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BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION AND THE KOREAN WAR: A PRELIMINARY LOOK

J. E. HOARE

There are a number of books on the subject of the effects of the two great wars of this century on British memory, and other books have dealt with subjects such as propaganda on and deception as they concerned both the enemy and the home front. No such studies exist on the Korean war, though later conflicts involving Britain, especially Suez in 1956 and the Falklands incident of 1982, have attracted a lot of attention. This paper, while by no means the definitive study of British public opinion and the Korean war, can serve as a preliminary look at the subject, especially in the early part of the conflict.

It is a subject which has long held an interest for me. I can remember as a small child becoming aware of the world outside my immediate family on two occasions. The first was a radio report of the death of Tommy Handley, a well-known British comedian, who had come to prominence during the Second World War. This was in 1949. The next was an account, again on the radio, of a refugee column in Korea, probably in late 1950 or early 1951. I can now no longer be sure who the reporter was but, having read his accounts of the war and heard extracts from some of his broadcasts, I suspect that it was René Cutforth, who went to Korea in late 1950 as the BBC's special reporter.¹ Interestingly enough, in the light of some of the evidence below, I have no memory of any

newspaper coverage of the Korean war, though I do remember the *Daily Mirror* headline "Whose finger on the trigger?" used in the 1951 general election campaign.

That radio broadcast sank into my subconscious, only to be revived by going to Korea and beginning to take an interest in Korean-British relations. However, there seems to be a general lack of material to help trace British public attitudes to the Korean war. There have always been a number of assertions about what the British people thought about Korea, some of which are mentioned below, but there seems to be nothing which records private views rather than public claims. Then almost by chance, I came across a useful source of original material which, so far as I know, has never been used for Korea. This material forms part of the Mass-Observation Archive at the University of Sussex. I am grateful to the trustees of the Archive for permission to use material from the collection, and to the archivist, Dorothy Sheridan, for help in understanding the origins and organisation of the material.

Mass-Observation was the brainchild of a group of young radicals in the mid-1930s, which sought to conduct a massive investigation into all aspects of British social life. Its project caught the imagination of many prominent social scientists in Britain, mostly of a left-wing persuasion. It published a series of books some of which have been reprinted in recent years. However, the high hopes of the early years were perhaps not fully realised, and although a great amount of material was collected, not all of it was published before the outbreak of war in 1939. For the duration of the war, most of Mass-Observation's efforts were devoted to work for the Ministry of Information or other government departments. Social science investigation began again in 1945, but from the late 1940s the organisation gradually became more and more an ordinary market research organisation. In 1970, the Mass-Observation papers were brought to the University of Sussex, and the present Archive established.²

The collections relating to Korea consist of one box of papers, which together make up four files, and which were the raw material which Mass Observation collected in the period July-October 1950. They relate, therefore, only to the early stages of the Korean war, but are nevertheless a useful guide to public opinion at a number of important points. In addition, there is one set of "Directive Replies"—for January and February 1951. The four files record the views of people selected at random, while the directive replies are answers provided on a regular basis by a volunteer panel, a rather more self-selected group. It is not clear if any of this material was ever used. In addition, I have looked at some Foreign Office material, now at the Public Record Office at Kew, a selection of BBC archive material held at Caversham, and a wide selection of memoirs, diaries and other published material. I have also sampled some contemporary newspapers and magazines. There is clearly much more of this type of material available, and it is also possible that other collections of raw material, perhaps covering the whole Korean war period may be found, for example in the Central Office of Information papers. Published studies on the Korean war using British government archival material, however, do not show many signs of this.

The outbreak of the Korean war must have come as a considerable surprise to most people in Britain in June 1950. Korea was not a place which was very well-known, and there were few traditional links with the country. Such links as there were had been broken by the Pacific war and organisations that had a history of involvement with Korea, such as the Anglican Church and the Salvation Army, were just in the process of re-establishing ties. The Korean war dealt a further blow. Outside the missionary organisations and, perhaps, art circles, there were no British scholars of Korea. Within British government circles, Korean "expertise" was confined to a few members of the former Japan Consular Service, who had served in Korea briefly and who tended to see the

country through Japanese prejudices. There were few British visitors and no British newspaper had a resident correspondent in the country. There had been some British-authored books about Korea, but it was hard to find any dated later than 1930 dealing with political issues; in 1950, the most recent British publication was *Old Korea* (London, 1946) by the artist Elizabeth Keith. It was a charming publication, but it related to a period several years before the Pacific war and carefully avoided contemporary issues. One or two articles had appeared in journals such as Chatham House's *The World Today*, and Korea featured briefly in the same organisation's *Survey of International Relations* and *The Annual Register*. But that was all. For up-to-date information, readers had to turn to an American scholar, George McCune, whose posthumous *Korea Today* appeared just as the war broke out.

From these various sources, a well-read person might have been aware that Korea was a possible trouble spot in Asia, and that there had emerged two separate regimes following the division of the country to effect the surrender of Japanese forces in 1945. British newspapers had reported that there had been sporadic border clashes between a communist north and a free south. British officials watched Korea, of course, though as a minor drama compared to the great events elsewhere in Asia. The Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, travelling to Colombo early in 1950, must have surprised the officers and men of HMS "Kenya" and his own officials when he warned them that in Korea—out of the news for many months—there was a precarious situation which could lead to war. But Korea was a long way away, and there were many other international issues which took precedence in most people's minds. To take the years 1948-50, for example, there were active crises over Berlin, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Palestine/Israel, India/Pakistan, China, Netherlands/Indonesia and Malaya. In many of these, Britain had a direct and clearly defined interest and British troops were involved. Add to these a variety of

domestic crises, and it seems fair to conclude that few in Britain would have dissented from the opinion of the then head of the Far Eastern Department in the Foreign Office that Korea was "not worth the bones of a single British grenadier."³

Initial coverage of the war showed up the past neglect of Korea. In its first reports on the fighting, *The Times* carried maps which showed most Korean towns with Japanese place-names, though these had been quickly abandoned in Korea after 1945. *The Times'* photographs illustrating the story were hardly more reassuring, since they showed Seoul and Kaesong in the 1920s or 1930s at the latest. Even as late as September 1950, *The Times* was still carrying a map of Seoul using Japanese names.

Writing in 1954, the British political journalist Guy Wint noted that the outbreak of the war had less effect in Europe than in the United States. In the latter, the news, coming in on a Sunday morning, struck many Americans as closely paralleling Pearl Harbour some seven years earlier. "By contrast...most Europeans were at first little shaken by the news. Korea seemed a long way off—much further than Berlin, and had not the world survived the crisis of the Berlin blockade?" Malcolm Muggeridge, then deputy editor on the *Daily Telegraph*, on holiday in Italy speculated in his diary as to whether this was the beginning of another world war. If so, how were he and his wife to get back to their children? But he does not seem to have done anything about it. Dora Russell, a fierce opponent of the war, wrote many years later in her autobiography that in Britain "...no one understood what it was all about."⁴

The official British reaction followed the American government's lead. Korea was seen as yet another challenge by the Soviet Union to the West, and one which had to be opposed. *The Times* quoted the Prime Minister, Mr Attlee: "After the bitter experience of the past thirty-five years, salvation is dependent on prompt and effective measures to resist aggression." A BBC radio broadcast on

27 June, reprinted in *The Listener*, gave a brief sketch of recent Korean history and attributed all blame for the conflict to the north Koreans.⁵ As A.J.P. Taylor put it in 1956, "...the British Government joined in the Korean war with Conservative approval to vindicate the doctrine of collective security which the National Government had betrayed in 1935."⁶

Mass-Observation began to collect opinions and views on the war within a couple of days of its outbreak. Some of these testified to the initial confusion. One young man on a London-bound train was noted on 28 June saying that the Russians had invaded Karachi. When corrected by his friend, he said that he "knew it began with a K." A few days later, a small group of eight people, all working class, were interviewed in London. Most displayed a resigned acceptance that the Russians were behind the war, and that it was right to "draw the line somewhere." One 55-year old man said, "If we don't stop it, Russia will swamp the world because it's definitely Russia's intention to swamp the world—she makes no secret of it..." There was some dissent, however. Two men, one 35 and one 50, said it was wrong to become involved, and that America seemed to want war. Another man, 60, described the American action as right, but held out little hope of success, since what had triggered the conflict was a new "spirit of national independence" among peoples "subjected for hundreds and hundreds of years to serving other people". Some concern was expressed over the atomic bomb, which one 60-year old man blamed, somewhat obscurely, on the British aircraft manufacturer Lord Brabazon and the former Permanent Under Secretary at the Foreign Office, Lord Vanstittart. Two women interviewed gave opposing views. One aged 29 said that it was something which had to be done; the other, aged 50, said that she and her friends were all terrified at the prospect of another war—this concern among older women was also echoed in some male replies. It is now impossible to tell, but it may be that for the first woman, 18 at the

outbreak of the Second World War, war had become an accepted part of normal life; for the second (and those of a similar age) it was an intrusion to be feared. One other notable theme, which is found among those who supported action in Korea as well as those who opposed it, is a considerable degree of hostility towards the United States, often described as overbearing and bullying not just to Korea but to Britain as well. British self-confidence was still high: the 29-year old woman "hoped they [the Americans] go down the pan until our boys get there." Others were more resigned, expressing the view that British help would probably be needed to sort out American problems.

Many of these same themes were found again in early July 1950. By then, north Korean forces were sweeping down the peninsula. The United Nations had, in the absence of the Soviet Union, condemned them, endorsed United States' action and sought wider support for action in Korea. Despite earlier Foreign Office comments about the value of Korea and pressing needs elsewhere, British ground forces had been promised; Royal Air Force Sunderland flying boats were already in operation by early July and British naval forces in East Asia had been placed at the United States' disposal.⁷

Even on the left-wing of British politics, there was little public hostility to the war; the then journalistic vanguard of the left, *Tribune*, was willing to concede that the American action was right, and the Trades' Union Congress endorsed the government's decision in August 1950. Even Monica Felton, regarded as a well-known fellow-traveller of the left, was to tell children in Prague as late as April 1951 that, "the majority [of British people] believe—honestly and without any doubt—that this war was started by an act of aggression by the government of north Korea."⁸ As far as the opinion polls were concerned, most of those interviewed continued to accept that Britain had little choice but to support action in Korea. A Gallup poll in the *News Chronicle* of 5 July 1950 noted that two

out of three approved the government's policy on Korea. This approval was highest among Conservative and Liberal supporters, but even Labour supporters turned in 62% in favour, with 18% against and 17% abstaining or declaring "don't know".⁹

The same poll noted that only one percent of those questioned claimed not to have heard anything about the war. Yet the war does not seem to have engaged attention as might have been expected. While the radio had gained tremendous importance as a source of news during the Second World War newspapers, though still short of newsprint, had regained some of their pre-war pre-eminence by 1950. Six newsagents in the London district of Fulham reported in the second week of July 1950 that there was no increase in the total sale of newspapers, although they were selling out earlier in the day than was usual in the annual holiday time. One said that his customers' attitude about British involvement was one of resignation, but that "its too far away for them to make head or tail of it." Most customers bought newspapers primarily for the sports pages (—many would say that they still do).

Another newsagent in the same area, not one of the six, noted one new development: the British Communist Party newspaper, then called the *Daily Worker*, was selling well. The interviewer said that he supposed the reason for this was "this Korea business", to which the newsagent's reply was that, "...people want to know the other side of things." Certainly in some of these early interviews, there were caustic references to the "capitalist press", but another reason may have been that the *Daily Worker* was the only British newspaper which had its own correspondent in Korea. This was Alan Winnington, who had been in Peking when the war broke out and who followed the north Korean forces down the peninsula. His reports gave the *Daily Worker* an interest other papers could not match, especially in the early days of the conflict, when most had to rely on agency reports, often

from Japan rather than Korea itself. There may also have been the expectation that a communist newspaper might help to understand the causes of a war which was being presented as part of an international communist scheme.¹⁰

In mid-July, Mass-Observation conducted a survey on public attitudes to the war. It showed no substantial change. The survey involved a sample of about 150 people, mostly taken in London. From the answers, some 90 could be said to be in favour of the UN action, fifteen against, and about 45 claimed not to know or were not interested. A five-point questionnaire was used, beginning with "What is the most important issue today?" and including views on the Americans and the Russians. A number of people gave no answer at all, or claimed not to know since they had not read a newspaper. One said it was the weather, while another said she "didn't know. Ask my mother, she'll tell you." Others were more enthusiastic, seeing American setbacks as merely temporary. A few adopted a "plague on both their houses" attitude, saying that the north and south Koreans should be allowed to settle differences on their own. A medical student aged 25 was one of the few to express the idea that the north Koreans might have been provoked into attacking.

By this time, the war had been underway a month. It was already beginning to affect people's lives. The United Kingdom had re-introduced conscription in 1947, and although in the first instance there was an apparently successful call for volunteers to Korea, "National Service"—i.e. conscription—was to be extended from 18 months to two years, with three and a half years for reserves. Reservists were called up, and those already serving found their terms extended. Most people accepted that these things had to be; as a recent writer has put it: "...we had all lived in a war-time boyhood, half-expecting to fight the Nazis: it might be said that we needed National Service to express our pent-up, expectant militarism..."¹¹

As the summer moved on, so Korea became better known. The first British casualties occurred when the cruiser HMS "Jamaica" was hit while shelling north Korean installations on the East coast; a sailor and five soldiers were killed, and three others wounded. British journalists began to arrive. The illustrated *Picture Post* ran an eleven-page feature titled "War in Korea" on 29 July 1950, based on material from the journalist Stephen Simmons and photographer Haywood Magee; Simmons was killed the following month, when the military transport plane in which he was travelling crashed off southern Japan. August also saw the deaths of two other British correspondents, when Ian Morrison of *The Times* and Christopher Buckley of the *Daily Telegraph*, plus an Indian observer officer, were blown up.

The arrival of the journalists also introduced a new element, for stories began to come back confirming that the south Korean government under Syngman Rhee was hardly a model democracy. Not that this came as a surprise for, despite later claims, few in Britain or the United States appear to have been starry-eyed about south Korean politics. Such reports, however, began to feed opposition to the war, which was beginning to develop in some parts of the Labour Party and on the left.¹²

When Mass-Observation again surveyed public opinion in London in mid-August 1950, there were other items of news to compete with Korea. A new royal baby, Princess Anne, was born on 15 August, and this took pride of place with some, while others listed the baby as joint first with the war. The war still seemed remote to most, and the issues confused. Of the 150 asked, the fifty-six who expressed a favourable view were clearly in a large majority against the twenty who were opposed. But over seventy said they were not interested in or did not know about the war; many of these mentioned the royal baby. They may have become somewhat more confused than usual because they were also asked what should happen to Taiwan. One lady blamed all the problems in Korea and

elsewhere in East Asia on Chiang Kai-shek, who should be handed over to the Russians since "he is the cause of all the disturbances." Others too felt that the Taiwan issue and Korea were interconnected, but seemed uncertain how this had come about. General MacArthur's role was also somewhat dimly perceived. A toolmaker from Earls Court perhaps summed up the confusion well: "I think it is something that should never have come about, but it is something that had to come." Perhaps not surprisingly, *Picture Post* reported in a feature on the men volunteering for military service on 26 August 1950 that none were interested in Korea or the issues involved; all said they had joined for excitement. At the same time, the belief that the Americans were poor fighters who would need to be rescued by the British was widespread and not confined to supporters of any one party, nor to people in any one social group. Yet both BBC television reports—this was the first war in which television began to make an impact—and cinema newsreels tended to stress that it was the United States and south Korean forces which had so far borne the brunt of the fighting and were continuing to do so. British public opinion, however, could not be persuaded that British involvement was the best hope of success for the UN cause.¹³

Mass-Observation next sought views on Korea in late October 1950. British ground troops had now been in action since the end of August—the first casualty had been a 19-year old private, killed on patrol a week after arrival.¹⁴ MacArthur had staged the highly successful Inch'ŏn landing in mid-September, with British ships in action during the bombardment, and with James Cameron among the war correspondents who went ashore in the wake of the landing. *Picture Post* carried Cameron's account of the landing and its aftermath plus graphic pictures of the death and destruction which occurred, thus bringing the war very close. Following the landing, the UN forces took Seoul and began the drive north. By the end of the first week in October, the conflict had moved on from

its starting point, and the question of crossing the 38th parallel had been settled, despite doubts on the part of Britain and some countries. Beyond, both literally and figuratively, lay China and the possibility of a wider war, but MacArthur was euphoric and there was talk of ending the war by Christmas.¹⁵

Domestically, there were also important developments. Both the Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were ill, and the latter resigned shortly before this survey was made. The effects of the war were making themselves felt too. Inflation, spurred by the after-effects of the 1949 devaluation of the pound and the war's creation of a demand for raw materials, began to take off in late 1950. Opposition to the war, though still not strong, was perhaps becoming more vocal. In late October, there was to be a Soviet-supported peace conference in Sheffield, which led to angry exchanges between the government and the conference's British supporters, some of whom were members of the Labour Party. When the government made clear its determination to stop the entry of known communists, the conference venue was shifted to Warsaw, and recriminations continued.¹⁶

The first two questions in the October survey dealt with the resignation of the Chancellor, Sir Stafford Cripps, the remainder with Korea. Those interviewed were asked what was meant by the 38th parallel, what they thought of UN forces crossing it, how they felt about the Korean situation generally, and what they thought of MacArthur. Again, the number who appeared to know very little about Korea was high, but of those who did know there was still considerable support for the war.¹⁷ MacArthur still clearly aroused mixed feelings. A housewife in Pimlico said she "thought him sometimes a bit bombastic," though adding, somewhat inconsequentially, "... but then, as I'm English it doesn't affect me." A butcher commented that MacArthur was "a general that keeps safe and Japan's a lovely place for a holiday." A lady doctor from Fulham,

who said she was a communist, described MacArthur as "one of the most blatant military maniacs." The same doctor did not think much of the war either, condemning the indiscriminate bombing of women and children, and describing it as one of the greatest devastations "since the old colonial wars." Another lady, this time a Liberal supporter, when asked about the 38th parallel said that she half supported the move and was half against it, but on the whole felt that the decision to cross was not right: "We've rather left ourselves open now. We can hardly blame the Chinese in Tibet now can we?" She was one of the few people to link what was happening in Korea with other events, though another communist, a plasterer from Hammersmith, claimed that crossing the parallel was "very similar to the aggression of Mussolini in Italy."

There is no further survey material in the Mass-Observation Archive. The only other set of material is "directive replies" for January-February 1951. As mentioned earlier, the people who compiled this were self-selected, in that they had volunteered to complete a questionnaire on a regular basis. The questions asked varied, but this seems to be the only time that Korea was raised. By then, the high hopes of success in Korea had been dashed following massive Chinese intervention as UN troops approached the Yalu river. It was widely believed in Britain that use of the atomic bomb had only been stopped by the Prime Minister's visit to Washington in early December 1950. UN forces had retreated south of Seoul, and though the line stabilized about 25 January 1951, there was no certainty that it would be held. Other reports out of Korea were causing disquiet in Britain. Alan Winnington's despatches to the *Daily Worker* about alleged south Korean atrocities were now being matched by other reports carried by newspapers of both left and right. There had been a major row at *Picture Post* between the editor, Tom Hopkinson and the owner, Edward Hulton, over the latter's refusal to allow the publication of James Cameron's account of atrocities, which ended with

Hopkinson's dismissal. Under US pressure, Britain announced a massive rearmament programme at the end of January, with £4,700 million pledged, and no obvious indication of where it was to be found.¹⁸

The small group of 18 who commented on Korea in 1951 did so therefore against a backdrop of doubts about the war. This is reflected in their comments and also surfaces in the Gallup Poll survey conducted at the same time.¹⁹ Even those who accepted that the United Nations had been right to intervene in Korea were opposed to the decision to cross the parallel. Only two gave unqualified support to this decision. MacArthur was regarded as impetuous and determined for a showdown; one lady remarked that Americans seemed to lack finesse in dealing with complicated issues. As in some of the earlier comments about American reverses, there is sometimes an element of 'apparent pleasure in the American plight.'²⁰ There was much hostility to Syngman Rhee, whose government was generally seen as worse than that of north Korea, though no evidence was produced. Two quoted an "old Korean" who was supposed to have said that "To a blade of grass, it matters not if horse or cow eat it." This probably reflects a newspaper story, though one of those who quoted it said that although he did not trust newspapers, the UN had "HAD to intervene."

It is a pity that there is no further material. The war went on for nearly two and half years longer, and its effects continued to be felt in Britain; the 1951 budget, which attempted to meet the costs of rearmament, introduced health service charges and led to the Bevanite split in the Labour party. In October 1951, a Conservative government under Winston Churchill replaced Mr Attlee's. Contrary to what many expected, this government reduced spending on rearmament—though much damage had already been done to the economy—and showed no disposition to do more on Korea than had their predecessors. Indeed Churchill, who had criticised the government in 1950 for not sending more troops to Korea,

was by 1951 claiming that he had never wished to see more than a token force sent. In 1952, after he became Prime Minister, he was willing to quote General Bradley's comment about the danger of Korea leading to the "wrong war, in the wrong place, at the wrong time." Korea barely featured in the 1951 election, though rearmament did.²¹

Campaigns against the war continued. They were given a new lease of life with the dismissal of MacArthur in April 1951, and then with the "Germ Warfare" issue which began in a tentative way in 1951, but did not really get underway until 1952. Among the leaders in these various campaigns were the Britain-China Friendship Society. This included the former diplomat and China expert Sir John Pratt, who wrote pamphlets to prove that south Korea had started the war, and the scientist Joseph Needham. Even their support, however, does not seem to have been enough to convince many people of the rightness of their cause. There was also a "Peace with China" group, with the then editor of the *New Statesman*, Kingsley Martin, prominent among its members. The germ warfare issue made little impact; despite the testimony of a scientist such as Needham, few appear to have found the evidence presented proved the claims. The Labour MP Richard Crossman, noted for the anti-American tone of some of the articles he contributed to the left-wing *New Statesman*, was at first willing to give some credit to the germ warfare claims, but became sceptical when he learnt of the way Needham and his colleagues had collected evidence from captured UN airmen. As a former interrogator himself, he thought that those who had gone to investigate the charges had had the wool pulled over their eyes.²²

Criticism of the Rhee government continued to be made from time to time, and there were occasional stories alleging US and British forces' involvement in atrocities against civilians. The publication of books giving accounts of Korea by the journalists René Cutforth and Reginald Thompson focused attention on such stories for a short

time, but this did not last. A number of other books which might have added to the concern, such as Julian Tunstall's *I Fought in Korea*, appeared just before or after the truce and made little impact.

In fact, after the brief excitement of the battle of the Imjin river and the stand of the Glosters at Sulma-ri (or "Gloster Valley" as it became known in Britain) in April 1951, and even more after the battle line stabilised in the summer, interest in the war appears to have faded. There were old problems to face, such as the continuing struggle against the communists in Malaya, and there were also new crises to attract attention: Iran in 1951 and the beginning of the Mau Mau campaign in Kenya in 1952. Press attention waned, only occasionally reviving. Mass-Observation clearly never felt the need to look at the issue again, and published diaries show a marked fall off in references to Korea after mid-1951. The published Gallup Poll material from the same period showed a clear wish to get out of Korea. While the war meant the continuation of austerity, it did not affect people obviously in other ways. The Festival of Britain opened in May 1951; a proposal to cancel it as inappropriate while the war was on was quietly dropped. The war was, however, believed to have cut the number of expected American visitors.²³

Twenty thousand British servicemen served in Korea, 10% of them National Servicemen, though the figure reached as much as 60% in individual units. They and their families were obviously affected. But casualties were comparatively low—though Britain lost far more in Korea than in the Falklands—and there were other more glamorous places to be serving. Those who served in Korea seemed confused about why they were there and who they were fighting; a concerned army major in the War Office wrote to the Foreign Office in September 1950 to express concern about a soldier interviewed by *Radio Newsreel* prior to his departure who clearly had no idea why he was going. The major felt that this gave a bad impression and asked the Foreign Office to take it up with

the BBC. Before anything was done, however, the major found that the broadcast had been cleared by an army public relations officer, and asked that no action should be taken. The journalist Neal Ascherson has recalled the silence of his group of National Servicemen when many of them learnt that they were to go to Korea.²⁴ No doubt some of that confusion was transmitted back home and may well have helped the growth of a widespread dissatisfaction with National Service as a concept. A public opinion poll in 1949 showed 57% in favour of it and 33% against; by 1953, these figures were reversed. Korea must have been a factor in that change. Many servicemen felt that they had been forgotten, with filmstars, sportsmen, or mountaineers—news of the conquest of Everest in 1953 seemed to those in Korea to swamp news of the armistice, for example—more highly regarded than those defending "freedom". As one returning serviceman put it: "Returning home, one felt one had been on a trip to the moon."²⁵ BBC TV, trying to interview returning British prisoners of war, found such great official opposition that the attempt was abandoned, while a programme on the stocks since 1951 to mark the end of the war fell flat when finally broadcast in the autumn of 1953: the Korean war was something to be forgotten.²⁶

If no real attempt was made by the government to explain the war and Britain's part in it to the soldiers and sailors who went there, it is perhaps not surprising that little was done at home. The end of the Second World War had seen the rapid disbandment of the Ministry of Information, no doubt with a sigh of relief from those—and they were many—who did not like to see Britain engaged in propaganda. Speeches in parliament and in constituencies were the way government policies were to be made known, not through posters and leaflets. Various collections of papers relating to Korea were laid before parliament during the course of the war, but these did not reach a wide audience. Otherwise the Central Office of Information confined its work on Korea to the preparation

of reference material which explained the war, but not in a way that would be widely available. There was also cause for confusion in the very status of the conflict: was it or was it not a war? No declaration of war was made, and in a sense, how could it be, since north Korea was not recognised as a state. Winnington's journalism and some of his actions were described as treason in parliament, but no charges were brought against him or his editor, nor against others who could be said to be giving aid and comfort to the enemy. (Winnington was not however able to renew his British passport for several years.) "Fighting communism" was also a difficult concept. The Soviet Union was seen as behind events in Korea, but normal diplomatic and other relations continued. A few professed communists lost their jobs, but there was no systematic attempt to hunt out members of the party, even after the disappearance of Burgess and Maclean in 1951. The people, however, took their own decision; the Korean war years saw membership of the British Communist Party drop from 43,000 in 1948 to 36,000 in 1952. Sales of the *Daily Worker* slumped and the party did badly in the 1951 election.²⁷

The Korean war is not well remembered, either in Britain or the United States. On the left, a few books on Korea appeared in 1953-54, but they seem to have made little impact, though Monica Felton's visit to north Korea cost her her job with the Stevenage Development Corporation. Only since 1986 has Britain erected a national war memorial to those who died, and only now is an official history of the war to appear. Perhaps the reasons for this lie in the confused circumstances behind the conflict. What is required is further research, to sift through the confusion. This field, public opinion, would be a good field in which to begin such research.

NOTES

1. R. Cutforth, *Korean Reporter* (London, 1952); *Order to View*, Chapter XI, "Reporting the War in Korea" (London, 1969).
2. A. Calder and D. Sheridan (eds), *Speak for Yourself: A Mass-Observation Anthology 1937-1949* (Oxford, 1985), pp.249-59; D. Sheridan and C. Dixon, *The Mass-Observation Archive: A Guide for Researchers* (Falmer, 1985).
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9. B. Porter, *Britain and the Rise of Communist China: A study of British Attitudes 1945-1954* (London, 1967), p.167. This gives the Gallup Poll questions and answers. An editorial, "Unity at Home", *The Times*, 7 July 1950, noted the sense of national unity.

10. P. Knightley, *The First Casualty: From the Crime to Vietnam: The War Correspondent as Hero, Propagandist, and Mythmaker* (London, revised edition, 1982), p.320; Alan Winnington, *Breakfast with Mao: Memoirs of a Foreign Correspondent* (London, 1986), p.118 et seq.
11. D. A. N. Jones, "Gangs", *London Review of Books* 9/1, 8 Jan. 1987. This reviews, among other books, Royle's on National Servicemen—see note 18. For the flow of volunteers and call-up of reservists, see *Keesings Contemporary Archives*, p.10871, 19 July-5 Aug. 1950, and "The fighting force", *The Times*, 25 August 1950.
12. *Keesings Contemporary Archives* p.10829, 8-15 July 1950; Knightley, *The First Casualty*, pp.323-24. For the manner in which the cinema newsreel and BBC TV carried the same themes, see Howard Smith, "The BBC Television Newsreel and the Korean War", *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 8/3 (1988), pp.227-52, especially 228-29. See also the letter from Lord Winster to the editor, *The Times*, 5 August 1950.
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14. T. Carew, *Korea: The Commonwealth at War* (London, 1967), p.64-65.
15. *Picture Post*, 7 Oct 1950. Cameron also gave an account of the landing in chapter 8 of his autobiography, *Points of Departure* (London, new edition, 1985). For the background to the subsequent developments, see R. O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War 1950-1953* (Canberra, 1981), vol.1, p. 117-18 and 134; P. Lowe, *The Origins of the Korean War* (London and New York, 1986), pp.181-96.
16. S. Britain, *The Treasury under the Tories, 1951-1964* (Harmondsworth, 1964), p.158. For the conference, see Russell, *Tamarisk Tree*, vol.3, pp. 133-34.
17. See also the results from a Gallup Poll survey of 4 October 1950, which broadly agree with the Mass Observation picture, in Porter, *Britain and the Rise of Communist China*, pp.167-68.
18. Knightley, *The First Casualty*, pp.327-29; Cameron, *Points of Departure*, p.145 et seq. For the rearmament programme, see Britain, *Treasury*, pp.158-60 and P. Addison, *Now the War is Over: A Social History of Britain 1945-1951* (London, 1985), p.111.
19. Porter, *Britain and the Rise of Communist China*, pp.163-170.
20. Anti-American feeling is a subject which was avoided at the time, but seems to have been widespread and not confined to any one group or class. See Knightley, *The First Casualty*,

- p.334. Even Field Marshall Montgomery was "rather pleased" at the American setbacks in January 1951, according to Malcolm Muggeridge. And when MacArthur was dismissed in April 1951, the then British Foreign Secretary had to warn Labour members of parliament not to "crow" over his downfall; Muggeridge, *Like it was*, p.424 (entry for 16 Jan. 1951); C. A. MacDonald, *Korea: The War before Vietnam* (London, 1986), p.99. Hugh Gaitskell, Labour's Chancellor of the Exchequer from October 1950 to October 1951—and the man who had thus to find the money for the rearmament programme—wrote a long memorandum, probably in 1952, on rising anti-American feeling in Britain, which he blamed on the Korean war. See P. M. Williams (ed.), *The Diary of Hugh Gaitskell 1945-56* (London, 1983), pp.316-20.
21. K. Harris, *Attlee* (London, 1982), pp.456-7; W. S. Churchill, *Stemming the Tide: Speeches 1951 and 1952* (London, 1953), p.19, 80 and 232-3. See also Britten, *Treasury*, p.138.
22. J. Morgan (ed.), *The Backbench Diaries of Richard Crossman* (London, 1981), p.139. Crossman had little time for the Peace with China Committee, or similar bodies, which he saw as communist fronts—see page 84 (entry for 4 March 1952). The germ warfare issue was extensively reported by Alan Winnington. See *Breakfast with Mao*, Chapter 12, for his account. For a trenchant contemporary examination of the issue see also M. Lindsay, *China and the Cold War: A Study in International Politics* (Melbourne, 1955), pp.42-46. For recent accounts of the germ warfare question in Korea from very different positions, see Jon Halliday and Bruce Cumings, *Korea: The Unknown War* (London, 1988), pp.182-84 and O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War*, vol.1, p.289 and following. Similar charges were made in Europe long before the claims about Korea. *The Times*, 3 and 4 July 1950, reported claims that the US had dropped Colorado beetles in East Germany and Czechoslovakia.
23. M. Banham and B. Hillier, *The Tonic to the Nation: The Festival of Britain 1951* (London, 1976), pp.32-33. The Festival opened on 3 May 1951, just as details of the Imjin river battle began to come in.
24. Foreign Office records, FO953/928/PG1812/5. Major Coaker, War Office, to Mr Stark, FO, 18 Sept. 1950, and relevant minuting; Neal Ascherson, "Lucky Jim's two years in uniform", *Observer*, 13 March 1988.
25. T. Royle, *The Best Years of Their Lives: The National Service Experience 1945-1963* (London, 1986), pp.183-84, 198-9. For disillusionment, see the extracts Royle quotes from *The Dead, The Dying and Damned*, a novel published in 1956 by a National Service officer in Korea, D.J. Hollands; Royle, *The Best Years of Their Lives*, p.196; letter from P. Jones (former soldier in Korea, now Secretary of Council of Civil Service

Unions) to the author, 2 June 1988. For the BBC problems see papers in BBC archives, R19/62, T6/185 and T32/223.

26. For traditional attitudes to information see M. Yass, *This is your War: Home Front Propaganda in the Second World War* (London, 1983), pp.3-5. This was reflected in the way the Central Office of Information was established; see chapter 3 in F. Clark, *The Central Office of Information* (London, 1970). For other points, see Wint, *What Happened in Korea*, appendix 1, "Was there a War?" H. Pelling, *The British Communist Party: An Historical Profile* (London, 1958), pp.161-63. To some extent, the need for a "purge" of communists, at least in the civil service, had been taken care of before the Korean war began; see J. E. Mortimer and V. Ellis, *A Professional Union: The Evolution of the Institution of Professional Civil Servants* (London, 1980), pp.168-75.

JOHN MCLEAVY BROWN IN KOREA

IAN NISH

John McLeavy Brown was an employee of the Korean government from 1893 to 1905, one of the most hazardous times in the history of the peninsula. Though he was supposed to supervise the Korean customs organisation, he found himself involved in many other activities, and this led to unpopularity in many quarters. The Russians twice tried to remove him but did not succeed. Ultimately the Japanese did manage to pension him off in 1905. Brown was what the Japanese call an "o-yatoi gaijin" a foreigner in the employ of Korea. A foreigner whose function was to teach financial prudence to the Korean court could not expect to be universally popular.

Brown was born in Lisburn, Co Antrim in 1835 and educated both at Queens University, Belfast and at Trinity College, Dublin. He entered the China consular service and, because of his rapid progress in the Chinese language, he saw service in the Legation at Peking. Brown resigned to join the Chinese customs service in 1873. During periods of long leave he qualified as a barrister and finally in 1888 obtained the degree of LL.D from Dublin. He is the only person with doctoral qualifications who, in my experience, chose never to use the title. During his career in the East, he was almost invariably known as "Mr McLeavy Brown". After twenty years with the Chinese customs, Brown was chosen to head the Korean Customs.

Brown owed his appointment to Sir Robert Hart, Director-general of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service. To Hart, Korean customs was the "Corean section" of the Chinese network at a time of Chinese hegemony over Korea. When I.F. Schoenicke went on long leave in the autumn of 1892, Hart arranged for F.A. Morgan, who had been temporarily deputed to the customs post at Chemulp'o, to take his place. Hart was committed to the view that "fears regarding our hold of Corea are at an end."¹ This was, however, to prove over-optimistic. Morgan had to go home, suffering from a breakdown and needing surgery on his leg. He never returned to a post in Korea.

Hart hastily appointed Brown, then assistant commissioner of customs at Kowloon, a post of considerable responsibility and special sensitivity. It appears that Brown did not demur. The prospect of freezing in Seoul may have seemed more attractive than sweltering in the south China seas. But Hart had his doubts: Brown was "a first class man for any big works, but, as head of an office, he lets current work into arrears to an extent that throws the whole Service 'out of step.'"²

A little later, he wrote to his London office, "Brown had taken Morgan's place in Corea: wonder how he'll get on there! He's a first-rate man when he settles down to work, but terribly lazy generally speaking."³ This was the comment of a crusty headmaster on a junior pupil rather than that appropriate to a trusted servant aged 58. It must be remembered then that Brown was not the first choice for the post which he was to occupy with distinction for twelve years.

Brown took charge of the Korean customs on 15 October 1893. He was clever, experienced, an able Chinese linguist willing to learn Korean. He seems to have created good impressions in most quarters: Koreans, Chinese including Yuan Shih-k'ai, and foreigners. Within

six months he had taken a firm grip on the Korean situation.

In the summer of 1894, war broke out between Japan and China. Japanese troops occupied the peninsula after Yuan Shih-k'ai and the Chinese withdrew and there were fears that Brown and other Britishers in the customs service might have to be pulled out. Brown himself had been involved in an attack by Japanese soldiers on 15 July while accompanying the acting British Consul-general, Gardner, though this was not typical. To be sure, Brown was at this stage holding an appointment linked to the Chinese Maritime Customs and had a good knowledge of the Chinese language, then used for communication with the Korean court. It suited the Japanese to make use of Brown. They wanted a customs service which would be completely independent of China—something with which the Koreans were in full agreement. The Japanese induced the Korean government to set up a Korean customs. On 25 October 1894 Brown was appointed Chief Commissioner of the new organisation. In practical terms his control of the service was undiminished. In personal terms, he was deemed to be on long leave from the Chinese service: he could return there in an emergency. Existing staff were all taken over en bloc from the Chinese customs, presumably on similar terms of employment.

Dissatisfied with the financial standards within Korea, the Japanese officials came to rely on Brown. In the first place they reorganised the customs service with Brown as Chief Commissioner of the new organisation. In essence the collection of revenue and its disposal would now be controlled by the finance department of government. It was mooted in several quarters that Brown should be given an additional role and the Foreign Minister, after consultation with the Finance Minister, offered Brown on 29 October 1894 a post as adviser to the finance department. Brown accepted. Walter Hillier, the British Consul-general, wrote in November as follows:

Mr Brown's popularity with all classes of Korean officials, and his long experience in the management of Customs business in all parts of China, will render him a valuable servant to the Korean Government, while his reputation and attainments as a Chinese scholar will stand him in good stead. If the Japanese Government were sincere in the policy which has been enunciated by Count Inouye, its agents will find in Mr Brown a willing and useful ally. On the other hand, he will be in a position to give us warning of any measures under consideration that may be detrimental to our commercial or other interests in this country.⁴

When Count Inouye Kaoru, the Ambassador, announced his schemes for the reform of Korea, some control of revenue and expenditure was essential. It would appear that Brown was in fact an ancillary to the various Japanese schemes for reform. He was given a five year contract with the Korean Government by express orders of the Korean king in October 1895. Even after Inouye withdrew and the king escaped to the protection of the Russian legation in February 1896, Brown stayed on in his dual function.

While the task of Chief Commissioner was relatively free of criticism, the post of Financial Adviser during a reformist period was hard and unpopular. The Korean court blamed Brown for the careful scrutiny of government expenditure and the shedding of supernumerary clerks from the various government offices. The *Korean Repository*, sympathetic to reform wrote,

The large experience in oriental affairs, pre-eminent ability and decision of Dr McLeavy Brown fit him admirably for the position he so ably fills. *We love him for the enemies he is making* in the camps of those who care more for personal aggrandizement than for the good of Korea.⁵

Brown managed to weather the storm of Korean unpopularity for there were many Koreans well aware of the nature of maladministration.

The hostility of the Russians, who had come to fill the position vacated by the Chinese after their defeat in 1895, was a more serious matter. When Min Yong-hoan went as Korean delegate to the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II in

May 1896, he asked for Russian protection. According to the Russian record, he also asked for a loan, which the Russians were only ready to give in return for the appointment of a Russian financial adviser and for military help in the form of military advisers. The widespread ramifications of this secret deal did not immediately manifest themselves in Seoul because of the deal's secrecy. It was only communicated to the foreign representatives in Seoul after Minister Waeber left the country and was replaced by Charge d'affaires Speyer in September 1897. On the basis of their quasi-alliance, Speyer concluded with the Korean Foreign Minister a more specific agreement in November which, among other clauses, gave the Russian financial adviser entire control of the Korean financial and customs administration. This agreement took human form with the arrival of Russian "drill instructors" and K. A. Alekseyev, Councillor of State in the Finance Department of the Imperial Russian Government.

By this time Brown had come to accept there was little hope of success in the international dispute, and he made it clear he would not resign voluntarily but would serve out his contract unless dismissed outright.⁶ The Korean Finance Department refused to dismiss him, leaving the act of dismissal to the king himself. Jordan, like Speyer, was in regular contact but got no decisive answer. The Brown case was in deadlock for two long months.

The British government was inclined to take a low posture. Salisbury wrote on 6 December: "If the Korean Government dismissed Brown from office, his claim for proper compensation for breach of contract will be a good one, and Her Majesty's Government will be willing to give it their support." The implication is that Britain would not support her national continuing in office. Sir Claude MacDonald, Britain's minister at Peking who was also Minister Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Korea, clearly drew that inference⁷ since he telegraphed in response: "I

presume HM Government will not be disposed to afford him [Brown] any further support in maintaining his position, and that there is nothing left for him but to retire." He added that Speyer, who had been the cause of Russia's forward policy, was soon to be transferred to Peking. In that more favourable atmosphere, it would be opportune to grasp any compromise offered by the Russians and Koreans. The opportunity came with the so-called Alekseyev compromise, in which Alekseyev would act as financial adviser while Brown remained chief controller of customs, acting "with the concurrence and approval of M. Alexieff in important matters."⁸ So the situation on the ground was patched up and Brown could breathe again.

But by one of the great ironies of history, the Korean situation deteriorated internationally. On 4 December the British admiral in the East, Buller, reported that nine Russian men-of-war and their admiral had arrived at Chemulp'o two days earlier. This was a bombshell for the Foreign Office. They recommended to the British Admiralty that "an approximately equal British naval force should be sent to Corea", with the object of preventing the Korean Government and people from assuming that Russia had any special rights in the waters of that country and that its force should stay for ten days.⁹

The position of Brown was at risk and, as an employee of the Korean government, he had very few cards to play. His position as financial adviser had long been challenged by the Russians. They had cherished the idea of transferring the customs as an adjunct of the Russo-Chinese Bank under the guidance of Pokotilov, who had spent some months in Seoul studying the financial system. But Brown's position was also the victim of a tug of war between Korean politicians. His colleagues in the Finance Department were strong advocates of his retention, while the Foreign Ministry felt that Korea was bound by the understandings reached within Russia in 1896. The

Korean king could not arbitrate between them. The issue of Alekseyev and Brown was therefore left unresolved in October and November. In practice, Alekseyev took over as Financial Adviser. Although Brown was not actually dismissed he ceased to be consulted and so found his task as Customs Commissioner more and more difficult. Moreover, the Russo-Korean Bank was set up in Seoul in January 1898, though it was to close its doors again three months later.

Support for Brown came from the Independence Club and the Japanese, American and British governments. Obviously Brown could not expect more than moral support from the first three. Much, therefore, turned on the attitude to be taken by London. On 6 October Lord Salisbury (as foreign secretary) warned Korea that Britain would be "seriously displeased if Mr Brown were to be removed". At the end of October Salisbury asked his representative in Russia to enquire from the Russian Foreign Ministry and received an assurance that, while financial experts had been sent as asked for by Koreans, Russia had given no instructions for the dismissal of Brown about which it claimed to be totally uninformed.¹⁰ Recognising that Speyer was probably acting on his own initiative, the new British representative in Seoul, John Jordan, stoutly defended the retention of Brown.

It took time for the Admiralty to assemble an "approximately equal naval force." It was 29 December before Admiral Buller reported he had reached Chemulp'o with seven ships and that *Immortalite* and *Iphigenia* were visiting Port Arthur. The commander-in-chief of China Station was ordered to stay at Chemulp'o until further notice. When one remembers that the Americans had also sent ships and that Japanese ships were on alert, it is clear that a war of nerves was being waged among the powers. It was, remember, not exclusively the war of McLeavy Brown since Lushun (Port Arthur) was also a major object of British concern. Secondly, we would do

well to recall that this example of gunboat diplomacy was not waged against Korea (though it did have its impact there) but between the powers.

The naval confrontation at Chemulp'o did not better the position of Brown. He had already accepted Alekseyev's terms of compromise before it was known that the British contemplated any naval presence. John Jordan, quite a junior consul-general, made a courteous complaint to Whitehall:

Your telegram of 15 December, announcing the approaching visit of the fleet, only reached me on the afternoon of 17 December, a few hours after Mr Brown had definitely accepted M. Alexieff's additional proposals Had your telegram not been delayed in transmission, and had the information which it contained reached me earlier, it is probable that I would have advised Mr Brown to hold out for better terms. (6.1.98)¹¹

In fact, the Alekseyev compromise was remarkably workable. Alekseyev's secretary, who ironically was an Englishman called Garfield, told Brown that his boss disliked the forward policy of Speyer and was in no way bound by it since he was affiliated to the Finance Ministry. He evidently thought Speyer to be a pushy Foreign Ministry type and saw in McLeavy Brown a kindred spirit from a cautious financial background. A Frenchman, E. Laporte of the Korean Customs, who was thought to be the person favoured by Speyer as Brown's successor as Chief Commissioner, was loyal to his chief and refused to serve.

Alekseyev and the Russian drill instructors were withdrawn in the spring of 1889, partly due to the resistance of the Independence Club led by Philip Jaisohn (So Chaep'il) and partly following the Nishi-Rosen agreement which restored Japan's fortunes on the peninsula. But Brown was not restored as Financial Adviser. This was a normal setback for, as we follow his activities over the next few years, we find him described as "Superintendent of Railways" (involved in issuing railway concessions), legal adviser and drafter of Royal Decrees,

negotiator of land concessions and negotiator over the opening of ports. In short, he seems to have been drawn into most matters which involved foreign governments and which had a financial dimension. He cleared up financial positions and assured that the accounts of the Finance Ministry were properly audited so that deficits were avoided. Like Hart in China, he had a prime responsibility for raising loans from foreign banks and ensuring that debts on foreign loans were repaid, in this case especially the Japanese loan. We also find him responsible for public works both in Seoul and in the Southern ports: he was responsible for the negotiation, payment and supervision of the construction of a seawall and jetty at Chemulp'o. Yet, if his responsibilities were infinitely expandable, they were equally contractable when ministers in power were hostile to or jealous of him.¹²

It was in the nature of his position that he identified himself with British interests. He was often found working alongside Jordan, the consul-general. It was not always clear what Britain's interests in Korea were. On the one hand, there was no resident British minister; and no regular British steamer service called on Korean ports, where the Japanese flag dominated the carrying trade. On the other hand, there was some confidence in the 'large potentialities' of British trade with Korea.¹³ If we may quote further from one of Brown's greatest admirers, Isabella Bird Bishop, whose travels in the peninsula led to her book *Korea and her Neighbours* in 1898:

Though we may have abandoned any political interest in Korea, the future of British trade in the country remains an important question. Such influence as England possesses, being exercised through a non-official channel, and therefore necessarily indirect, is owing to the abilities, force and diplomatic tact of Mr McLeavy Brown ... So long as he is in control at the capital, and such upright and able men as Mr Hunt, Mr Oiesen, and Mr Osborne are Commissioners at the Treaty Ports, so long will England be commercially important in Korean estimations.¹⁴

This was true also in a political sense: Brown saw the Korean problems through British eyes. The latter is relevant to the renewal of Brown's contract, due to run out in October 1900. Russia posted Pavlov, of the forward group of diplomats, from Peking to Seoul in August 1899. He seemed anxious to re-assert Russia's position by his demands over Masamp'o. John Jordan was worried that by the time Brown's contract lapsed, Russia would again be in the ascendant and urged him to agree to an early renewal. Brown, he reported,

... had great hesitation about committing himself to a course which entailed a large pecuniary sacrifice on his part, and involved the continuation of a struggle which past experience has shown to be almost hopeless. Eventually, however, he expressed his willingness to accept another term of service, and authorised me to take such action as seemed best calculated to secure the necessary modification of his Contract (6.8.99).¹⁵

Officers of the Korean Customs were not remunerated on the same scale as those of the Chinese Customs from which Brown was seconded. What he lost in salary, however, Brown may have made up in influence. The other factor was his age of 64: even the most vigorous Son of Ulster cannot have relished battling on between Russia and Japan into his seventies. Nonetheless he eventually agreed, leaving Jordan to approach the Koreans. Korea agreed to extend Brown's contract as Chief Commissioner of Customs for five years from October 1900 as early as August 1899.¹⁶

In the aftermath of the Boxer disturbances, relations between Russia and Britain deteriorated. This affected the standing in Korea of McLeavy Brown, whose appointment was by this stage treated like a pawn between them. On 21 March 1901, the Korean Foreign Minister asked John Gubbins, then standing in for Jordan as minister to Korea, to dismiss Brown. The grounds were that he had refused to carry out a promise he allegedly gave the Korean Emperor the previous December to move out of the Chief

Commissioner's official residence beside the palace and that, when court officials had called to execute the promise, he had ejected them. Gubbins had no doubt that the demand was part of a palace intrigue and depended on Russian backing. He thought that men-of-war should be sent to Korean waters.¹⁷ It is interesting that at this stage the Koreans should ask the British representative to dismiss and punish Brown, who was their own employee. Brown told Gubbins he had made no such promise but that, since his residence was government property, he was ready to give it up on being given time enough to make other arrangements. It proved difficult to iron out the problem diplomatically, as each time the matter was raised Korean ministers increased their intrusiveness into Customs affairs.¹⁸

As before, Britain had the support of the Americans and the Japanese. Baron Hayashi Gonsuke, the Japanese minister in Seoul, agreed it was very important to retain Brown in control of the Customs and that to remove him would entail serious consequences.¹⁹ Fortified by this support, Britain informed Korea that, except for misconduct, she could not admit Korea's right to dismiss Brown before the expiry of his contract. Several questions were asked in the House of Commons. At Chemulp'o the *Bonaventure* put in an appearance, the first of the British ships to berth there. On 1 April the incident was patched up: it was concluded that everything arose from a mistake on the part of Brown's interpreter, Brown being unable to speak Korean, that the interpreter would be punished by ten years' imprisonment, and the dismissal of Brown would be countermanded. Gubbins continued to ask for a naval vessel to be sent for three weeks followed by a visit by a squadron.²⁰

The next move by the group determined to oust Brown followed one month later. Gubbins was informed that Brown's contract as renewed in 1899 had been approved by the Finance Department only, and had not

been ratified by the Council of State. He may have felt that Britain did not carry enough weight with the Korean Court, for he wrote:

The importance of the retention of Mr Brown as Chief Commissioner is, I venture to suggest, greater for Japan than for us, for, apart from the fact that she is the only Power with large commercial interests in this country, the retention of the present Chief Commissioner constitutes a *modus vivendi* between the rival interests of Russia and Japan, which it would be difficult to disturb without detriment to present international relations.²¹

When approached, the Japanese showed cordiality and offered support but with reservations:

It would be most unwise to make anything of the nature of a threat, for they hold that Mr Brown, being a servant of the Korean Government, can be dismissed by that Government at any time, provided the terms of his contract are not violated. [Mr Kato] also intimated to me that, though the Japanese Government are well aware of Mr McLeavy Brown's great ability and probity, they consider that he is rather wanting in tact, and assumes on occasion a somewhat dictatorial and improper tone towards the Government whose servant he is.²²

But the Japanese foreign minister would not entertain any idea of Japanese troops in their Seoul garrison being used to prevent the Korean Government occupying their own Customs buildings. Japan's moral support was enough and Britain's efforts to defend Brown were successful. New factions came to power in Seoul for whom the Brown case was not a top priority. Brown continued his broad portfolio of activities undiminished.

Like Isabella Bird, Gertrude Bell, the intrepid Victorian traveller, gives us a favourable picture of Brown. She visited him in 1903 when he was living in Seoul in some style, not yet dispossessed of his Commissioner's residence. She wrote:

Under Providence, it seems to me the Chief Commissioner of Customs rules Korea, or at least it is entirely open to him to rule Korea if he chooses. Whether the present one does or not, I cannot judge, he seems to have accomplished a good deal in the matter of street making, policing and cleaning Seoul but—to hazard a wide conclusion—he seems a little too

much absorbed in his new band stand and similar matters for a really busy politician. But this is a very hasty impression and while I was with him I thought of nothing but how agreeable he was.²³

The reference to the bandstand I interpret to mean that Brown was wrapped up in the minutiae of his tasks and was not inclined to grasp the full range of powers he could have had, had he wanted them. Another friend was Dr George Ernest Morrison, *The Times* correspondent in Peking. A stern judge of character, Morrison remained on the best of terms with Brown till his death. He presents a favourable view of Brown.

In Seoul I stayed with McLeavy Brown and found him the same delightful companion as ever. His position is now more pleasant than it has ever been for he is well supported by the Japanese and they recognise the good work that has been done by the Customs under his control.²⁴

The fact that Morrison was the person who proposed that Brown ultimately became adviser to the Chinese legation in London attests to Brown's congenial qualities and to his ability to maintain good relations with East Asians. The fact that he was primarily a Chinese scholar may have made him less popular in certain Seoul quarters as they reacted against the old Chinese hegemony. In British circles, Jordan thought Brown "has a marked personal influence with orientals but suffers from a paralysis of writing power ... He is a sort of walking encyclopedia who knows everything, but does not turn his knowledge to the account he might do."²⁵ So much from a companion of some ten years' standing in Seoul!

The building of a bandstand may seem a rather unusual responsibility for Brown as a doctor of laws and Chinese scholar. But customs officials attracted new responsibilities in a haphazard way. Perhaps the best explanation of how these functions accrued is given by one of the officials himself, H.V. Davidson, at one time Brown's secretary:

As the Customs Funds were held separately under the sole control of the Chief Commissioner, constant attempts were made by various Korean officials to obtain grants from these funds for numerous schemes more or less unessential. It was said that Mr McLeavy Brown always sat on his cheque book, but, when resistance became hopeless, a way out was found by which the Customs undertook the supervision and direct payment for these works. Thus the Customs Department became involved in many operations that were remote from revenue collection. The widening of the street, Chongno, from the West to the East Gate of Seoul; reducing the grade of the "Peking Pass", just north of Seoul; building bridges with Korean stonework and improving the storm drainage, were among the earliest extra jobs. Buildings were provided in the Seoul Customs compound for printing the first daily newspaper in English, "The Seoul Press", so that Customs forms and reports could be printed there ... The erection of the Stone Palace in the Toksu Palace Grounds was made and completed under Customs control. The provision of such a palace was a project long opposed by Mr McLeavy Brown, but he was forced to yield finally and to prevent waste undertook the erection with funds provided from the Customs revenue ... The building advanced slowly because whenever there were difficulties between the Head of the Customs and the Korean Palace officials, all work ceased. Thus when Mr Brown left Korea at the end of 1905, the building had reached only the first floor.²⁶

In addition to these Seoul-based projects, there were many connected with the outlying ports. This wide range of functions arose from the assumption that contracts of any sort would give rise to bribery and corruption unless the spending of money was overseen by Customs.

In February 1904 came the war between Russia and Japan which Brown had long thought inevitable.²⁷ Even as the occupying Japanese armies moved through the peninsula to the Manchurian battlefield, some attempts were made at long-term reform of the Korean administration. By an agreement signed on 15 October the Korean government appointed as Financial Adviser Megata Tanetaro (1853-1926). No financial decision could henceforth be taken without his consent; he would be present at all financial discussions by the Council of State; while he had no vote, he had the right of veto on financial decisions.²⁸ In short, Megata was not so much financial

adviser as financial comptroller and enjoyed a degree of control which Brown never had, but which Alekseyev had aspired to in 1897, even if only temporarily.

Brown's position became a matter of some delicacy both for himself and for Britain. Since 1902, Britain had been the partner in the Anglo-Japanese alliance which guaranteed the political independence of Korea. Japan was trying to avoid breaching the underlying message of that agreement. So far as Brown was concerned, the view of the British minister in Seoul, now Sir John Jordan, was that:

No attempt has been made to give the Financial Adviser any direct control over the Customs Administration; and although there is room for friction in the relations between the two Departments, there seems no reason why, with the exercise of tact and good sense on both sides, things should not be smoothly adjusted. Mr McLeavy Brown ... has an unexpended balance of about 2,500,000 yen under his sole control, and it is not improbable that the Japanese may claim that at least a portion of this sum should be employed in productive works. To this Mr Brown would probably offer no very strong objection, so long as the requirements of the service of which he is the Head were duly considered. (19.10.4)²⁹

Megata was an experienced Japanese official. He had been Customs Commissioner at Yokohama port for many years.³⁰ He immediately set about a comprehensive reform of the Korean currency. The more deeply he became involved in this, the more natural it seemed that his office should engulf the customs service. There were two deterrents to any change, however. One was the personal popularity of Brown with Koreans and foreigners and the corresponding unpopularity of the Japanese. As late as the summer of 1905, Minister Hayashi Gonsuke assured Jordan and Dr Morrison of *The Times* that there was no question of Brown being relieved of his duties.³¹ The other deterrent was the existence of the Anglo-Japanese alliance itself. The 1902 alliance, with its clause guaranteeing Korea's territorial integrity, was however

revised in the summer of 1905. The revised treaty, signed on 12 August, buried the clause.

Despite Japanese assurances, Jordan may have had his doubts. He knew that Brown's contract with the Korean government terminated in October 1905 and it was impossible to predict what the situation would be by then. His long-term thinking was clear:

It seems important that the succession should be retained in British hands. Whatever may be the future political status of Korea, the interests of British trade imperatively require the maintenance of the recent Tariff arrangements, and that object can best be attained by continued British direction of the Customs Administration. The Japanese control the finances of Korea, an American Adviser represents, nominally at least, the United States in its foreign relations, and it is only fitting that the Customs should be left to the Power which, next to Japan, has the largest commercial stake in the country.³²

In order to avoid any mishap with this plan from the Korean side, in May Jordan and Brown engineered through Sir Robert Hart the posting to Korea of C. A. V. Bowra, one of the ablest Customs Commissioners. Bowra had long experience at Niuchuang as Deputy Commissioner.

As it happened, opposition to the renewal of Brown's contract came not from the unpredictable Koreans but from the unpredictable Japanese. On 11 August, when the renewed alliance treaty was in the bag, Katsura, acting as his own foreign minister in the absence of Komura (who was in the United States), telephoned his minister in London. He was to put the point to Lord Lansdowne, in view of his goodwill under the alliance, that Japan wanted Korea to put their customs under the Finance Department there and ensure that full control was vested in the Financial Adviser. While recognising the services of Brown and grateful for his efforts over the years, Japan did not want to renew his contract and hoped that the British government, like the Japanese, would allow him to retire with generous treatment. Brown already had the CMG;

could he be given a KCMG?³³ Much else was said of the financial settlement to be made, if only Brown would resign. It was clear from Lansdowne's response that the Foreign Office was not going to stand up for Brown as it had in 1897 and 1901. Minister Hayashi in Seoul asked Jordan if he would pass over the suggestion to Brown about resignation and the winding up of the existing customs administration. Brown accepted what was inevitable. Minister Hayashi and Financial Adviser Megata called on the Korean emperor on 27 August to inform him of the reform.³⁴

History is not without its strange twists. Although Hayashi reported that the Korean Emperor's sanction had previously been obtained, the emperor did send two emissaries to the British legation on the following day to express his concern: the retirement of Brown would be interpreted as an indication of Britain's abandonment of all interests in Korea and 'caused the Emperor peculiar pain'. Could nothing be done to prevent this? Jordan, who took great pride in the British management of the Korean Customs, had to shrug his shoulders and state the inevitable.³⁵ The emperor had a private meeting with Brown; but of that nothing is known.

On 24 November, a few days before Brown left Korea, his colleagues gathered to say farewell. Wakefield, former Commissioner at Wonsan, Pegorini, an Italian who had formerly been Commissioner at Pusan, Davidson and others presented the retiring Chief Commissioner with a model of a miniature of the first lighthouse erected on the coasts of Korea at Sowolmido (Little Roze Island). In making the presentation, Wakefield said:

You have, on the eve of your departure, inaugurated an enterprise that will last forever, you have erected lighthouses on the Korean coasts; we feel confident that as these will shine as guides to mariners through fogs and shoals so will your firm and honest administration at all times act as a beacon to direct and encourage future administrators.

Other lighthouses and navigation aids were about to be completed by the Customs administration to cover the main shipping lanes around Korea's coastline. Wakefield added:

Your departure from Korea will be keenly felt not only by your staff but by the officials and people of this and of foreign countries who are acquainted with the valuable works that you have initiated and carried on for the benefit of Korea, under difficulties understood by none but yourself, with no reward but the satisfaction derived from work well done.³⁶

Apart from H.W. Davidson, who stayed on in Korea until 1941, Brown's colleagues did not take up the offer to stay on in equivalent positions under Megata. Those who had connections with Sir Robert Hart's establishment chose to return to China, where their rates of pay were higher. Brown, as the heir-presumptive, was perhaps most aggrieved, but he later reached a senior post in the China service.³⁷

Brown had a cordial send off from all quarters in Seoul, Korean and foreign. He was awarded Korean and Japanese decorations. He made his return by a slow route, calling on Sir Robert Hart at Peking. Hart, who approached Customs affairs like an unemotional greengrocer, reported:

Brown has just left me after a week here: he has 27 months' leave. He wound up his Customs business nicely and brought back no claims for himself or his staff on IMC funds so I give him full pay.³⁸

This was to be the end of Brown's customs career and his Korean experience. For these he was rewarded with honours, becoming a Knight Bachelor in June 1906. It marked the beginning of a new career at the age of 71, for he was to serve the Chinese legation in London as adviser until his death in 1926.³⁹

In conclusion, my account of Brown cannot be considered definitive. While I have used some Korean language materials and been assisted by Professor Chong

Chinsok in obtaining others, what is lacking in my account is what Brown said to Korean ministers and officials and what they thought of him.

McLeavy Brown played an important part during a cataclysmic eleven year period of Korean history. Korea was a weak country which, by the misfortunes of geography, occupied a vital strategic position. It fell between the upper and nether millstones of Russia and Japan. The Korean government, though divided, acted skilfully by playing off both sides and by using well-disposed foreigners to win the support of neutral countries. This latter was the role of Brown. By ensuring the most stable form of income—customs revenue—and by attempting to hold a balance of fairness, Brown did assist Korea in a difficult time. In recognition of this on his retirement he was accorded the Order of the Tai Kuk (First Class).

NOTES

For help with materials for this paper I am grateful to Dr J.E. Hoare, to Professor Chông Chinsök of the Department of International Communication, Hankook University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, and to the librarians of the Mitchell Library, Sydney for access to the papers of Dr Ernest Morrison.

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2. Hart to Campbell, 2 July 1893, in *Hart*, vol.2, no. 894.
3. Hart to Campbell, 1 Oct. 1893, in *Hart*, vol.2, no. 906. See also Hart to Campbell, 29 Oct. 1893 in *Hart*, vol.2, no. 910.

4. Hillier to O'Connor, 30 Oct. 1894 in K. Bourne and D.C. Watt (eds), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print*, Part I Series E, "Asia 1860-1914", vol.4, document 623 (Maryland, 1989). Hereafter cited as "FOCP."
5. *The Korean Repository*, Sept. 1896, p.369.
6. Jordan to MacDonald, 18 Oct. and 11 Nov. 1897 in FOCP, vol.6, documents 258 and 268. Also Park Il-keun (ed.), *Anglo-American and Chinese Diplomatic Materials relating to Korea, 1887-97* (Pusan National University, 1984), p.1385.
7. MacDonald to Salisbury, 14 Nov. 1897 in FOCP, vol.6, doc. 255.
8. Jordan to MacDonald, 22 Dec. 1897 in FOCP, vol.6, doc. 283.
9. Adm. Sir A. Buller to Admiralty, 15 Dec. 1897 and Admiralty to Foreign Office, 17 Dec. 1897, in FOCP, vol.6, docs. 271 and 261.
10. Goschen to Salisbury, 30 Oct. 1897 in FOCP, vol.6, doc. 253.
11. Jordan to MacDonald, 6 Jan. 1898 in FOCP, vol.6, doc. 295. For a general account of the January crisis in Korea, Manchuria and north China, see I. H. Nish, "The Royal Navy and the Taking of Weihaiwei, 1898-1905," *Mariner's Mirror*, no.54 (1967), pp.42-4.
12. cf Jordan to Salisbury, 15 July 1899 in FOCP, vol.7, doc. 83.
13. One of the interesting explanations of British policy in Korea and its attitude towards the Customs Organization there is to be found in Gubbins to Satow, 5 Oct. 1900 in the E.M. Satow papers 9/14 (Kew: Public Record Office):

"A minister like Dr [Horace] Allen who has great personal influence with the Emperor, and the Japanese and Russian Representatives, whose political interests in Corea justify frequent audiences of His Majesty, are in a better position than their colleagues to exercise pressure on the government."

Hence Britain had to retain such influence as it had through Brown and the Customs.
14. Isabella Bird, *Korea and Her Neighbours* (London, 1898), p.292.
15. Jordan to Salisbury, 6 Aug. 1899, in FOCP, vol.7, doc. 95.
16. Jordan to Salisbury, 11 Oct. 1899 in FOCP, vol.7, doc. 123.
17. Gubbins to Lansdowne, 21 March 1901, in FOCP, vol.7, doc. 297.
18. Gubbins to Lansdowne, 22 March 1901 in FOCP, vol.7, doc. 298.

19. *Nihon gaiko bunsho*, vol.34, nos 410-14, especially no. 413. Also, I.H. Nish, "Korea between Japan and Russia, 1900-1904," *Papers presented at the 6th Annual Conference of AKSE, 1983* (Seoul 1983), p.197.
20. Lansdowne to Gubbins, 23 March 1901 and Gubbins to Lansdowne, 1 April 1901, in FOCP, vol.7, docs 299 and 304.
21. Gubbins to Lansdowne, 21 April 1901, in FOCP, vol.7, doc. 309.
22. MacDonald to Lansdowne, 16 May 1901, in FOCP, vol.7, doc. 349.
23. G. Bell to G.E. Morrison, 21 May 1903, in Lo Hui-min (ed), *Correspondence of G.E. Morrison* (Cambridge, 1976), vol.1, p.297.
24. G.E. Morrison to V. Chirol, May 1905 in Lo, *Morrison*, vol.1, p.300.
25. Jordan to Campbell, 28 Jan. 1908, in FC 800/244 (Beilby Alson papers in the Public Records Office, Kew).
26. H.W. Davidson, *The First Korean Customs Service* (unpublished manuscript), p.3. The manuscript was kindly made available by J. E. Hoare.
27. G. E. Morrison to J. O. P. Bland, 23 Oct. 1903, in Lo, *Morrison*, vol.1, p.235.
28. *Nihon gaiko bunsho*, vol.38/I, no. 798. It was widely believed that Brown's influence had also increased since the Japanese occupation of the peninsula.
29. Jordan to Lansdowne, 19 Oct. 1904, in FOCP, vol.8, doc. 239.
30. Megata Tanetaro (1853-1926) studied abroad at Harvard Law School. He entered the Ministry of Finance in 1883 and after service as head of Customs at Yokohama was responsible for taxation until his appointment to Korea.
31. The papers of Dr George Ernest Morrison, Morrison diary, entries for 8 and 14 April 1905 (Mitchell Library, Sydney).

Also see Chong Chinsok, *The Korean Problem in Anglo-Japanese Relations, 1904-10* (Seoul, 1987), p.110.
32. Jordan to Lansdowne, 8 May 1905, in FOCP, vol.8, doc. 318.
33. *Nihon gaiko bunsho*, vol.38/I, no. 801.

Also Jordan to Lansdowne, 30 Aug. 1905, in FOCP, vol.8, doc. 344; Hayashi Gonsuke, *Waga 70-nen wo kataru* (Tokyo, 1935), pp.244-52.
34. *Nihon gaiko bunsho*, vol.38/I, nos. 805-6.
35. Jordan to Lansdowne, 30 Aug. 1905, in FOCP, vol.8, doc. 344.
36. *Japan Weekly Mail*, 16 December 1905. I owe this reference to Chong Chinsok.
37. Morrison diary, 20 and 22 May 1906.

38. Hart to Campbell, 17 December 1905, in *Hart*, vol.2, doc. 1392.
39. It is alleged in Lo, *Morrison*, vol.2, p.25 that Brown as a close friend of Morrison was recommended by the latter as Counsellor to the Chinese Legation in London. This is confirmed in Jordan to Campbell, 28 January 1908, in FO 8--/244. There are various references to the effect that Brown returned to Korea; but I have found no evidence of this.

THE QUALITY PUZZLE: HOW HAS KOREAN INDUSTRY MASTERED TECHNOLOGY SO FAST?

ANDREW TANK

This paper asks why south Korea has managed to produce export quality manufactures so much more effectively than other developing nations. It argues that the interaction between a hostile external environment and a cohesive, ambitious internal community forced the pace of development beyond that achievable under less intense conditions. Few other countries—including Korea in the coming years—will be able to replicate such conditions.

The Economic Backdrop to Korea's Quality Miracle

Corporations face an economic balance which has shifted from solving the problems of shortage to solving the problems of glut. The period of post-war reconstruction laid stress on production, with associated anxieties about lack of food, minerals and manufactures. The 1970s oil shocks extended this "shortage mentality". But the early 1980s recession revealed a completely changed economic landscape. World prices of traded commodities (grain, oil, minerals) fell dramatically and competition in all spheres of economic activity increased sharply. So now corporate

priorities are focused closely on competitiveness, or put more simply "meeting customer needs". The age of the engineer has given way to the age of the marketeer.

At the heart of south Korea's remarkable economic advance has been the ability to deliver high-quality manufactured products in a wide variety of industries. It is now the world's twelfth biggest exporter. This has been achieved by marshalling international flows of capital and technology, combining them with indigenous, highly committed factors of production, and satisfying customers in a global market place. Table 1 describes this international position. Note that south Korea's "true" ranking in the "Exporters' League Table" should be tenth, since much of the value of exports from Hong Kong and the European Benelux countries is entrepot trade.

Table 1: The World's Top Fifteen Exporters (1)

Rank	Country	Exports (2)
1.	West Germany	293,790
2.	USA	250,405
3.	Japan	231,286
4.	Benelux (3)	175,445
5.	France	148,382
6.	United Kingdom	130,868
7.	Italy	116,086
8.	USSR (4)	97,336
9.	Canada	97,082
10.	Taiwan	52,632
11.	Hong Kong	48,475
12.	South Korea	47,282
13.	Switzerland	45,515
14.	Sweden	44,518
15.	PR China	39,542

Notes: (1) The above 15 territories account for 71.5% of total world exports. (2) US\$ million; 1987; f.o.b.; visible exports (ie tangible products—commodities, components, and manufactures—but excluding so called "invisible" services such as transport, tourism, banking, insurance, interest, dividends and earnings). (3) Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg, containing a high proportion of entrepot trade. (4) 1986 figure.

Table 2: Exports from Asia

Rank	Country	Exports (1)	Populations (2)
1.	Japan	231.3	122.1
2.	Taiwan	52.6	19.4
3.	Hong Kong	48.5	5.6
4.	South Korea	47.3	42.1
5.	PR China	39.5	1053.2
6.	Singapore	28.7	2.6
7.	Malaysia	17.9	16.6
8.	Indonesia	14.8	170.5
9.	Thailand	11.7	53.6
10.	India	11.3	781.4
11.	Philippines	5.6	57.4
12.	Pakistan	4.2	102.2
13.	Sri Lanka	1.4	16.3
14.	Papua New Guinea	1.1	3.5
15.	Bangladesh	0.9	102.6

Notes: (1) US\$ billion; 1987; f.o.b.; visible exports. (2) Million.
Source: The Economist Group

What is Total Quality Management?

Total Quality Management is a management philosophy which describes techniques to ensure customer orientation. The word "Quality" is here defined as "conformity to agreed customer requirements". Note that this does not mean that quality products are expensive ones—rather that they meet needs at an acceptable price. A Citroen 2CV car is a quality product since it meets the needs of a large number of customers at a modest price—whilst the DeLorean sports car was not a quality product—despite its technological prowess, few people were prepared to buy it. (Examples of British companies who have staged impressive recoveries by embracing Total Quality management techniques include British Airways, Rank Xerox and the computer maker ICL).

The Engines of Korea's Economic Advance

Contrary to popular belief low labour costs have not been the principal reason why south Korea has become such a significant force in textiles, steel, shipbuilding, cars, consumer electronics, semiconductors, construction and other sectors. Rather, a combination of capital intensive manufacturing plants, a highly educated and flexible workforce and a crucial sense of national commitment have ensured south Korea has succeeded in delivering export quality.

How did south Korea achieve this feat, when so many other developing countries have manifestly failed to do so? This paper picks out some of the most crucial factors, but it is important to stress that it has been the interplay of these factors which has produced Korea's extraordinary rate and type of advance. Most countries in Asia, even the most impoverished, share certain of these attributes: Korea's success has relied on putting them all together.

External Factors

i. Trade

The Koreans are not intrinsically traders, and very, very reluctantly accept the capitalist world trading system. As one senior Samsung executive put it, "By the mid-1990s we will be a responsible member of the world economic clubs (GATT, OECD & C) not because we want to, but because we have to".

Following the Korean War south Korea had no significant industrial base or mineral resources (both were

in north Korea) and an impoverished domestic market. Total output (GNP) in 1953 was just \$1.4 bn (at current prices): a subsistence economy. Producing products of export quality was (and to a large extent remains) the only available engine of expansion. Visible exports now account for 37% of GNP, compared to 14% in Japan and 22% in the UK. This reliance on exports has forced the Korean manufacturing industry (but not other sectors such as farming or non-tradeable services) to build to international quality standards.

ii. Japan

Japan has been a crucial "tutor" to south Korea. Much of the south Korean success in terms of management style, production engineering and technology transfer is due to successful mimicking of Japanese methods.

Since 1961 55% of the technology transfers to Korea have been from Japan. Many of the older business leaders retain strong connections with their Japanese counterparts and—especially in light of the recent yen appreciation—Japanese companies have invested heavily (\$1.5 bn in the last five years) in Korean industry. However, the role of Japan goes back much further. Indeed, in retrospect, the 1876 treaty that Japan forced on Korea marked a pivotal point in Korea's industrial development. It was the end of Korea's connection to a decaying Chinese economy, an economy stagnating in corruption and undynamic in technology, and the beginning of a liaison with East Asia's new industrial powerhouse.

Clearly, until 1945 this relationship was a brutally imperialistic one, with Japanese industrial interests using Korea as a convenient colonial adjunct. Even so, and even as occupiers, Japanese did invest in Korea to ensure it

remained a viable prop to their ambitions. Especially after 1910, the Korean people were learning the techniques of industrial power. Formal education was widely expanded, workers were trained in factory discipline, and industrial development displaced dependence on agriculture. By 1938 Korea had 200,000 industrial workers. The result was that, though the physical infrastructure was totally devastated in 1953, the people in south Korea were unusually receptive to new industrial development. Also, the residue of enmity left by the Japanese provided a painful grain to fatten Korea's industrial oyster.

iii. *The USA*

The USA contributed much by rebuilding the national infrastructure during the 1950s and 1960s, through training skilled technocrats, and by providing management skills. Direct aid between 1953 and 1970 amounted to \$6 bn in concessionary aid and \$7 billion in military aid, and during the 1950s accounted for 75% of gross investment. In short, the US gave Korea a brand new national infrastructure in the 1950s and US-trained technocrats master-minded the astute economic management of the next two decades.

Equally important, the US has provided the demand to amortise investments in Korea's ambitious, and highly risky, development process. Direct demand for munitions and other products during the Vietnam war boosted Korean industry in the 1960s, while more recently domestic US demand for Korean steel, cassette recorders, cars and many other consumer goods has sustained it. It is important to note that without the assurance of this large US market, Korea's export-oriented, industry-led expansion would almost certainly have suffered the same fate as that of many other developing countries, who invested in "White Elephant" industrial projects that went bankrupt.

iv. *Threat*

The constant threat of war still today keeps the country in a state of anxious readiness, and focuses minds on the job in hand. Life is serious, economic achievement is a surrogate form of national assertion and—on economic issues—there is much sense of common purpose. In terms of promoting quality this has several direct effects: military requirements forced engineers in aerospace, electronics and the auto industries to build to high specifications. But the ancillary benefits in the wider industrial community are probably more important. For the Republic of Korea, economic achievement is equated with national achievement and both are seen as essential supports for overall security. The economic engine is viewed as part of a common national heritage to be nurtured by all players in the industrial scene. Even during the spate of strikes in the summer of 1987, when workers were demanding more money and better conditions, few were asking for reduced working hours.

Internal Factors

i. *People*

The most distinctive internal factor explaining Korea's excellent quality performance is the characteristics of the people. The general level of education is very high, with literacy levels exceeding those in the USA or the UK for instance, and learning is held in high esteem. The workers are very eager to innovate, have an acute inquisitiveness, and are interested in upgrading work practices.

Undoubtedly Korean workers do work very hard—the average work week has increased from 50 hours in 1975 to

54 hours today—but it is wrong to characterise them as docile drones. On the contrary they are eager, motivated and on occasion, rebellious. As one American who has worked with Korean entrepreneurs for 20 years put it: "They are instant experts infected with the 'Can-Do' syndrome". This attitude is evident throughout the Korean corporations. At the shopfloor level the much-publicised Japanese ethic of continuous improvement is at work (for reasons see under "Education" below); at middle management level the pace of change has been so rapid that there are plenty of opportunities for bright young managers; at the senior level prodigious entrepreneurs like Hyundai's Chung Ju-young [Chōng Chuyōng], Samsung's Lee Byung Chull [Yi Pyōngch'ōl] or Daewoo's Kim Woo-Choong [Kim Ujung] have been given scope to live out their grandiose dreams.

In Korea, the notion that ambitions should be just beyond your capabilities is taken to extremes. In industry after industry senior managers have set targets that were believed to be widely optimistic by "experts". This extravagant ambition has forced the pace of advance in Korea in a way quite inconceivable in actions used to steady advance and the quiet contemplation of alternatives. As a footnote it should be added that such ambitions have frequently unravelled, exposing Korea's *chaebōl*—and the nation itself—to awesome risks. And many observers note that this ability to "pick winners" will prove increasingly difficult in future.

ii. Education

The contribution of broad, comprehensive education across the whole population remains one of Korea's most potent economic attributes. Confucian respect for learning underpins an educational infrastructure that puts that of many much richer countries to shame.

Although now ignored, the colonial Japanese laid impressive foundations—increasing the primary school enrolment from 20,000 in 1919 to 900,000 in 1937 on one estimate. The Republic of Korea has subsequently devoted massive sums to education. In 1961, education was made compulsory to age 14—an extraordinarily enlightened decision for such an impoverished country—and it has since been extended to age 18. 1.2 million students are in Tertiary education—and 40% of graduates are in science and engineering. Although some educationalists question the quality of the teaching methods, the sheer bulk of learning going on is awesome to observers from America and Europe—final year students at Kyōnggi High School in Seoul are expected to put in 4-5 hours homework per night, and much more in advance of examinations.

The results of all this in industrial terms is that employees in Korea are rapidly able to master new technology. On the auto production lines, for instance, assembly workers are the Aristocracy of Labour—as they were in Henry Ford's Detroit. As one manufacturing manager put it to me:

In America or Europe we staff our car plants with the dregs—people who can't find a job anywhere else. Here [in Korea] these guys really want to be here, building cars.

It is debatable how long such highly educated workers—especially the young women who staff the dullest assembly lines—will be prepared to put up with such jobs. Equally, as Korean living standards rise, workers in Ulsan or Seoul will no longer receive such low wages compared to rivals elsewhere in the world. But it is clear that the high educational quality of the Korean workforce is a crucial dynamic in perpetuating the quality miracle.

iii. *Investment*

This high quality labour force has also been given the tools to do the job. Korean industrialists, greatly assisted by an (economically) benevolent autocratic state to marshal resources, have invested very heavily in high risk projects to acquire technology, build high-technology factories and provide south Korea with a thoroughly up-to-date industrial fabric.

Throughout Korea's rapid expansion the society as a whole has ensured that massive investment requirements have been met. A thrifty population has saved prodigiously, so that savings—and hence investment—have been well over 30% of total income each year. Money has not been allocated to consumption, still viewed as frivolous to many Koreans. The imperative has been to save, to secure the future in a personal and, hence, a national sense. However, even such high savings rates did not quench the thirst of Korean industry for investment funds in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Korean industrialists, dreaming apparently impossible dreams, were demanding massive investments in highly capital-intensive steel-mills, shipyards, chemical complexes and auto plants. The state turned abroad for the funds and, effectively, banked the nation on fulfilling those impossible dreams. The gamble almost bankrupted the state in 1980, and debts continued to spiral to levels proportionately much higher than those in Latin America. In 1985 external debt totalled nearly \$50 billion.

This highly dangerous policy, which would be condemned as grotesquely irresponsible if done by most other developing countries, worked. South Korea has consistently (on average) earned a rate of return greater than the cost of capital, and hence the debt has never become unmanageable. The result is that across the whole range of economic activity Korean industry uses

high-grade equipment. There is an interesting footnote, however. Since 1985, the Koreans have been using their current account surpluses to retire debt at as fast a rate as possible. Although there are still plenty of capital-hungry projects that the nation could invest in, its leaders have decided that national pride demands that Korea should not be a debtor nation. In strict economic terms this may be unwise; but national pride is ultimately much more important than economics.

iv. *Technology acquisition*

The Korean attitude to technology is comparable to that for raw materials or capital: "if you haven't got it, go out into the world and find it". Moreover, once found—whether begged, borrowed, bought or stolen—technology is put to work at speed.

Samsung's entry to the world semiconductor market illustrates this clearly. The company decided to enter this highly competitive, very cyclical business, in the early 1980s. It acquired a technology license from Micron Technology (and also ended up compensating another company, Texas Instruments, for alleged patent infringement), built a fabrication plant in six months—under half the industry norm—and produced 7 million wafers in the first year, against a forecast of 2 million. There was much doubt among industry specialists that Korea would be capable of advancing so fast in a field that is on the very limits of electronics technology. Yet Korean companies—led by Samsung, but now joined by Hyundai and Goldstar—invested a total of US\$ 1,200 million between 1983 and 1987 in semiconductor manufacturing, and have now won over 10% of the world market for memory chips.

More remarkable than this feat of investment is the pace of technology assimilation. The Korean companies

produced their first volume memory chip in 1984. It was a 64K DRAM, a device capable of storing 64,000 pieces of information in easily retrievable form on a piece of silicon the size of a thumbnail. At that stage Samsung was about 3 years behind its American and Japanese rivals. In 1990 Samsung plans to introduce a 4 megabyte DRAM—capable of storing 4,000,000 pieces of information on a thumbnail-sized silicon sliver—at roughly the same time as its competitors. This example, replicated in many less advanced sectors (high technology sports shoe manufacture by Reebok, steel manufacture by POSCO, car making by Hyundai and so forth), shows how Korean companies have been able to climb the "technology ladder" with extraordinary speed.

Can this Continue?

The question most often asked by Western industrialists observing Korea's manifold achievements is: where will this end?

The answer is that it won't, although the implications are not as troublesome as many often fear. Korea is not another Japan; its overall size, technology level, and the strength of industrial fabric are all very weak by comparison. Moreover its achievements have been focused on certain leading sectors, leaving large parts of the Korean economy largely untouched by the modern, quality-conscious world. And, although there is still plenty of steam left in the Korean industrial engine, its speed of advance is likely to slow. Some key danger-points are:

- 1) Trade: South Korea is unusually exposed to a competitive global trading environment. Any protectionism, especially in the USA, could

easily destabilize its ambitious development plans.

- 2) Democracy has its cost. Korea's benevolent autocracy enabled that condition so beloved of international investors: stability. In the long run, Korea's quality miracle demands greater participation and involvement by its employees, but in the short run labour unrest and dissent will almost certainly unsettle it.
- 3) Innovation is still novel to Korea. So far Korea's giant *chaebŏl* have introduced no new product concept (such as a microwave oven, front-wheel drive car or video cassette recorder) to the world; they have always been diligent imitators. Thoughtful companies are investing in this problem, but paradigm-transforming innovations demand more than money.
- 4) Financial sophistication is still extremely rare. Korea has many bankers who cannot realistically judge a loan-risk, stockbrokers who have never been exposed to genuine down-side risk and industrialists whose investment decisions have always been underwritten by the state. On a simple level this is already costing the *chaebŏl* heavily by, for instance, lack of access to instruments like currency hedging; at a deeper level, the society is unable to assess options on a sound financial basis.

**WHAT CAN KOREAN INTERNATIONAL
COMPANIES LEARN FROM JAPANESE
MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS?**

KIM TONGHWAN

The Economic Growth of Korea

Korea is currently undergoing a remarkable transformation which can be measured in terms of its political, economic, and social development. Rapid economic growth over the past quarter century has been one of Korea's major achievements. In 1962, when Korea launched its first five-year economic development plan, its per capita GNP (in current prices) was no more than \$81. By 1988, this figure had risen to \$3,728. Korea also achieved a current account surplus during the three consecutive years to 1989. It is apparent that Korea is now on the brink of joining the ranks of the lower OECD industrialized nations.

The literature on Korean economic development cites a number of factors which have played important roles in the nation's economic success during the last 25 years. It is reasonable to cite the following three basic elements as primary factors of that success: first, an internationally oriented economic development strategy; second, a quality

labour supply with a high level of education; third, a favourable international economic environment. Even though these three factors are often cited as the key elements of success, it is safe to say that exports are the engine of the contemporary economic development, and that exports will continue to be the critical ingredient in the economic transformation until the end of this century. Over the past 25 years, export growth has stimulated the inflow of technology and the acquisition of knowledge, and has at the same time helped raise Korea's total productivity growth to unusually high levels.

Despite the successful trade performance and economic growth of the recent past, Korea is expected to face substantial hurdles that must be overcome if it is to maintain economic growth. As examples of major current challenges, I may cite protectionism in major markets and the recent current account surplus.

The Challenge of Rising Protectionism

Because of its export-oriented trade strategy, Korea's growth has become highly dependent on trade. In 1988, more than 85% of the GNP was accounted for by exports and imports. Because of this, Korea is now extremely vulnerable to protectionism. It is more vulnerable than other trading nations because of its heavy dependence on the United States, Japan, Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom, which together account for two-thirds of its exports; the United States alone currently accounts for nearly 40%. Another reason for this vulnerability is that Korea's exports consist predominantly of unusually protection-prone products such as textiles and clothing, steel, consumer electronics and cars. These products are all highly sensitive politically either because they are labour-intensive or because market shares can be gained

only by displacing existing suppliers. In recent years there has been a marked trend towards bilateralism on the part of large industrial countries in an attempt to solve trade problems. If this continues Korea, a small country with limited bargaining power, will be at a disadvantage when dealing with large trading partners. At present, there are reports that a large proportion of Korea's major exports are or will be subject to import restrictions in the countries of the OECD. If Korea's new exports—cars, electronics, computers, auto parts, and machinery—are subject to controls in the future, then a large amount of Korea's investment for export growth will be short-circuited.

To go some way towards meeting the current challenge of sustaining Korean economic growth, it is worth examining the activities of Japanese multinational corporations closely.

Japanese Multinational Corporations: Sources of Growth

I start with the observation that there is nothing wrong with learning useful lessons from others. Korea has thus followed the model for economic development set by the Japanese in both the private and government sectors. This strategy has been facilitated by geographic and economic proximity. And this is why Korea and Japan are comparable in the speed and structure of their development. Yet it is crucial to recognise their different strategies towards foreign direct investment and the development of technology.

Operating with two severe handicaps—poor natural resources and the sheer distance from important foreign markets—many Japanese multinational corporations, especially those facing intense foreign competition and

pressure, have overcome their difficulties through careful analysis of the exact situation and the adoption of a long-term strategy.

Japan is critically dependent on overseas resources, resources of both a physical and technological nature. Trade, the absorption and transfer of technology, and direct foreign investment are the integral instruments of Japan's industrial progress. Japan has proved itself more adept than any other industrialized nation at deliberately making the best use of its environment, systems, and policy structures. It has also maximised the benefits arising from the force of ownership advantage, location advantages, and the internationalization of production. External commercial contracts, notably for the transfer of technology and direct investment, have been used to upgrade the industrial structure and improve the trading competitiveness of the Japanese economy at home.

Japan sees itself as a trade-dependent nation. Since it has a relatively large population with very limited natural resources, its industrialization was from the outset designed to make it a workshop which would import raw materials from overseas, process them into finished goods at home, and export them back onto the international market. In order to survive, Japan consequently has to export to pay for its required import of resources. In this sense, Korea is in a very similar situation to Japan.

i. *Foreign direct investment of Japanese multinational corporations*

Despite its large domestic market supported by the free world's second largest economy, Japan has been the host country for a relatively small amount of foreign direct investment. Yet it has grown quickly to become the world's third largest overseas investor, after only the United States and the United Kingdom. In 1980, Japan's

foreign direct investment of \$36,497 million, was twelve times greater than its inward investment. That one year's \$2,979 million rapid growth (over previous years) in overseas investment was designed to increase Japan's exports by setting up marketing networks that would secure vital supplies of industrial resources by organizing resource-extractive ventures abroad. Further, those segments of manufacturing that are no longer suitable to be based at home for a variety of politico-economic and environmental reasons have been transferred overseas.

To understand the essence of Japanese multinational corporations' foreign direct investment, it is vital to bear in mind the geographical location and the types of industry favoured. The location of Japanese foreign investment has been determined by the desire to multinationalize production in mature rather than technologically intensive sectors of industry. Therefore, Japanese multinational production is highly concentrated in the currently industrializing Third World countries of Asia and Latin America. By steering international production towards the NICs (newly industrialized countries), Japanese firms gain from very low production costs and highly productive labour forces. They also get to participate in the world's fastest growing markets.

The foreign investment of Japanese firms in the United States and Europe does include some production, undertaken largely in response to real or threatened trade restrictions. But such production is both modest in proportion and overwhelmingly geared towards supporting the sales of goods actually produced in Japan or the NICs. Western industrialized countries have been considered more as important markets than as production sites.

The geographical distribution of Japanese foreign production sites stands in sharp contrast to the United States and European patterns. American foreign direct investment in manufacturing has long been oriented

toward Canada, Europe, and to a lesser extent Latin America; British investment has been directed to Europe and to former Dominion, Empire, and Commonwealth countries.

There has also been a shift in Japan's overseas manufacturing from a heavy concentration in developing Asian countries towards a diversification into the more advanced countries, particularly into the United States and Europe. Most of these manufacturing ventures, as I have indicated, have been in response to the rise of protectionism. Recently, bowing to pressure from foreign countries to produce locally, many of Japan's export-competitive manufacturers, particularly those active in the production of electronics and cars, have been forced to experiment with direct production as their second best strategy. Yet, because of the unfavourable manufacturing environment overseas, Japan's new ventures in industrialized countries are reportedly barely breaking even. Profitability is often achieved only by the use of intermediate inputs of parts and components imported direct from Japan, which has a comparative advantage in terms of trade since it builds up the technology of the mother country.

ii. *The technological advancement of Japanese multinational corporations*

Japan's dependence on advanced foreign technology is clearly revealed in its balance of trade in technology. Japan was once a huge deficit country, paying more royalties and fees overseas than it received. The successful absorption of advanced foreign technology was the major factor in the miracle of Japan's structural upgrading and post-war economic growth.

The wide technological gap that existed between Japan and the West, particularly Japan and the United

States, at the end of the Second World War presented both an opportunity and a threat. There was the opportunity to use advanced foreign technologies without starting from scratch, but there was also the threat of Japan's domestic industry collapsing under the control of foreign companies. Aware of the dangers of foreign domination of industry yet eager to absorb advanced technologies from the West, the government restricted foreign direct investment at home while encouraging imports of technology through licensing agreements.

Another aspect of the Japanese research and development (R & D) effort is that more than two-thirds is funded by business. It therefore ultimately aims to produce commercial results. The Japanese proportion of business-funded R & D is the highest in any industrialized nation after Switzerland. It is almost the mirror image of the proportion of private-to-public funding of R & D in countries such as the United States, Britain and France where government funding, especially for defence, constitutes about 60% of the national R & D effort.

The vast majority of the Japanese effort is not only business oriented but also directed at improving or advancing existing technology. In contrast, the United States, France, and above all Britain are extraordinarily fertile in developing radical breakthrough innovations. These tend to produce Concorde, Rolls-Royce RB-211 jet engines, and large financial losses.

Additionally, Japanese firms have also directed their R & D and innovative activity towards serving a number of distinctive user needs. First, a large proportion of Japanese innovation—more than one third—has been concerned with the conservation of raw materials and energy. Second, a large proportion has dealt with an acute problem particular to the Japanese: the nation's very limited land space. Thus, space saving miniature components have been created for small homes and small

city streets. In the process of miniaturization, numerous improvements in technology have been made.

Japan has turned many of its adversities into advantages. Resource dependent as it is, it has striven to make the most of the liberal post-war trade environment which existed beyond Japan for both commodities and technology. It has certainly succeeded in its attempt. Direct foreign investment and transfers of technology have been both the facilitators and concomitants of Japan's structural transformation.

Current Internationalization Activities of Korean Enterprises

In Korea today, the business of overseas investment by domestic enterprises is brisk, encouraged by central government's policy of expediting foreign direct investment. About \$480 million of direct investment for 253 projects was approved in 1988. The 1988 total represents a considerable increase both in the amount and the number of projects over 1987 (\$358 million for 109 projects). The Bank of Korea announced in January 1989 that overseas investment by domestic business had reached \$63 million in 25 cases over the month (up from \$47.3 million in 13 instances for the same period of 1988).

Industrial manufactures topped the list of industrial overseas investments with \$208 million for 114 projects in 1988, followed by trades with \$53 million for 92 projects. Again, in January 1989, manufacturing industries topped the list of overseas investments with \$36 million for 15 cases. By geographical region, the United States attracted the largest volume of Korean direct investment with \$230 million for 78 projects in 1988. South-east Asia followed with \$75 million for 118 projects.

These statistics show that there are clear differences between Korea and Japan in their foreign direct investment: Korean firms' major projects in this sphere during recent years have been concentrated in manufactures, and the most popular location for production is North America. International production in industrialized countries can be risky, as Japanese corporations have been aware, unless firms have technological advantages over the host country. Therefore, when Korean international companies consider their foreign investment, they need to analyse not only locations but also levels of technology. We might note that Korea's technological relationship with Japan has enabled it to move with speed into world markets in which technical quality is required. But it remains crucial to ensure against a continuing dependency, because this gets more risky as Korea and Japan begin to compete seriously for international market shares in the same product lines.

Similarly, in reviewing recent transactions between Korea and China, Korean companies need to pay careful attention to the long-term effects of foreign direct investment. China is interested in developing its own manufacturing and exporting capability rather than in the continued import from Korea of electronics, machinery and transportation equipment. What China basically wants is financial investment and the transfer of technology. It would be disturbing if some Korean companies were to promote such transfers, as they would increase the competitiveness of the country that has the greatest potential to fight for an increasing share of Korea's markets.

Even though Korea has followed Japanese multinational corporations' internationalization models and strategies, Korean firms now have to recognise the differences between the two countries in relation to the international market. Japan, still a relatively closed economy, moved into export markets with well established

industries which enjoyed relative technological advantages. Korea, on the other hand, has often entered global markets with little experience at home, relying on low labour costs and continuing substantial imports of machinery, components and technology.

Learning from other countries requires careful analysis, patience and a long-term view. Blind imitation will not pay off.

THE TRADITION OF KOREAN POETRY

KEVIN O'ROURKE

In the West we tend to look on the poet as a man apart, a prophet, a seer, someone just a little mad. Old Korea had no such conception. Rather, skill in poetic composition was a very practical business; it was one of the major indicators of a man's ability to serve his country well as a public servant, and at the same time it was the yardstick of a man's personal cultivation. Although skill in poetry is no longer the key to preferment for your average aspiring young person, the legacy of the tradition is still evident today in poetry. The poet still enjoys a special place in the Korean heart: everyone in Korea writes poetry.

A few general remarks about the tradition may help to get things in perspective. Firstly, most Korean poetry is characterised by what may be termed a movement towards transcendence. This is typical of the Buddhist-Taoist tradition which always looks toward freedom and liberation; it is also typical of the Confucian tradition which, while espousing an ideology that aspires toward order and control, still seeks the ultimate in wisdom. Personal cultivation is the methodology in both ideologies. Thus, in practice, transcendent man, to which Buddhism and Taoism aspire, and the sage or wise man, to which Confucianism aspires, are one and the same.

The transcendental approach is also fundamental in the tradition of Tang and Song China. The Song dynasty poet, Yang Wanli, writes:

*Now, what is Poetry?
If you say it is simply a matter of words,
I will say a good poet gets rid of words.
If you say it is simply a matter of meaning,
I will say a good poet gets rid of meaning.
But you ask, without words and without meaning,
where is the poetry?
To this I reply: get rid of words and get rid of meaning
and there is still Poetry.*

Yang Wanli's poem represents an insight which we in the West did not acquire until the symbolist movement at the end of the nineteenth century: the poem as symbol, representing a content ultimately not expressible in words, something that transcends language and meaning, a dramatization of personal illumination.

Secondly, in Korea composition was usually spontaneous: a visit to a temple, meeting a friend, celebrating the arrival of spring, a gift of wine; a concrete emotion prompted the writing of a poem.

Thirdly, Korean poetry is "I" centred, confessional. In the hands of anything less than consummate artists, this sort of subjective tradition labours within severe limitations. But in the hands of great masters, the reader discovers his own experience—and consequently that of all man—in the experience of the poet, moving in the process from the particular to the universal. This is the mark of very good poetry indeed.

One last general point: the Korean poet's approach to nature is conceptual. Nature is not usually seen in terms of physical beauty. The appreciation of nature leads to contemplation, which in turn leads to rapture, not over physical beauty but over moral beauty. The poet does not

see this mountain, or this portion of the mountain; he does not see this flower or that petal. He sees the universal essence of mountain, the universal essence of flower, much in the same way as do the French symbolist poets. Professor Lee O-ryung [Yi Oryōng], in a paper read at the 1988 PEN congress in Seoul, made an interesting observation about the point of view in Korean art. He noted that the idea of perspective—a Western concept—implies a limiting of the point of view. In traditional Korean art—and here he includes poetry—the artist or poet painted or wrote from a continually changing point of view. It is, he says, as if the artist were viewing his subject from a helicopter. In modern times he concludes—taking Sowōl's *Mountain Flowers* as an example—Korean poets combine the techniques of limited and unlimited points of view.

The pattern of Korean poetry had been solidly established by the time Yi Kyubo (1168-1241) began to write *hanshi* in the Koryō dynasty (918-1392). *Hanshi* are poems in Chinese characters, written by Korean poets, which follow the rules of Chinese prosody. Yi Kyubo's *hanshi* are short, intensely personal, and very often dramatic vignettes from the poet's own life. He describes an external landscape—a temple, a posthouse, an inn—and then he moves to an inner landscape of the heart. The poems are brief, song-like and revelatory; they describe moments of personal illumination. The reader meets the poet in the more intense moments of the daily grind: it may be a problem on the job, a problem with one of his children or with his wife; it may be a visit to a temple or to a friend; it may be an occasion of sorrow or joy. Always, however, the occasion is intimately connected with the poet himself. The poem is Yi's reaction to the situation, his personal experience.

The ideal the poet strives to attain is brilliantly defined in what is perhaps Yi Kyubo's best known poem, *The Moon in the Well*:

*A mountain monk coveted the moon,
he drew water, a whole jar full;
but when he reached his temple, he discovered
that tilting the jar meant spilling the moon.¹*

One notices immediately that this poem functions on several levels at the same time: it functions as a metaphor of the detachment necessary to attain true enlightenment; it also functions as a metaphor of the poetic imagination at work. Yi Kyubo represents the tradition at its best. His poetry has beauty, drama, excitement, and inner light. Here he is on a visit to a remote hermitage:

*Desolate the monk's room beside the ancient tree;
one lamp burns in the shrine, one incense burner
smokes.
I ask the old monk how on earth he spends his days:
A chat when a guest comes; when the guest goes, a
nap.*

With a few deft strokes—tree, lamp, incense burner—the poet paints the hermitage before moving on, almost casually, to an intense Zen landscape of the heart. The monk represents that ideal of transcendence which cultivated men strove to attain. However, central in the poem is how the light generated by the monk touches the speaker. Thus, the focus of the poem is on the speaker; his experience, not the monk's, is dominant.

When we think of Chinese poetry, we invariably conjure up visions of moonlight on the autumn river, flower petals in the yard, travelling scholars with lame donkeys—usually looking for a winehouse at which to make a stop—lonely mountain temples with sage monks, or *yangban* aristocratic types sporting in bamboo groves or pine pavilions. Our perception is that of an extremely romantic tradition, far removed from the everyday cares of this world. And, of course, there is a certain basis for this kind of perception. For one thing, there is the profusion of

the sweet and vapid, which represents the tradition at its worst. However, there is nothing sweet or vapid about Yi Kyubo; much of his material is grounded solidly in the cares and concerns of everyday life. Some of it is even surprising. I think in particular of a lovely poem he wrote about his daughter:

Thinking of my children: first of two poems

*I have a young daughter;
already she knows how to call her dad and mom.
She drags her skirt along and plays at my knees;
she takes the mirror and imitates her mother at make-
up.
How many months now since we parted?
Suddenly it's as if she were by my side.
By nature I'm a wanderer;
dejected, I live in this foreign place.
For weeks I've been on a binge;
I've been laid up sick for a month.
I turn my head and look toward the palace in Seoul;
mountains and streams stretch oppressively far.
This morning suddenly I thought of you;
tears flowed down, wetting my skirt.
Boy, hurry and feed the horse;
my desire to go home grows more urgent
with every passing day.*

In the first place, it is very refreshing to see a man from Koryŏ filled with love for a daughter; to see his consuming interest in the child so that he notes how she plays and welcomes her games. And the image of the child at her mother's make-up kit could be from our own time. The poem begins beyond the poet with the picture of the child at play, but quickly moves to an inner landscape of parental joy and love, made more poignant by sadness. You feel the poet's dejection, his sense of being a wanderer and a failure, his problem with wine, his immense loneliness. In this mood of dejection, he thinks of the little

girl who loves him as much as he loves her. He feels he must have the consolation of her love to assuage his own grief; he is constrained to make the decision to go home. This sort of poem opens up a whole new poetic world. It introduces the real, the tangible; it deals with emotions you can almost touch. If there is one single quality that distinguishes first-rate Korean poetry from the mass of inferior work, it is this quality of sharply focused dramatic emotion. Yi Kyubo's *Resting at Shihu Inn* is a good example of the kind of poem I mean.

Excessive thirst is an old complaint.

Muggy summer's day; I set out again on a long journey.

With a pot of tea I try an experiment in taste;

it's like frozen snow going down my throat.

I rest again for a while in the pine pavilion;

already I feel Autumn in every bone.

The lad can't understand me at all;

he thinks it weird I delay so long.

My disposition has always been broad and liberal;

when I get to a place, I stay as long as I want;

when I meet an obstruction, immediately I stop;

when I ride a river, immediately I float.

What's the harm in staying here?

What's in it for me, if I go over there?

There's a lot of space between sky and earth;

my life has tranquillity.

The poet has set out on a long journey on a muggy summer day. Soon he feels the pangs of thirst, indicative perhaps of his problems with wine: he may have had a few too many the night before. At any rate, he tries a pot of tea, made presumably with an experimental mix, and it soothes his thirsty throat, sliding down like frozen snow. He is no longer a young man; the aches of age are beginning to tell. He rests again. The boy who is accompanying him, however, does not understand the

delay; he is anxious to get going. This is the signal for the ageing traveller to move to inner mediation. He thinks about liberality of the spirit: one must be flexible, unhurried, imperturbable, if one is to achieve true peace of mind. If one already possesses tranquility, the supreme virtue, why disturb the delicate balance? It is all marvellous, except for the hint toward the end, "What's in it for me, if I go over there"? For me, this is the key; the poet is saying things are not really so simple. Perhaps he is not quite as transcendent as he pretends to be. He can in fact be prevailed upon if the necessary reward is proffered. The style of the piece once again is dramatic. The speaker describes what he is doing, his thirst, his tiredness, the advance of age, the reaction of the young lad; then he moves on to the meditation on transcendence. The image of the tea sliding down like snow and the description of the lad's reaction are particularly fine.

Hanshi constitutes an almost unexplored field in terms of English translation. Apart from Peter Lee's work, Kim Jong-gil's *Slow Chrysanthemums*, Kim Chae-hyun's recently published *Poems by Zen Masters*, and the Yi Kyubo poems in my own *Tilting the Jar, Spilling the Moon*, practically nothing is available in English, even from the hands of Korean-born translators.

Hanshi poems are quite different from the better-known *shijo* in the feeling they engender. This difference in sensibility may derive from the fact that *hanshi* were written in Chinese, the language of literature and official business, whereas *shijo* were written in *han'gŭl*, the language of the home and of the common people. At any rate, *shijo* are even more private and more personal than *hanshi*. An image is introduced, developed, and the poet presents a statement of his own experience, all within the narrow confines of three lines and forty-five syllables. Nothing is allowed to get between the poet and his subject:

*The tree is diseased;
no one rests in its pavilion.
When it stood tall and verdant,
no one passed it by.
But the leaves have fallen, the boughs are broken;
not even birds perch there now.*

Notice the intensity of focus in this Chōng Ch'ōl (1536-1593) poem. We see the tree as it is now, ragged and broken, and we see it as it was when it was tall and verdant. The final line is like a surgeon's scalpel in its depiction of the fate of those who fall from political favour.

In *shijo* you don't usually find the poet dealing with specific people; usually it is "a monk", "a girl", "a temple", "a pavilion." On occasion you may find a temple named or a pavilion of a particular area specified, but name or geographical location is never integral. *Shijo* are never "written on the wall of a temple."

The *shijo* is a three-line poem, fourteen to sixteen syllables in each line, distributed through four distinct breath groups, the total number of syllables not being more than forty-five. This is the regular or ordinary *shijo*, called *p'yōng shijo*. The Chōng Ch'ōl poem just quoted is a *p'yōng shijo*. Here is another example by Kim Sujang (1690—?):

*On steamy summer dog days
I long to search out a cool clear valley,
strip off, hang my clothes on a branch
and sing an old Koryō song,
thus to wash in jade water
the grime and dust that mire my body.*

There are two variations of the basic form: the *ot shijo*, in which the first or the second line may be somewhat extended; the *sasōl shijo*, in which all three

lines may be extended, the first two without restriction, and the third within certain limits. The number of extra syllables show considerable variety. The *sasōl shijo* is distinguished by a wider range of subject matter than the traditional *shijo* and by a marvellous sense of humour:

*Rip your black robe asunder;
fashion a pair of breeches.
Take off your rosary:
use it for the donkey's crupper.
These ten years studying
Buddha's pure land,
Invoking the Goddess of Mercy
and Amitabha's saving hand,
let them go where they will.
Night on a nun's breast
is no time for reciting sutras.
(Anonymous).*

The earliest *shijo* are mostly political allegory, dealing with the fall of Koryō or the rise of the Chosōn dynasty. The typical *shijo* of the Chosōn period deal with Confucian precepts, seasonal changes, the inexorable advance of age, songs of love and loyalty toward the king, and songs in praise of wine. However, just as in the *hanshi* tradition the best *shijo* deal with transcendence. One notable difference between *hanshi* and *shijo*, however, is that *shijo* give the feel and favour of Korea, whereas *hanshi* seem quite indistinguishable from the tradition of Chinese poetry.

Until the end of the nineteenth century Chinese remained the language of government and literature. In 1884, the Western powers and Japan forced the opening of the Korean ports. This marked the end of the Hermit Kingdom (as Korea was known) and the beginning of a flood of Western influence. After Annexation in 1910, young Korean intellectuals began to go to Japan for university education. There they came in contact with

current trends in Japanese literary circles. The period was marked by a surge of nationalist sentiment, and a consequent movement which rejected Chinese and the Chinese tradition in favour of *han'gŭl* and the Western tradition. Working with Western models—Montpassant, Flaubert, Zola, Turgenev in the novel; Baudelaire, Verlaine, Yeats and Symons in poetry—these young writers began to create a new literature. Symons' *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* was translated into Japanese quite early in the twentieth century and became a sort of bible. Young Korean poets in Japan had a little English and rather less French. So most Korean translations of the time seem to have been made from Japanese texts—with an eye sometimes on the English original—and most of the theory the writers adopted came from Japanese translations of English sources. The result of this complex skein of influence was a poetry full of Pre-Raphaelite colours, characterised by a *fin de siècle* atmosphere of world-weariness, decadence and pessimism. Symons and Yeats were dominant, the early Yeats that is. This was clearly not a good starting point from which to create a new literature. Indeed, had Yeats not quickly abandoned his early mode he would perhaps have shared Symons' fate and long since have passed into relative oblivion. Kim Suwŏl and Han Yongun are the best of the new generation of Korean poets who emerged. Suwŏl died before he could realize his full potential; his is a sad lyrical voice characterized by a melancholy beauty. Han Yongun retains a special place in the Korean heart as a freedom-fighter and as a reform-minded Buddhist priest.

Unfortunately, however, the ghost of the 90s has lived on through Korea's modernist and postmodernist phase. There is obviously a profusion of poetic talent in Korea, but how the current poets will measure up to the great masters of the past in the acid test of time remains problematical. There are literally hundreds of poets publishing their work in authoritative journals, all of whom have been introduced with suitable encomiums by

eminent writers. A quick glance at the poems reveals titles like "Afternoon", "Flower", "Spring", "Autumn Day", "Vagabond's Song", etc. Much of this material is third-rate; the content parallels the title, revealing a lack of poetic sensibility and a profusion of pious generalizations. Good poetry is precise, concrete, accurate, incisive. Of course there are distinctive voices. Sŏ Chŏngju (b.1915) is quite unmistakable:

Untitled

*So hushed
the sky
an orchid
wondering
why
opened
its petals
wide*

The appeal of Sŏ Chŏngju's work rests firstly in his use of language, so distinctively that of his native Chŏlla Province, secondly in the sensuality particularly apparent in his early work which has evoked comparisons with Baudelaire and Yeats, and thirdly in his return to the spirit of the ancient Korean Kingdom of Shilla, essentially a Buddhist state, to find values that should inform the new Korea which is to replace the tragic Korea of the recent past. His approach is to present a poetry of revelation, with brief lyrics. Very often he gives only the barest bones, so the reader must make his own poem. This is coupled to an intense, Zen-style illumination. The prose poems carry the technique about as far as it can go, as evidenced in *Two Ascetics Meet on Sosulsan*:

Kwangi lived in his grass hut on the southern peak of Sosulsan, Tosong lived in a cave on the northern side; they were close friends and often travelled the intervening ten li to visit each other. Their

arrangements to meet were not according to our rigid norms of year, month, day and hour, but were based on a much more refined standard.

When a fresh breeze blew from the north, not too strong and not too weak, and the leaves on the trees leaned to the south, Tosong in the north followed that breeze toward Kwangi on the southern peak, and Kwangi, refreshed by the breeze, would come out to meet him.

And when the wind blew fair in the other direction, and the leaves on the trees leaned toward the north, Kwangi on the southern peak set out to visit Tosong on the northern peak, and Tosong, seeing how the breeze blew, would come out to meet his friend. Can't you hear the Immortals laugh?

Once again we see the theme of transcendence.

The recent literary resurrection of Chŏng Chiyong and Kim Kirim, buried in oblivion since the Korean War, has generated wide interest in literary circles. Both are steeped in the imagist mode. Chŏng Chiyong generates a special excitement:

Sea

*sideways it scuttled like a crab,
along the boundless mud flats
beneath a distant blue sky,
as if it had had come out of the mud
after a hundred years in hiding.*

The image of the sea scuttling like a crab is worth many a book of poems. No other contemporary Korean poet writes quite like this, not even Kim Kirim, though he too is an imagist in his approach and highly individual in his effects:

On the high seas

S.O.S.

Six thirty in the afternoon.

Suddenly,

*the world is shipwrecked,
caught on the hidden reef
of the sea of darkness.*

Help!

I forego the temptation to save it.

What we see in the work of these two poets is the discarding of the Pre-Raphaelite tints, which dominated the first phase of twentieth century Korean poetry, in favour of a more modern idiom which in the West was greatly indebted to the Chinese tradition. The pendulum has swung all the way.

The most translated contemporary Korean poet is presumably Cho Byung-Wha [Cho Pyŏnghwa]. He has been rendered into English by several translators; he has also been translated into French, German, Dutch, Chinese and Japanese. Largely neglected by the academics, he continues to be popular among the general public, due perhaps to a surface simplicity, the transparent clarity of the images in his best work, and the universality of his themes. Perhaps his definition of modern man and his dilemma comes nearest of all to the truth:

*I've cast off in life what may be cast off;
I've cast off in life what may not be cast off,
and here I am, just as you see me.*

NOTE

1. This is the title poem from the author's *Tilting the Jar, Spilling the Moon: Poems from Koryo, Choson, and Contemporary Korea* (Seoul, Universal Publishing, 1988). Several other poems included here previously appeared in that collection.

THOMAS HARDY IN KOREA

AGNITA TENNANT

In this paper I intend to present a brief survey of the process by which the works of Thomas Hardy were introduced to Korea and to suggest that he may have left some tangible marks on the development of modern Korean literature. I will also aim to bring out some features in Pak Kyöngni's novel sequence *Toji (Land)* that can be compared with Hardy. The works of Hardy are only a small part of the Western culture that flooded into Korea following the so-called "Kabo Innovations" of 1925. It seems that *An Imaginative Woman*¹ was the first story published in Korea—in a magazine called *Kongyong* in 1923. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s Hardy was the author most frequently translated. A chronological list of Western literature in translation and articles relating to it up to 1950 by Kim Byung-Jol [Kim Pyöngjöl] shows 21 items of Hardy's work.² It is significant that of these, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was by far the most frequently published. Such short stories as "To Please His Wife", "The Son's Veto" and "A Tragedy of Two Ambitions", all from *Life's Little Ironies*, were also popular. From this early stage it seems clear that *Tess* was going to be Hardy's monument in Korea, and that in the case of *Life's Little Ironies*, the title itself had a strong appeal.

Tess was first serialized in 1926 in a daily paper, the *Chöngoe Ilbo*, between 7 November and 24 December,

under the title of *Pönnong* using two Chinese characters which mean to tease or taunt.³ Like most translations of this period, it was a re-translation of a Japanese version by Nakaki Teichi first published in 1924 under the title of (in translation) *A Woman of Fate*. The two chosen titles seem good examples of differing views expressed in translations of the same novel. They also indicate the possibility that, in paraphrasing, the translators can to some degree manipulate the text to express their own perspectives. From the title *Pönnong* one might guess that the translator, Kim Kijin, found particularly appropriate the last paragraph of *Tess*: "The President of the Immortals, in Aeschylean phrase, had ended his sport with Tess." But in fact he misses out this passage completely and in its place puts his own point that Tess had been wickedly tantalized and that she had at last parted with such a weary life for good.

Tess was serialized again in 1929 in six instalments in the *Chosön Ilbo*.⁴ This version is full of little inaccuracies and it consequently looks as though the translator was using a text already far removed from the original. The translator succeeds, however, in producing a picture of the tragic life of an innocent woman and portraying what happens when a maiden is seduced.

Another version of *Tess* was serialized in five instalments in the *Chosön Ilbo* in 1934.⁵ Kim Kwangsöp was the translator and commentator. While Kim showed a sophisticated understanding of the novel and made many interesting comments, often bringing in his own metaphors to illustrate the points, there are so many textual mistakes that again it makes one wonder what kind of source text he was using. He begins with an introductory note about the sad lot forced upon women in a patriarchal society: "...this world still seems an unsuitable place for a woman of purity", and ends with a passage after the black flag has gone up: "A child of nature who would love according to nature's will and ways

without compromise and without revision has been sacrificed by faults in the morality of society, the law and civilization."

Between 1928 and 1932, about ten articles on Hardy appeared in journals and newspapers. The most impressive and significant of them is a thesis entitled *Thomas Hardy as a Novelist* by Yang Chudong. This was serialized in 26 instalments in the *Tonga Ilbo* at the end of 1928.⁶ It turns out that Yang had written a dissertation entitled *The Technique of Thomas Hardy* for Waseda University in Japan earlier that year. The dissertation is listed in the bibliography on Hardy compiled by Fukushima Bunnosuke (later he was to call himself Yamanoto Bunnosuke) in 1936.⁷ Yang Chidong opens his dissertation with these words:

Readers will remember that January marks the first anniversary of the death of Thomas Hardy, poet and writer, a literary giant not only of England but of all the world. We remember sadly that when he died only a few reports of his death appeared in the literary columns of the press, with hardly any mention or review of his literary works and ideas. I will not point out here our need to pay constant attention to the study and introduction of foreign literature, yet on seeing such an omission within our literary circles I could not help feeling sad. Therefore, though admittedly too late, I submit this thesis on the occasion of the first anniversary with the intention of commemorating Hardy and to reflect once again upon his literary achievement.

Followed by a list of sources from which he frequently quotes, Yang's thesis consists of a scholarly and highly erudite discourse on the principles of literary criticism and on Hardy's technique of expression, style, structure, and so on. Considering Yang was writing in the 1920s, it strikes one that the account does not sound at all archaic. It is rather familiar, because it uses observations which have now become commonplace in Hardy criticism. Yang went from strength to strength throughout December of that year, bringing his discourse to an end with the highest praise of *Tess*:

Tess is undoubtedly Hardy's greatest masterpiece. It could be said that in its setting, *Tess* is inferior to *The Return of the Native* or *Far from the Maddening Crowd*... However, in this work, Hardy perfectly simplifies the plot and his expressive techniques reach perfection ... Above all I would like to point out the great pathos running through this work. The author's great pathos concerning the fate of the woman Tess will find, I dare say, no parallel in any other great literary work in all the world. It is by reaching this form of pathos and truthfulness that Hardy's art marks a departure from mere technique into artistic maturity, and the artist becomes an integral part of his art and witness to the great strength of humanity...

The whole dissertation is very significant not only for its own merit but also because by writing in *Tonga Ilbo*, one of the most important daily papers, Yang spoke to a wide readership and guided them as to what they should look for in Hardy, above all setting the tone for the appreciation of Hardy in Korea in the future. The importance of this was echoed when in the following year a critic called Kang Sŏngju wrote an article in the same paper, entitled *In Anticipation of the Second Anniversary of the Death of Mr. Thomas Hardy*.⁸ At the end of it he urged his readers to read Yang's discourse of the previous year again.

In 1935 Pak Hwasŭng, a well known woman writer, wrote an article in the *Tonga Ilbo* under the title of "Native and foreign writers whom I most admire." In this, she expressed her indebtedness to Hardy, saying, "... the Western writers whom I adore and who influenced my own writing profoundly are Thomas Hardy and Charlotte Bronte ..." ⁹ This is an important article in that Pak is the only writer I have come across who has openly admitted Hardy's influence.

As we consider the post-war period, we now notice that translations of Western literature which until then, under Japanese rule, had largely depended for their publication on journals are now published in volumes.

Leaving out the confusing years of the Korean war and the period immediately after when the compilation of

bibliography fell far short of full coverage, the National Bibliography shows new translations of *Tess* year after year as a single volume or as part of a series in some scheme such as *The Collected Works of World Literature*. Hardy's name becomes almost synonymous with *Tess*. During the twenty years between 1966 and 1986, no less than 64 translations of Hardy were published out of which 37 were *Tess*.¹⁰ There is a strong possibility that some items were missed out of publication lists, and that even more can be found. It must also be taken into account that by this time there were many Koreans able to read English texts.

Meanwhile, with the growing number of universities and colleges, Hardy became a very popular subject for study in the academic world. Between 1960 and 1985, over 60 dissertations were written for master's degrees and there were no less than five doctoral theses produced. The titles significantly indicate a very high concentration on the subject of fate.

In the 1950s, the Korean Society for English Language and Literature was formed. Its membership consisted largely of professors and teachers of English. Some sophistication in the field of English literature seems to have settled in, and some interesting articles were from then on written on Hardy.

From this brief history of publications and scholarship related to Hardy it clearly emerges that *Tess* is his most popular work amongst Koreans. And the question of the nature of its appeal—both in academic and in more general circles—poses an interesting problem. One way of looking at it is that the image of *Tess*, the beautiful woman with a pure heart, became for the Korean people a symbol that meant different things at different times. For instance, in the 1920s and the 1930s, *Tess* was emphasized in journals and newspapers as a symbol of the helpless women who suffered the oppression and

injustices of a patriarchal society. She could thus represent the sorrowful state of the country under Japanese occupation, especially after the 1 March Independence Movement in 1919 ended in bloodshed and persecutions and the appeal for sovereignty to the Paris Peace Conference miserably failed.

In the 1960s *Tess* could become a symbol of the rights of women, women now beginning to be liberated from their old yoke. The popularity of the novel seems to have reached its peak in the 1970s, when over 20 editions were published. One possible explanation could be that during this time Korea's industrialization was reaching its climax with the now well-known economic miracle. Many innocent country girls left their native villages to work in the cities as factory hands. Many of them suffered great deprivation as a consequence, and *Tess* must have held great appeal to them.

It is conceivable that the image of *Tess* may yet change again in the future to something more positive, as women's position in society improves. It is interesting to note that in recent years some of the dissertations on Hardy have been written by students from women's universities. This might be taken as an indication of an attempt by women to re-assess their position in present-day Korea.

The exact extent and nature of Hardy's influence in Korea is a complex and elusive problem about which I am not yet in the position to state any firm conclusions. But I have found a substantial basis for comparison with Hardy in a Korean novel sequence entitled *Toji (Land)* by Pak Kyōngni. Pak was born in 1926 and is considered one of the greatest living writers of modern Korea. *Toji* is about a traditional rural community faced with drastic change as a result of the Enlightenment period at the turn of the century. There is a certain affinity between Hardy and Pak both in subject matter and the way both handle their

material. When I first discovered this I was almost sure that Pak had been influenced by Hardy, but an interview with her during 1987 in Korea suggested otherwise. Yes, she admitted she had read *Tess* and other works by Hardy in Japanese translations many years ago, but she could not say that she was particularly influenced by him—nor by any other Western writer for that matter—though she had been an avid reader, and had read all the Western writers available in her youth. Her comments did not surprise me, nor did I take them as a final answer. Firstly, I believe that Korean writers are reluctant, consciously or unconsciously, to admit outside influence, partly because in doing so they would be admitting Japanese influence because what they had read as Western literature was in fact in Japanese translation. In the context of the complicated Korea-Japan relationship, Japanese influence of any kind is regarded as something of a disgrace. This makes the question of Hardy's influence a very difficult one indeed, even though in fact there can be little doubt that writers of Pak's generation, or of her parent's generation, were influenced by Western writers. The forerunners of modern Korean literature, the so-called New Novels, were clearly modelled on Western literature. During the 35 years Korea served as a Japanese colony, a large part of the reading material for the Korean youth consisted of translations of Western literature. Such translations had been popular in Japan since the Meiji era (1867-1912). Secondly, even if a writer has been influenced by another, it is probably for the most part an unconscious process which is consequently difficult to trace back and assess quantitatively.

Another difficulty in measuring Hardy's influence lies in the incomparability of the two languages. This would apply to translations of all European literature into Korean, and vice versa: it is difficult to compare the narrative style. Until very recently, I insisted that Pak's narrative style was definitely similar to that of Hardy. But then a question crossed my mind: how could I be so sure?

If you, as the reader, have already been influenced by Hardy, is it not possible that you might be reading Pak with a Hardyesque frame of mind? If so, your perspective is biased, and your judgement little more than make-belief. The question of influence became even more complex as I glanced through several different translations of *Tess* in which the narrative form actually differed. The realization of the problem gave me a shock and has led me to be more circumspect. Nevertheless, I would still claim that the affinity is there on certain specific grounds, and I believe these grounds can be used as general criteria for a study of comparative literature.

The areas in which I believe comparison to be possible are: types of characters and the environment in which they are depicted; an obvious philosophy running through the work; the time and stance of the author as he views the subject he is about to write about; the use of clear imagery such as the sun, moon and stars, nature and seasonal changes. It is with these areas in mind that I would like to examine some aspects of affinity between Hardy and Pak as it appears in *Tess* and the first volume of *Toji (Land)*.

In *Toji*, Pak's view of life appears to be mistrustful of God—not outright antagonism but scepticism. God is indifferent to individual human fate and predicaments. Such scepticism results in a fatalistic vision that regards man as trapped in his fate. This view is expressed well in chapter 37, where a foul scheme is designed by Kim Pyöngsan, a fallen and destitute gentleman. He finds out by chance that Chilsöng, a tenant farmer, is resentful of the wealth of the Ch'oe household, the landlords of the community, and that Kwinyö, the personal maid of Ch'oe Chisu, the master of the house, desires to be made pregnant by her master. Kim Pyöngsan brings these two characters together and a plot is schemed. Chilsöng will make the girl pregnant and, when it is done, they will dispose of Ch'oe Chisu. Kwinyö will claim that the child is

her late master's, thus becoming the mother of the heir to the house, and then the Ch'oe riches will be shared out. The sexual encounters take place while Kim Pyöngsan is on watch, inside the shrine for fertility gods, where there is a statue of a child Buddha as a symbol of the deity.

The shrine of the fertility spirits buried deep in the woods of Tang mountain solemnly kept watch over the night and, inside, the child Buddha, with smiling face, looked down on these ardent deeds of supplication. The bleak autumn wind whispered past the eaves of the shrine, the leaves rustled as they rubbed together, a nightingale cried like an elderly spinster, and an owl like the ghost of an old bachelor. The figure of the Buddha—was it no more than a lump of metal, melted by a craftsman and mindlessly poured into a mould?—never spoke but only smiled.

And then after these three characters had gone each on their own way,

... the moon, a piece missing, hung faintly above the roof of the shrine. 'Do they think it will all happen just as they wish?' Was the little Buddha saying something like this to himself?

When Pyöngsan got home,

... He entered the main room, took off his clothes and got into bed. After a while he fell into a deep sleep and dreamed he was sitting on top of a pile of gold. 'Do you think it will all happen just as you wish?' If the little Buddha had appeared in his dream to tease him like this, it would all have been well. But while Pyöngsan's miscalculation was infinitely pitiable, the Buddha must be rather mischievous. While they doggedly climbed perilous slopes in the hope of grasping the five-coloured rainbow, instead of giving them a hint of the disasters and pitfalls ahead of them, did he not beckon them on with 'A little further, just a little further?'

Compare these passages with Hardy's view on a similar occasion as it appears at the end of Chapter 5 of *Tess*, when Tess has left the Chase after going there to claim kinship with d'Urberville:

Nature does not often say 'See!' to her poor creature at a time when seeing can lead to happy doings; or reply 'Here!' to a body's cry of 'Where?' till hide-and-seek has become an irksome, outworn game. We may wonder whether at the acme and summit of human progress these anachronisms will be corrected by a finer intuition, a closer interaction of the social

machinery than that which now jolts us round and along: but such completeness is not to be prophesied, or even conceived as possible. Enough that in the present case, as in millions, it was not the two halves of a perfect whole that confronted each other at the perfect moment; a missing counterpart wandered independently about the earth waiting in crass obtuseness till the late time came. Out of which maladroitness sprang anxiety, disappointments, shocks, catastrophes, and passing-strange destinies.

Or, take the famous passage toward the end of chapter 11, after the seduction of Tess by Alec in the wood:, which begins, "Darkness and silence ruled everywhere around."

Both writers, then, share a view that a divinity is a disappearing if not an already vanished possibility.

One might also fruitfully compare the same passages from *Toji* with chapter 20 of *The Woodlanders*, where Fitzpiers and Duke Samson, with Grace as a bystander, participate in the Midsummer Eve ritual.

Like Hardy, Pak shows a certain mistrust and dislike of the social change taking place in what had been a static society, and is resentful of the crumbling of old values. Through the mouth of Yun P'o, a carefree old bachelor, we hear,

As I see it, so-called 'enlightenment' is nothing very wonderful. In a word, you can call it a good tool for killing people. Either that or a way to ruthlessly plunder other people's possessions...I am a simple man who does not know very much, but I know the old saying 'If it is not the right road don't go down it.' And this makes me wonder how it can be the proper way for anyone to hand over to strangers the land of rivers and hills that bore and bred him...(chapter 8)

This might well be compared to Hardy's dislike of the new threshing that has revolutionized the farming process (in chapter 47 of *Tess*).

In *Toji* and *Tess*, both Hardy and Pak are dealing with the world of the immediate past rather than their own time. Their material is based on stories told by and

gathered from their parents and grandparents. In an interview with a critic, Pak was reported to have said that the original seed of *Toji* was a story told her by an elderly cousin when she was young, about a farming village in which the landlord's family reigned for generations until the day when an epidemic wiped out the whole community. Acres of crops lay ready for harvesting but there was not a soul left to do it. This original seed germinated and grew into something quite beyond what she had initially set out to write; and it is still growing. As for Hardy, much has been said of a similar effect. Michael Millgate in his *Thomas Hardy—His Career as a Novelist* says,

The root of *Tess* lies deep. Early experiences such as his presence at the execution of Martha Brown may well have made their contribution... He once spoke of the profound effect made upon him by his father's story of a boy hanged during the 1830 agricultural riots simply for being near the scene of a rick-burning...¹¹

It is conceivable that this distancing of time gives the authors room for reflection and imaginative refinement so that even when they are dealing with social or political issues of immediate consequence, the quality of writing is in no danger of becoming journalistic. Both writers draw heavily on the mediating power of memory, and this process is again something which will receive further attention as my research progresses.

The idea of, in Millgate's term, "the victimisation of the innocent",¹² is a source of deep inspiration to both authors. As Yang Chudong pointed out as early as 1928, Hardy's pathos and tender feelings towards the victim give peculiar strength to his art. This applies also to Pak Kyöngni. To demonstrate, I will choose for the present discussion the tragic love between Yongi and Wölsön in *Toji*, though it is only one of the secondary plots. The plot is comparable to *Tess*, and also to some extent to *Jude the Obscure*. Yongi and Wölsön grew up together in the village as childhood lovers, but because Wölsön is the daughter of

a shaman, and so regarded as an outcast, she cannot marry Yongi, and is sent away with an older man from another region. Yongi has to marry a woman of equal status. He enters a loveless and childless marriage. Nothing is heard of Wölsön for many years until one day she rolls into the village like a fallen leaf carrying a little bundle, absolutely helpless. The old lady of the Ch'oe household who had been the patron of the now-dead shaman takes pity on her and sets her up in a little tavern by the market place. Yongi takes comfort from seeing her face on market days as he takes a cup of wine in her shop on his way to and from the market, usually in the company of other villagers. One day, their love is consummated when he stays overnight at her place. This marks the beginning of a tragic love that can never be complete in the conventional way, yet can never be broken. Yongi is a farmer who is extremely conscientious and sensitive, in many ways like Jude. His is a male-dominated society in which to take a concubine is no great scandal, especially when the legal wife is unable to produce a child to carry on the family line. But he cannot bring himself to break the decent farmer's code of behaviour, nor can he go against his dead mother's wish that he should never mistreat his lawful wife who offers sacrifices to his ancestors.

Wölsön is in many ways like Tess, or Sue in *Jude*—delicate, sensitive, helpless in one way yet set firm in another, absolutely uncompromising in love. She is physically assaulted by Yongi's wife and pitied by the villagers, but she rejects all proposals from other men who want to make her happy in the worldly sense. The author's tender feelings towards Wölsön are manifested through Yongi's feelings and behaviour. Even though a secondary theme, I personally think the chapters dealing with their relationship are the most beautiful and moving in the whole novel. Here, rivers and hills, the stars and the moon (but never the sun), the distant calls of

nightingales, and the crying of frogs in paddy fields and crickets underneath the wooden floor all play their part.

I pointed out earlier that both Pak and Hardy have a sceptical attitude toward transcendent gods. They are seen as not only indifferent to the individual fates of human beings but can appear to be quite mischievous, so that for both authors life is full of "little ironies" and "maladroit delays." For instance, in *Toji*, in the course of time Yongi's wife died in an epidemic. Now he could take Wölsön as his lawful wife and live happy ever after, but the author doesn't have it that way. Wölsön was away when the wife died. She had been thrashed by Yongi's jealous wife and had left the district. Yongi, distraught at the thought of her wandering about the world unprotected, helpless and miserable, tumbles into bed with another woman, Imin, who had been casting amorous eyes at him all along and is also now a widow. He fathers a son by her, thus barring yet again the way for Wölsön to join him. Imin is a sensuous, selfish, vigorous woman who thrives whatever the circumstances. In the words of the author, she is "like the weeds by the brookside." She is the exact opposite of Wölsön, and reminds one of Arabella in *Jude*. In this way Pak has created, quite incidentally perhaps, characters who find their counterparts in Hardy's world.

One should not be surprised at such an affinity for two reasons. Firstly, from what I have said about Hardy it is clear that there is much in his work which would strike a chord in the Korean mind. His vision of the world, I believe, finds a significant resonance in Korean culture. Secondly, the history of the publication of translations of Hardy's work, or indeed the response of the Korean academic community, well indicates both the extent and the character of Hardy's presence, so that if Hardy has only been explicitly acknowledged by one writer—Pak Hwasung—his presence has nevertheless been significant and his appeal marked. His influence can hardly be

doubted. And it is the precise nature of this influence that I shall be concerned to trace in my further research.

NOTES

1. I have not been able to trace this. The Korean title listed by Kim is *Tonggyōng hanūn yoōn*, which could be translated as either *The Well-beloved* or *An Imaginative Woman*. Taking account of the fact that the former does not appear to have been translated into Japanese during this period while the latter was published in 1923 for the second time (the first being 1919), and subsequently republished in 1925 and twice in 1926, I assume this to be the latter.
2. Byong-chul Kim (comp.) *A Chronological List of Western Literature in Translations and Articles about It* (Seoul, Eul-yoo Munwhasa, 1977).
3. Kim Kijin (trans.), *Pōnnang*. Serialized in *Chōngoe Ilbo*, 7 November - 24 December, 1926.
4. Shimhyang sanin (trans.), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Serialized in *Chosōn Ilbo*, 9 November - 16 November, 1929.
5. Kim Kwangsōp (trans.), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Serialized in *Chosōn Ilbo*, 31 October - 4 November, 1934.
6. Yang Chudong, *Thomas Hardy as a Novelist—A Study*. In, *Tonga Ilbo*, 1 December - 28 December, 1928.
7. Bunnosuke Fukushima (comp.), *A Bibliography of Thomas Hardy in Japan*. (Tokyo, Kowgakusha, 1936). The bibliography is appended to a translation of *The Distracted Preacher*.
8. Kang Sōngju, *In anticipation of the second anniversary of the death of Thomas Hardy*. In *Tonga Ilbo*, 15 November - 20 November, 1929.
9. *Tonga Ilbo*, 14 July - 18 July, 1935.
10. The National Central Library of Korea (comps), *Publications List of the Republic of Korea 1966-1986* (Seoul).

11. Michael Millgate, *Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist* (London, Bodley Head, 1971), p.267.
12. *Ibid*, p.286.

BOOK REVIEWS

KEITH HOWARD

Martine Aepli, *Korea*. With Calligraphy by Kwon Ok Yon [Kwŏn Ogyŏn]. 141 pages, colour photographs throughout. Souffles, SA, 1988 (Distributed in UK by Kegan Paul International, London). ISBN 2-87658-034-9.

My inclusion of this book may seem a little strange, since the author/photographer is French; Aepli is described on the dust cover as a physio-acupuncturist who became a photographer by vocation. The book is, however, in the Kegan Paul International catalogue. It is a worthy volume, not for academic merit but because it pretends to be nothing more than a collection of photographs -- each carefully and accurately captioned. The photographs are only sometimes arty; generally, they depict everyday scenes seen by an (almost) everyday person. That, in effect, is their value: the book provides an informative record of Korea, Korean life and Korean customs (much as the poet Yi Kyubo provided for a different age: see the review of O'Rourke's *Tilting the Jar, Spilling the Moon* below).

I find the text, such as it is, perfectly adequate. Although romanization is variable and uses no diacriticals, there are relatively few errors: Maein-sa [Haeinsa] (page 87), *Chansung* [Changsŭng] (page 68), and the caption to page 19 should specifically refer to tombs. Contrary to the text, Queen Min was not "the only royal personage to recognize and invite shamans to the court" (page 47), and Kim Kŭmhwa did not take shaman rituals to Hwang Hae province (she was *born* there; see page 53). Minor niggles include the unnecessarily simple map on page 14. In the introduction, no dates are offered for dynasties or historical periods and Li Mong-Ryond [Yi Mongnyŏng?], Seung Ch'un-Hyang (of *Ch'unhyangga*) and Hong Kil-Tong are assumed to be historical figures when they are, rather, characters in folk stories and literary novels. The introduction, incidentally, is by Audric Thierry, the

French cultural counsellor to Korea from 1982 to 1986. In a preface, Kim Jeong Ok [Kim Ch'ongok] offers a very contemporary description of Korean identity. Beware his idea that Koreans are humble, particularly when "Korea appears to be at the centre of the solar system" and "Korea has", unlike China, "not had any direct contact with Europe." All these, however, are minor points.

The photographs are divided into eight sections dealing with landscape, heritage, ritual, shamanism, "along the way", Buddhism, masked dances and folk bands, and the changing face of Seoul. There are so many things to be recognized: women sitting in the shade of a tree, rice transplanting, rocky mountains, *kimch'i* pots, tiled and tin-roofed houses. Buddhists are seen at prayer, carrying out ablutions, striking the drum. A potter kneads clay with his feet; old men crouch, smile at the camera, or carry mountainous loads on A-frames. A butcher's sign in a shanty town is juxtaposed with a garish movie hoarding, naked mannequins look towards men white-washing a concrete building. There are also less-common scenes: shamans at various stages of their rituals, spiritual totems dotted around the countryside, Buddhist images lined up in secret temples.

In sum, the photographs do the talking, inviting one and all to explore this colourful land.

Chung Chong-wha (editor), *Korean Classical Literature: An Anthology*. Kegan Paul International, London, 1989. 221 pages. ISBN 07103 0279-7.

Kim Dong-ni, *The Shaman Sorceress*. Translated by Hyun Song Shin and Eugene Chung. Kegan Paul International, London, 1989. 156 pages. ISBN 07103 0280-0.

The last time I visited Korea I was astonished by just how many books in English were available in the Kyobo bookshop. This being so, we should beware from now on whenever a fly-leaf announces that it wraps "the first translation" or "the first book about"...

The anthology edited by Chung Chong-wha claims to be:

...one of the first attempts to introduce Korean culture to the West through its literature... Some of the works contained have never before been translated into English.

This is true only in a fashion. There are other English anthologies, including a whole collection which appeared within a few years of each

other -- Peter H. Lee's *Flowers of Fire: Twentieth Century Korean Stories* (1974), Kevin O'Rourke's *Ten Korean Short Stories* (1973), Marshall Pihl's *Listening to Korea: A Korean Anthology* (1973), Kim Chongun's *Postwar Korean Short Stories* (1974), and Hong Myoung-hee's *Korean Short Stories* (1975). In a similar vein, *The Shaman Sorceress* claims to be published here for the first time in English.

And what of the content of the anthology? Chung also translated *Love in Mid-Winter Night*, a collection of *shijo* poetry published by Kegan Paul International back in 1985. Three of the same poems appear in the new volume -- one with an identical note about the author Choi Young [Ch'oe Y'ong] (compare 1985: 22, 23, 37 and 1989: 79, 89, 90). There are also, of course, a number of other—and to my mind often superior—*shijo* translations (by Richard Rutt, Kevin O'Rourke and others). W. E. Skillend, the translator of "The Story of Sim Ch'ong" (the index gives this as "Sim Chung") here, notes a parallel translation prepared some time ago by Marshall Pihl. The story remains very popular in Korea, so it is to be expected that other versions also exist (Alan Heyman recently published his own translation in *Korea Journal* 30/3 and 30/4 (1990)).

Korean Classical Literature has many virtues. Not least, it has value by default. The anthologies mentioned above are hard to find today, and the many translations of novels and stories distributed in the last decade by the Korean Commission for UNESCO and the International Cultural Society of Korea tend to offer no background to Korean literature. *Korean Classical Literature* presents four short stories—"Hozil" or the Tiger's Admonition", "The Tale of Huh-saeng [H'osaeng]" and "The Tale of Yangban" by Park Ji-won [Pak Chiw'ŏn] and the anonymous allegory "The Stork Decides a Case"—30 *shijo* and two long poems, a translation of the *p'ansori* tale—"The Story of Sim Ch'ong"—taken from a Seoul source, and a novel originally serialized in an early (- 1906) newspaper, "Tears of Blood." An introduction sets out to describe what constitutes Korean classical fiction. Other links introduce authors and the concept of allegory, discuss poetry and comment on the development from oral literature to novels.

Weaknesses stem largely from poor editing, though the introduction also partially disappoints because it sets out to compare Korean literature with what to my mind is an irrelevant form—the European romance. Chung, listed as editor, has translated the 30 *shijo* poems and provides discussions on poetry and classical fiction. Moon Hi Kyung [Mun H'ügy'ong] takes responsibility for the translation of Park Ji-won's stories. Both Chung and Moon are inconsistent in their use of romanization. H'ö Kyun (page 105) is also Huh Kyun (page 7); Kim Kitong [Kidong] talks about *Janghwa* [*Changhwa*] and *Hongryun* [*Hongny'ŏn*], *Patji* [*Pach'i*] and *Chung Ulsun* [*Ch'ong Üls'ŏn*] (page 7); *Shinchung* and *Choonhyang* (page 9) become *Sim Chung* (contents page), *Shimchung* (along with *Hingbu* [*H'üngbo*], page 11), and

correctly *Sim Ch'öng* and *Ch'unhyang* (page 112). The surname "Im" is rendered "Imm" (page 10) and "Yim" (page 109). Similarly, one can find *eunmoon* [ünmun], *hangul* [han'gül], King Chinbeung [Chinhüng] and Kokury [Koguryö, Yi Jon-o [Chono], Kim Kwang-wook [Kwanguk], Kim Soojang [Sujang], Chung Cheol [Chöng Ch'öl], Hwang Jinie [Chini], and more.

More than half the volume—128 pages—is the work of W. E. Skillend. He translated "The Stork Decides a Case" and assumed it would be followed by his link to "The Story of Sim Ch'öng." The first paragraph of the latter (page 104) thus makes little sense, for the editor has inserted 50 pages of poetry. Skillend's commentary is clear and precise. His translations are exemplary; they flow well and I recommend them without hesitation. He is also careful to offer (correct) McCune-Reischauer romanizations for Korean words and, in the Sim Ch'öng tale, gives Wade-Giles romanizations for Chinese terms.

The editor has not done his job. Indeed, his introduction disagrees with Skillend's comments on the history of Korean literature. Compare, for instance, comments on Hō Kyun and pre-19th century works on pages 7 and 105-6, and considerations of the "vernacular" "Nine Cloud Dream" by Kim Manjung, which Skillend points out survives in Chinese and Korean translations from the Chinese (pages 8-9 and 106). There are a number of other inconsistencies. What could have been a valuable text is thus flawed to the extent that for anyone unfamiliar with, for example, different Korean romanization systems, it is virtually worthless.

Essentially, the same flaws mar *The Shaman Sorceress*. The story itself is an excellent insight into how educated people tend to view the "backward" and "primitive" shaman belief system; I have provided a partial synopsis in my earlier article, "Why should Korean shamans be women?" Many would argue that Kim Dong-ni's [Kim Tongni] shorter *Munyōdo* is a more successful story about a shaman practitioner, and that already exists in several translations (the best is in Peter H. Lee's anthology). I personally prefer *The Shaman Sorceress*, although Kim is possibly too free in his use of stereotypes. The story remains important for its glimpse at a world now fast disappearing. It offers insights into a shaman's calling, life, rituals and low social status.

The flaws in the translation once again suggest that, although prepared by two Koreans from a foreign novel, no editor has glanced over the text. Who should take the blame for grammatical mistakes and the uneasy flow? The first sentence—"Even as Eulhwa came back with the water from the well at the shrine Wolhie was still fast asleep"—ably demonstrates this. And romanization is again awkward: Eulhwa [Ühwa], Wolhie [Wöihüi], Bun-nam [Pönnam], Baekok [Paegok], Bukchun [Pöckh'ön], Sungchool [Söngch'ul] and so on. Kim Tongni is still alive; I think he deserves better.

James Huntley Grayson, *Korea: A Religious History*. The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989. xii + 319 pages, maps, glossary-index. ISBN 0-19-826186.

The dust jacket makes impressive claims: "first of its kind", an attempt at an "entire history" which sets religion in "its socio-cultural context." Grayson's introduction accordingly gives a thorough survey of literature, at least that other than in Korean, to demonstrate how little apart from two old books deal adequately with an overview of Korean religion. The author has, of course, published some of his material on Buddhism and Christianity before (see for example, *Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea: A Study in the Emplantation of Religion* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1985)).

Grayson divides his account into four parts, three of which are historical—early Korea, Koryö and Chosön—and frames his discussion of religion with potted histories. This represents a new and, in terms of the claimed "socio-cultural context", a valid contribution. As might be expected, the historical accounts are brief, with far less detail than recent history books—and entirely chronological. Each account presents clear and precise details, though the material offered is occasionally challenging. For instance, the author proposes a much later development of Silla [Shilla] than its rivals, Paekche or Koguryö, and points to the long existence of Parhae to the north of Unified Shilla. Both of these run somewhat contrary to what Koreans are still taught. Nonetheless, the inclusion of these historical sections begs a question: who is the book written for? The answer comes in the concluding remarks (chapter 18). Grayson hopes deeper knowledge of Korean spirituality will contribute to comparative religious studies. It can do so he says (pages 222-227) in three ways: there is a need to clarify problems in the history of religion (in this context, the role of Korea in the migration of religious traditions from China to Japan is considered vital); there is interest in accounting for the contemporary vitality of Korean Protestantism; Korea, as a "religious laboratory", can help inter-religious dialogue.

The book boasts exemplary romanization; the 12-page glossary is particularly well constructed and ably bears witness to the plethora of Chinese and Korean terms used. Romanization consistency leads to Söul (the McCune-Reischauer version of the more usual Seoul) and Peiching (Wade-Giles for the Chinese capital). Unlike Grayson's earlier publications, the hyphen is dropped from Korean names. I personally find that the essentially worthy attempt to avoid it—except to bind morphemes to principle words and class words to titles—here leads to

just as much confusion through unnecessary use of raised commas. Consider: Hae'in-sa (Haein temple), Pu'an Ku'un-mong (The Cloud Dream of the Nine), No T'ae'u (who, as president, calls himself Roh Tae Woo).

Grayson teases out three general themes: the influence of "primal" religion, the conservative nature of Korean religious experience, and the way particular religions dominate different historical periods. Each of these themes deserves comment. "Primal" religion, associated with shamanism, is noted prior to the Three Kingdoms period (chapter 2), with characteristic features common to, say, Siberian practices—motifs of eagles and other birds, horses and tigers. Little is actually new here; the crowns, belts and shoes found in Shilla tombs are commonly considered shaman regalia, though Grayson interestingly claims they hark back to earlier times. The consideration of festivals, *Yŏnggo*, *Suritnal* and *Tongmaeng*, is also brief, but then only limited data survives. The supposed "influence" of shamanism is subsequently basically ignored until Part 4 ("Korea in the Modern Era"). This is Grayson at his weakest. Terminology and descriptions of practices do not reflect current scholarship particularly well—although Cho Hung-youn, Laurel Kendall, Kim T'aegon and Alexandre Guillemoz are all listed in the bibliography. It appears in the text—erroneously—as if there is a nationwide consensus about shaman rites, costumes, and so forth. And can we really propose the following:

...it is clear that Korean primal religion represents a blending of traits of Palaeo-Siberian and Neo-Siberian tribal groups, and that this blending must have taken place at the time of the arrival of the Tungusic tribes in the Korean peninsula between 1,000 and 600 B.C. (page 257).

Cho Hung-youn and Kim Yŏlgyu have written similar things, but within shamanism there is much evidence of change over even the last century. Surely this should make us wary of proposing 3,000 years of consistent oral tradition?

Grayson's accounts of Buddhism and Confucianism are far more substantial. Here he offers ample evidence for his assertion that particular religions flourish during specific periods. Buddhism found ready acceptance in Korea because it arrived strongly associated with China (page 32). Its dominance began to wane as infighting "loosened the glue of social fabric" in Unified Shilla. It relied on royal patronage (page 135) and so was moved aside towards the end of Koryŏ, when central authority was weakened and as the Buddhists' corrupt use of power was challenged. Confucianism rose for these same reasons. The attraction of Taoist philosophy (but not religion), mediated through Chu Hsi, became the basis of Chosŏn: "Korean culture for the next 500 years was formed by Confucian concepts and values" (page 271; a

more thorough consideration of shamanism might question this: can the little tradition not influence the great tradition?). The major strands of Buddhist and Confucian thought are dealt with in what I see as a model of clarity.

The Christian church appears to have flourished with "dynastic collapse and national rebirth" (this is the title to chapter 9). Although the church started amongst the scholarly and aristocratic elite, from the early 19th century it became associated with the poor. From the 1860s, Confucianism was partially displaced by the Taewŏn'gun as he sought to centralize power. In the Kap'o reforms of 1894, even the Confucian state examinations were abolished. "Unwittingly" Christianity was "mixed up in the maelstrom of European imperialism" (page 182; anthropologists who work on Africa accept that the two usually went hand in hand). The result of the extraordinary Korean conversion to Christianity gives rise to the main problem facing Korea today: an outmoded top-down military-style government versus the cultural sophistication of the populace (page 193).

Within the Christian church, Grayson notes that there is much to support the notion of religious conservatism. Against such a notion, however, the *kidowŏn* faith-healing centres and *puhŏnghoe* revival meetings of protestant communities parallel shamanism (page 205). Again, the Korean version of liberation theology, *minjung sinhak*—here given one paragraph in its protestant guise and just passing reference within the Catholic church—, and the role of the Catholic church against the government (page 212), suggest powerful developments. Bearing this in mind, a more complete consideration would have been welcome. Further, to Grayson the spawning of syncretic movements, by their very nature, does not flag conservatism. Two chapters (15 and 16) are reserved for illuminating accounts of *Ch'ŏndogyo*, *Wŏn pulgyo*, *Chŏngsan*, *T'ongilgyo* (the Unification Church) and *Ch'ŏndogwan* (the Olive Tree Church). Here the author successfully teases out the influence of shamanism and other religions.

Christianity has enjoyed only a short history on the peninsula, hence most information about it is presented in Part 4. The historical setting followed to this point is given brief attention before eight chapters focus on particular traditions: Protestantism, Catholicism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Islam, *Ch'ŏndogyo*, syncretic religions, folk religion. An appendix contains Grayson's translations of seven foundation myths. There is also a table of religious statistics (as with most Korean-originating data, shamanism is excluded).

The thoroughness of the account is unquestioned. Much thought has gone into presentation and layout, and for this reason the book should appeal both to scholars of religion and to Korean specialists. The latter will surely appreciate the amount of information made available about Korean religious traditions—dogma, history, major figures in their propagation, reasons for their appeal. Any criticisms

that I have are very minor and basically stem from personal prejudice: in my work on Korea and Korean culture, I favour the folk. I await, therefore, a further (perhaps companion?) volume which will deal in greater detail with the history of "primal" religion, both as a ritual system (*musok*) and as superstition (*mishin*).

Georgie D. M. Hyde, *South Korea: Education, Culture and Economy*. Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, England, 1988. xx + 287 pages, map and 50 photographs. ISBN 0 333 45930 X.

This book is inaccurate in many major assessments, offers incomplete lists of data taken largely from newspaper cuttings that provide an inadequate picture, is often hopelessly out of date, and accepts government propaganda as fact while ignoring virtually all recent scholarship on Korea and Korean culture. I wonder how it came to be published. I am also surprised that neither author nor publisher consulted anybody in the West connected with Korean studies. Are those of us in the field failing in our job?

Simple facts are often wrong, or contradict themselves within a few pages. According to Hyde, the Shilla kingdom had risen and fallen by "the fifth century B.C." (page 9), although the name "Shilla" of a hotel in Seoul derives from the "Sylla" dynasty, which is known as the golden age of Korean culture" (page 8); the "Silla" period is also listed as lasting from 668-918, when "Songgwangas" [Sōnggwangsa] temple, in "Shollabuk-do" [Chōlla Namdo] was built (page 11), but on the same page, the dates of "Silla" are given as "57BC - AD935." The last are the normally attributed dates. In chapter 1 there is no page free of errors. For example, the map misses expressways (facing page 1), and I am not sure how as a creditor nation Korea still displays remarkable "financial skills in attracting loans to cover ventures at home and abroad" (page 4). How will Koreans react on being told that "it is necessary to book at hotels, inns or camping sites about three weeks in advance" (page 5), or when they hear that Pusan is "the southern capital" rather than Seoul (page 5)? We are told Chinju boasts "temples constructed in the 14th century"—surely many date from earlier—, that the Koryō dynasty is "known for its fierce resistance during invasions of the 16th century" though it fell to Chosōn in 1392, and that "Buddhist temples are a reminder of the Japanese invasion" either in the 1590s or 1910, but how is difficult to fathom (page 5). 1979 is said to be "before the rapid expansion of Seoul"—a city of 500,000 in 1950 and around 8 million in 1980! And that same Shilla Hotel, built in 1979, is stated to be already designated a "national treasure", surely an appellation reserved for ancient and important national monuments.

Culture is misrepresented, with "The Korean Percussion Ensemble" presumably standing for *Samul Nori*, who have never used such a name. The reference to a single concert in 1985 (page 9) misses a British tour by the same four-man *Samul Nori* team. On page 25 things get worse, where the "Master Drummers of Korea"—yes, *Samul Nori* again—are "currently so successfully touring Britain," but may possibly return to Seoul "to take part in the Olympics festival" by 1988!

Religion is a non-starter. Shamanism (page 12) is described "as a kind of off-shoot of Taoism, which deifies the sun, moon and stars, and has little in common with other religions." "Basically it is ancestor worship", with its priests known as "Muchangs" [*mudang*?]. "It has one deity" (not 10,000, and presumably no longer counting the sun, moon and stars), "The Dragon King of the Sea." Koreans clearly have much to learn. Haein monastery is "the oldest complete" set of "thirteenth century" Buddhist scriptures, and the most beautiful Buddha image is said to be at "SeoggAm Grotto" (Sōkkuram?). Further "a pagoda, that is a temple," which in rituals has a monk striking "wooden clappers together", is in reality not a temple and the "clappers" are a single piece of hollowed-out wood (see pages 14-15). Confucianism is equally misunderstood: the story offered to explain it tells how Queen Min "became very much attached to one *mundang* [*mudang*] and kept her in the palace" (page 15). The most "serious Confucian rite...takes place at the Chongmyo, the Royal Ancestral Shrine" (page 16), and lasts "about six hours", which must be interesting since scholars, audience, and performers all leave within two. Page 18 offers insights into Christianity: Yōūido becomes "Yoido", Myōngdong "Myondong", and the Unification Church is described as a protestant sect engaged in "charity business." One should forget the list of churches on page 19, since it comprises a selection of those who have English language services and advertise weekly in *The Korea Herald*.

The captions to photographs are awful. Photos 1 and 2 show the *changgo*, one as "an hourglass drum" and one as "double barrelled drums." *Nongak*, which implies folk bands, is given as a "Felt Dance" (I have no clue what this means). Photo 9, "Traditional Ladies Choir", is not traditional, and photos 15 and 16 offer two different explanations of one thing—see-sawing. Photo 32 describes Seoul National University medical college as being in "southern Seoul" rather than near the centre. Many photographs are hopelessly out of date: cotton yarn is described as a "main source of foreign currency" (in 1988?) and Japanese school uniforms are portrayed which were abandoned ten years back; for "more than 12 universities" read "over 45" (photo 25), for "90% of primary school children proceed to middle school" read "all", and don't fall for the notion that Hyundai cars are "made entirely of Korean components" (photo 36), or that "KBS television has 21 regional stations" (photo 13). Grammar, romanization and spelling

errors accompany photos 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 21, 28, 33, 36, 38, 40, 42, 46 and 49.

Romanization is actually appalling. It is not really true that "transliteration is not yet standardized" (page xiii), for Western scholars have for years used the McCune-Reischauer system, a system adopted by the Korean Ministry of Education by 1984. On the same page, I am not sure what is meant by "double letters", though if Hyde really refers to initial and middle syllabic pronunciation changes, "and" should be inserted in the text between "d" and "t." The very next sentence has me completely flummoxed: "I have tried to group visits correctly from the cards received."

Although "culture" is mentioned in the title, most traditional culture is missing from the book. "Education" does not consider traditional schooling. "Health care" relegates Korean medicine to superstition and omits all mention of acupuncture. Data on leprosy and physical handicaps ignores the tradition of looking after the handicapped within a community and the still contemporary separation of lepers. And what of today? Korea, Hyde says, has liberalised imports so that there is little price difference between local and foreign products (page 141). I wonder if the author ever asked the exorbitant price of Sony Walkmans, Mercedes cars, whisky or wine? We are told that moral rearmament, under "the wise Chun" regime, is so successful that bribe-taking is punished severely. And so children and students no longer give gifts to teachers (pages 70-2). Although I sympathise with the government attempt to do away with such things, Hyde seems not to have asked businessmen or students.

Notice the comment on Chun Doo-Hwan [Chŏn Tuhwan]. He comes in for much praise. This is unfortunate given his recently ended three-year exile in a Buddhist temple and the hated legacies of his regime. His "guidance" is frequently applauded (pages 2, 26, 30, 36, 38, 41, 58, 65-67 etc). Note pages 45—about democracy and "the political harmony achieved by President Chun"—, 46—"President Chun will go down in history as the leader..."—and 65—Chun has met student demonstrations with "understanding, guidance, and persuasion." Hyde has conveniently forgotten that Chun's "democratic government" came to power following a 1979 military coup that was strengthened with the bloody Kwangju suppression in May 1980. Not surprisingly, comments on the opposition are inflammatory: Kim Young-sam [Kim Yŏngsam] is said to lead a (now defunct) party run by north Korea (page 223, but see also 228 and 230), and the successful elections in 1987 are described as a "violent civil war" (page 230). And, while the views offered on north Korea may once have been accepted from Korean writers, they are not worthy of a foreign author and ignore the substantial published information which is readily available (see pages xix, 169, 170).

Hyde does manage to offer some useful information, albeit largely culled from her main source, *The Korea Herald*. Many will know this newspaper's government leanings and despair that it basically takes news straight from wire services, but Hyde knows otherwise: she describes it as "one of the best of the world's newspapers in terms of impartiality, accuracy, and honesty" (page xvi).

In short, Hyde's political viewpoint is simplistic and stilted: "Historically, all the political problems emanate from the carving up of Korea by the USA and the Soviet Union." Her economic perception is wrong, to the extent that she castigates many economists, at least those "in the West who think that Korea's success depends on low wage structure and tend to link it with Taiwan's unethical methods of trading" (page 121). Need I say more?

Kevin O'Rourke (translator), *Tilting the Jar, Spilling the Moon*. Universal Publishing Co., Seoul, 1988. 196 pages.

Yi Munyŏl, *Our Twisted Hero*. Translated by Kevin O'Rourke. Minumsa Publishing Co., Seoul, 1988. 119 pages.

Oh, that Korean companies had learnt the value of ISBN numbers! The addresses of the two publishers here are given as : 54 Kyunji-dong, Chongno-gu, Seoul 110-170 (Universal) and 44-1 Kwanchul-dong, Chongno-gu, Seoul 110-111 (Minumsa). In price, at 7,500 *wŏn* and 3,500 *wŏn* respectively, both indicate that the Korean market has caught up with the West. O'Rourke has a doctorate in Korean literature from Yonsei University, and has lived in Korea since 1964. The wealth of his experience is not wasted, for here the translations are exemplary. O'Rourke's feeling for line and sympathy with the authors' expression is well communicated. Consistent use is made of the McCune-Reischauer romanization system, though without diacriticals.

Tilting the Jar, a worthy winner of a prize in Korea, has the subtitle "poems from Koryo, Choson and contemporary Korea." It contains a selection of *hansi* [*hanshi*] poems by Yi Kyubo (1168-1241; Yi is described by O'Rourke as the "Korean poet of transcendence"), *sijo* [*shijo*] poems by Chŏng Ch'ŏl (1536-1593), Yun Sundo (1587-1671), Kim Sujang (b. 1690) and anonymous authors, and contemporary poems by Sŏ Chŏngju (b. 1915). *Hansi* are Korean poems written in Chinese characters. O'Rourke starts with a short account of Yi's poems:

...there is nothing sweet or vapid about Yi Kyubo...Much of his material is grounded solidly in the cares and concerns of everyday life, giving it an almost contemporary flavor. His poems always focus on an emotion and offer brief but brilliant illuminations of the heart (page 21).

Each *sijo* poet also receives a short introduction: that on Chŏng Ch'ŏl details what is known of his career and character, and places his 107 poems in the tradition. In the translations a few footnotes are usefully offered that clarify the text. The selection of anonymous *sijo* accepts that most date from the 18th century onwards, and suggests a move from Confucian concerns to everyday life: "*Sijo* left the *yangban*'s study and entered the ordinary man's backyard and kitchen" (page 102). Sŏ Chŏngju—"there is fairly general agreement that Sŏ is the most important Korean poet of the 20th century" (page 124)—merits 63 pages. O'Rourke states that Sŏ writes revelatory poetry, poetry that gives an almost zen style illumination. Hence, the spirit of the original needs to be—and here is—captured with minimal elaboration or explanation.

Kim Tongni (whose *Shaman Sorceress* was reviewed above) has noted Yi Munyŏl's "marvellous display of narrative skill", a feature which remains apparent in O'Rourke's translation. Several of Yi's novels have recently been published in French to considerable acclaim, and *Our Twisted Hero* recently won the Yi Sang award in Korea. O'Rourke offers no introduction; allowing the story to stand on its own is surely a sign of its maturity and accomplishment. It is a contemporary novel; Yi was born in 1948. Indeed, the subject matter—a school bully and his downfall—would probably have led to its banning had the novel appeared in Korea before 1987. More than an allegory, it seems to chart the downfall of the Chŏn regime. Enough said?

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Standard romanization systems for Asian languages should be adopted: McCune-Reischauer for Korean, *pinyin* for Chinese, and Hepburn for Japanese. Use diacriticals for Korean. Enclose separate character glossaries where necessary, preferably in a camera-ready form. Do not insert characters in the main body of your text. Proper names should follow preferred spellings only when affixed to an article or book written in English. In such cases, McCune-Reischauer romanizations should be appended in square brackets, or non-standard given in parentheses. Names should be given without hyphens—for example, Kim Hyenam. In references give Asian titles in romanization with, where appropriate, a translation. Use standard translations where available.