarō, Commander of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea, to Tanaka Giichi, Japanese Minister of the Army," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-1. Meanwhile, trial materials noted that the number of protesters was two thousand. *Ruling on Ninety-six Defendants including Kim Se-yeong* (Sentences No. 786-823 of 1919), Daegu District Court, June 5, 1919.

myeon,⁵² but they also became disarmed and confined.⁵³ In other words, the regular police completely failed at suppressing the protest for Korean independence on its own.

The Japanese army and military police thereafter became involved in the protest's suppression. Instead of requesting for a smaller unit's support, the military police turned to the Pohang Military Police Squad. Upon receiving the urgent call for aid, the squad's commander took seven military policemen⁵⁴ and left for Yeonghae. Uljin and Yangyang to the north of Yeongdeok and Yeongil to its south were the military police's jurisdiction while Cheongsong to the west of Yeongdeok was controlled by the regular police. The Pohang Military Police Squad was based in Yeongil. Yeongyang and Cheongsong were mountainous areas thus the military police there would not have been able to respond quickly. Although Uljin was relatively closer to Yeonghae-myeon, the Pyeonghae Military Police Outstation was unable to assist because it had already dispatched its forces to suppress a different independence protest that occurred on March 18 at

⁵² A protest took place in Yeongdeok-myeon on March 18. Hundreds participated, but violence was not involved unlike the protest in Yeonghae-myeon. The protest in Yeongdeok-myeon was immediately suppressed by the Japanese regular police, which is probably why policemen in the area were able to offer support in suppressing the protest at Yeonghae-myeon.

⁵³ "Telegram (March 18, 1919) from Suzuki Takashi (鈴木隆), Governor of North Gyeongsang Province, to Yamagata Isaburō (山根伊三郎), Inspector General of Political Affairs at the Government-General," in the *1919 Secretary of State Report on the Riots* 7; Confidential No. 102 Article. 86/ No. 39, "Telegram: Protests and Dispatch Status in Korea between March 17 and 18 (March 19, 1919) from Kojima Michihirō (兒島惣次郎), Commander of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea, to Tanaka Giichi, Japanese Minister of the Army," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-1; Confidential No. 102 Article. 94/ No. 8, "Telegram: Protests and Dispatch Status in the Provinces of Gyeongsang and North Hamgyeong between March 18 and 19 (March 20, 1919)" from Kojima Michihirō, Commander of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea, to Tanaka Giichi, "Japanese Minister of the Army," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-1; Confidential No. 102 article. 98, "Telegram: Protests and Dispatch Status in the Provinces of Gyeongsang and North Hamgyeong between March 18 and 19 (March 20, 1919)" from Yamanashi Hanzō (山梨半造), Japanese Vice Minister of the Army, to the Senior Aide-de-Camp to the Japanese Emperor," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-1.

⁵⁴ Confidential No. 102 article. 86/ No. 39, "Telegram: Protests and Dispatch Status in Korea between March 17 and 18 (March 19, 1919) from Kojima Michihirō, Commander of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea, to Tanaka Giichi, Japanese Minister of the Army," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-1.

Byeonggok-myeon of Yeongdeok-gun.⁵⁵

Another noteworthy aspect of this case was that the military police dispatched policemen that belonged to a squad instead of a smaller unit. In Yeongil-gun, an independence protest occurred at Pohang-myeon for three days between March 10 and 12 and another protest occurred at Cheongha-myeon on March 22.⁵⁶ Since no protests occurred in Yeongil-gun in between March 18 and March 22, the military police there could have spared personnel for protest suppression in other areas. Still, military policemen from a squad were dispatched instead of those from a substation closer to Yeongdeok.

Apart from requesting for the dispatch of military police, the provincial governor also requested the dispatch of forces from the Eightieth Infantry Regiment stationed in Daegu. The infantry regiment subsequently sent twenty-one troops via automobile to Pohang where they transferred to a steamboat to reach Yeongdeok.⁵⁷ The troops from the 80th Infantry Regiment arrived at Yeonghae around 4 p.m. on March 19. They joined forces with the military police already there, firing blanks to threaten the protesters. When the protest showed no signs of dying down, the troops switched to live ammunition; then, the protesters dispersed and the Japanese were released.⁵⁸ The protest's suppression left one death and fourteen injured.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Kim et al., *Yeongdeok ui dongnipsa*, 215-17.

⁵⁶ Kim, *Gyeongbuk dongnip undongsa* 3, 447-53.

⁵⁷ Confidential Morning Briefing No. 302, "Latest Report on the Riots (March 19, 1919), The Headquarters of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-7.

⁵⁸ "Telegram (March 19, 1919) from Suzuki Takashi, Governor of North Gyeongsang Province, to Yamagata Isaburo, Inspector General of Political Affairs at the Government-General," the 1919 Secretary of State Report on the Riots 7; Confidential No. 102, Article 89, and Morning Special No. 47/145, "Telegram: Protests and Dispatch Status in Korea on March 19 (March 20, 1919) from Utsunomiya Tarō, Commander of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea, to Tanaka Giichi, Japanese Minister of the Army," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-1.

⁵⁹ Confidential Morning Briefing No. 311, "Latest Report (No. 37) on the Riots (March 20, 1919), The Headquarters of the Japanese Army Stationed in Korea," *1919-1921 Documents Related to Riots in Joseon* 7-7. In actuality, more lives seem to have been lost through the suppression of the manse protest in Yeonghae-myeon, leaving eight dead and sixteen injured. Kim, *Gyeongbuk dongnip undongsa* 3, 414.

A few inferences can be drawn from the case involving Yeonghae-myeon. First, basic police units with minimum personnel were incapable of handling large crowds of active Korean protesters. It would have been virtually impossible for the five policemen at the Yeonghae Police Substation to suppress thousands of protesters. Second, the size of reinforcements offered by units within the same area was insufficient. The substations nearby most likely operated with a similar personnel size, which would have made it difficult for them to provide reinforcements. Even the Yeongdeok Police Station only managed to spare a team of five to help subdue the protest in Yeonghae-myeon. Third, while the military police dispatched seven policemen as reinforcements, the Japanese army provided a much larger reinforcements of twenty-one troops from the Eightieth Infantry Regiment. The protesters are likely to have found the troops' arrival as threatening as their use of live ammunition. Fourth, the mode of transportation reinforcements indicates that traveling by boat was the quickest way to access Yeonghae-myeon. The 80th Infantry Regiment traveled via automobile between Daegu and Pohang but took a steamboat from Pohang to Yeongdeok. It is therefore highly likely that the policemen from the Pohang Military Police Squad also took a steamboat to reach Yeongdeok. The fact that the reinforcements chose to travel by sea demonstrates that it must have been faster than taking the coastal road available to the north of Pohang-myeon at the time.

These cases abovementioned reveal each police organization's capacity to deal with suppression and their relationship with one another. The regular police requested military support to suppress the protest at Songdo-myeon on March 3, but the military police stationed nearby did not take part in the suppression. This suggests that the jurisdiction was rather strictly divided between the military police and the regular police. On the other hand, when the regular police failed to suppress the protest at Yeonghae-myeon on March 19, the military police and Japanese troops joined forces to provide reinforcements. Hence, depending on temporal circumstances and actual developments in individual protests, the Japanese army, military police, and regular police sometimes would move beyond their own jurisdictional divisions and cooperate to suppress the anti-Japanese Korean pro-

tests in 1919. The case involving Yeonghae-myeon shows that the Japanese army was capable of providing more substantial reinforcements than the Japanese military and regular police.

Conclusion

Utilizing some primary sources of the March First Movement Database, available through the National Institute of Korean History, this paper explores the pattern in which the military police and the regular police reacted to the nationwide anti-Japanese protest for Korean independence, or the March First Movement in 1919. The military police and the regular police were operating a dense network across the Korean peninsula with 177 units allocated across 232 *bu* and *guns*. This meant that two police stations were installed for almost every three *guns*. The number of military or regular police units per *bu* or *gun* was 7.7 on average, which meant that such units were installed at nearly every district down to the *myeon*-level. Although the network itself was dense, however, the basic units were left with a minimal number of personnel of around five people. It is the Japanese military police, superior to the regular police in every respect, that took the lead in the maintenance of public order and this control system until the movement.

The Japanese military police and regular police displayed further differences in terms of placement. The regular police controlled most of the twelve major cities classified as a *bu* according to the administrative system at that time. The regular police also controlled most regions except for the southwestern coastal regions and some islands. Generally speaking, in the regions south of Gyeonggi Province, the military police and the regular police each had a similar presence in number even though there were more regular police districts in some areas of South Jeolla Province and South Gyeongsang Province. As for the areas along railways, the military police and the regular police occupied similar proportions in terms of the distribution of their forces. Nonetheless, the military police did control vast regions that included the whole areas bordering Manchuria and most parts of Korea's central and northern inlands. Besides, there were more military po-

lice districts in Hwanghae Province and the northern half of Gangwon Province. The jurisdiction of military and regular police was strictly divided so that they only coexisted in ten out of the 232 *buses* and *guns* nationwide.

During the March First Movement, a total of 2,464 incidents occurred and 1,692 of them were protests. Within a span of two months between March and April 1919, 2,339 protests occurred; this figure accounted for 94.9 percent of all incidents during the period. The statistic indicates that protesting was the predominant mode of resistance. Among the 1,593 protests that took place solely on the Korean peninsula, the greatest number of protests occurred in Gyeonggi Province, Hwanghae Province, North Pyeongan Province, and South Gyeongsang Province. Under these circumstances, most armed suppression involved firearms on the grounds that 243 out of 269 incidents involved the use of firearms. There were only 19 instances of suppression using swords, not firearms, in the the combined operation of the military police and the regular police. This disparity in choice of weapon indicates that the military police and the regular police often fired their rifles from a distance in order to repress the protests with the overwhelmingly large number of the anti-Japanese protesters.

In terms of the method of suppression as above, this paper sheds light on a pattern in which the military police and the regular police, whose jurisdictions had been strictly separated from each other, did cooperate with each other against the March First Movement. The initial response to the protest in Songdo-myeon, Gyeonggi Province demonstrated the regular police's relationship with the military police. To suppress the protest in the very beginning stage of the movement, the regular police, taking charge of the local security of Songdo-myeon, reached out to the railroad guards for military aid. And although the Gaeseong Military Police Squad was stationed at Songdo-myeon at the time, it did not assist in suppressing the protest. This instance reveals how hesitant the military police and the regular police were to cross over into each other's district.

But, the military police and the regular police, as confronted with the upsurge of the movement throughout the Korean Peninsula, would join forces with each other. And, when the cooperation was not available, they would

join forces even with the Japanese army to suppress the protests. The protest at Yeonghae-myeon, in North Gyeongsang Province on March 19 exemplified this development. At Yeonghae-myeon, the regular police reached out to the military police for support; the provincial governor simultaneously requested reinforcements from the Japanese army. The protest was ultimately suppressed as the military police and the dispatched troops joined forces. That is to say, depending on how a protest unfolded, the colonial police apparatuses would jointly engage in protest suppression beyond jurisdiction.

With the focus on the structure and the geographic placement of military and regular police units, this paper examines the density of their network in different areas, as well as the circumstances of individual units, and reveals the way the colonial apparatuses reacted to the Movement. This approach will enable us to take a closer look at the actual modes of suppression by the military police and the regular police, the frequency of each agency's involvement in suppression, and the cases of simultaneous dispatch by the two public police organizations. By so doing, we can have a better understanding of the pattern in which the two organizations tried to subdue the nationwide anti-Japanese resistance and these two oppressive agencies made a difference to each other while collaborating with each other.

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