



## **Imperatives of Culture (Korean Classics Library: Historical Materials)**

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*Imperatives of Culture* is a landmark in bringing important Korean texts from the colonial period into the English-speaking world. Intellectuals and writers who were central to debates over Korean identity and culture—which in the 1930s and 1940s the Japanese were trying to eradicate—illuminate with insight and often brilliance the dilemmas of an ancient nation captured by a curiously ‘late’ (or late-coming) twentieth-century imperialism. These essays also cast their reflection down to the present, as divided Korea enters its seventh decade. This book rewards multiple readings and will be most useful in the classroom.” —Bruce Cumings, Chair, Department of History, University of Chicago

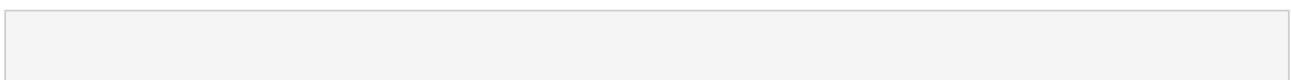
“Here, finally, for the first time in English we have in one volume the signature voices of many of Korea’s pioneering modernists of the colonial era in their own words and in all their stunning diversity and complexity. Together with the excellent introductions that accompany the original essays, these translations are a gift to all seeking to understand Korea in the larger context of twentieth-century modernity.” —Carter J. Eckert, Yoon Se Young Professor of Korean History, Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University

This volume contains translations—many appearing for the first time in the English language—of major literary, critical, and historical essays from the colonial period (1910–1945) in Korea. Considered representative of the debates among Korean and between Korean and Japanese intellectuals of the colonial period, these texts shed light on relatively unexplored aspects of colonial intellectual life and take part in current conversations around the nature of the colonial experience and its effects on post-liberation Korean society and culture.

The essays, each preceded by a scholarly introduction giving necessary historical and biographical context, represent a diverse spectrum of ideological positions and showcase the complexity of intellectual life and scholarship in colonial Korea. They allow new perspectives on an important period in Korean history, a period that continues to inform political, social, and cultural life in crucial ways across East Asia. The translations also provide an important counterpoint to the imperial archive from the perspective of the colonized and take part in the ongoing reevaluation of the colonial period and “colonial modernity” in both Western and East Asian scholarship.

*Imperatives of Culture* is intended in part for the increasing number of undergraduate and graduate students in Korean studies as well as for those engaged in the study of East Asia as a whole and a general, educated audience with interests in modern Korea and East Asia. The essays have been carefully selected and introduced in ways that open up avenues for comparison with analyses of colonial literature and history in other national contexts.

**Christopher P. Hanscom** is an assistant professor in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles. **Walter K. Lew** is the author of *Treadwinds: Poems and Intermedia Texts* and a study on the work of Theresa Hak Kyung Cha. **Youngju Ryu** is an assistant professor in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan.



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