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PAPERS OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR KOREAN STUDIES

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PAPERS OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR KOREAN STUDIES

VOLUME 4

**Papers**  
**of the**  
**British Association for Korean**  
**Studies**

**Volume 4**

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## Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies

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## Editorial

The first three volumes in the *BAKS Papers* series appeared in quick succession. This, the fourth volume, should confirm that we have accomplished our initial aim to keep to an annual publication schedule.

Until 1992, BAKS held annual conferences. This has meant that up until now there has been a reasonably ready supply of papers on a wide variety of topics. The variety of the first four volumes well illustrates the diverse Korean Studies interests pursued in British universities and colleges. But annual conferences do not readily allow for a volume to pull papers together on the basis of common themes. Now, things are set to change. The BAKS membership, in March 1992, elected to hold bi-annual conferences. This should be seen as a positive development. It will allow British scholars to prepare papers in greater depth and with more research behind them. Second, the decision was coupled to a proposal to hold more tightly themed workshops in alternate years. The first workshop—on Korean material culture—was held in February 1993 at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Consequently, we need have no fear that there will be a lack of material to consider for future volumes; the decision merely signals a change in direction. In fact, the change is already evident here in Volume 4: four of the papers included here could be labelled political science. Three—by Lee Hongkoo, John Gittings, and Jacqueline Pak—take at face value the call for contributions given in each volume, for they were never presented at BAKS meetings. And, quite naturally, a number of papers have far outgrown their initial form as brief conference presentations.

*Because of the focus of several papers, it is worth reminding readers that individual presentations represent the views of authors, not of the British Association for Korean Studies or the editor.* And, since many of the authors describe recent or contemporary events, the editor has let preferred romanizations of personal names stand.

Lee Hongkoo was until 1993 Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Britain. His paper was prepared for a seminar at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London during 1992. At the SOAS seminar, three invited scholars from other institutions offered prepared comments. This is how the paper appears here, with the addition of Lee's spontaneous responses. John Gittings, an editorial writer for *The Guardian*, has observed North Korea for almost 20 years; his paper explores and questions the hagiography surrounding the Northern leader, Kim Il Sung. Jin Park's contribution can be read with the hindsight of recent political events in the South. Part of this paper appeared in the *Pacific Review* during 1992, and we thank the editor of that journal for allowing us to reproduce the whole text here. Park is lecturer in Japanese politics at the University of Newcastle. Jacqueline Pak's paper, on the Ilhae Foundation founded by Chun Doo Hwan and surviving today despite a bitter legacy as the Sejong Institute, was initially written from the point of view of an insider preparing an MA dissertation for Harvard University. Pak was a publications editor at Ilhae and speechwriter for the chairman, Kim Kihwan, in 1986 and 1987. More recently, she has been working in London.

Archaeology is the focus of two papers originally presented at the 1991 BAKS conference in Cambridge. Dong-mu An, in 1991 a visiting scholar at the Institute of Archaeology, University College, London, works at Chŏnju National Museum. Bong



Won Kang was, at the time of presenting his paper, a postgraduate student at Cambridge. His paper created considerable discussion at the conference. Both papers complement—in terms of subject but not necessarily approach—the paper published in Volume 3 by Sarah Nelson. Jin Young Moon, who here writes about the welfare systems of Korea and Taiwan, recently completed doctoral studies at the University of Hull. Volume 4 is rounded-off with a contribution by Yur-Bok Lee of the University of North Dakota, author of *West Goes East: Paul Georg von Möllendorff and Great Power Imperialism in Late Yi Korea* and several other books. Lee's account of Robert Hart, the best-known British subject employed by the Chinese government in the late 19th century, complements Ian Nish's consideration of John McLeavy Brown in the *Papers* volume 2.

## THE END OF THE COLD WAR AND PROSPECTS FOR KOREAN UNIFICATION

HONGKOO LEE

The Cold War has ended with the historic transformation of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, leading to changes in super-power relations. How does this affect the confrontation between North and South Korea, a confrontation which has dramatically illustrated Cold War tensions for the last four and a half decades? Does the end of the Cold War automatically ensure unification on the divided peninsula? There is no simple answer, for a change in the global system, however fundamental and wide ranging it may be, does not immediately bring uniform effects to all regions and all sub-systems. Peculiarities and particularities of different regions and different situations have their own dynamics, and interact with developments in the global system to produce a variety of changes, solutions, and problems. The Korean situation, then, has its own distinct features which tend to explain the efforts of both North and South to deal with changing times and North-South interaction.

The Korean situation seems to contain three characteristics which make it special in the general context of the changing international system. First, Korea has experienced not just the tension of the Cold War, but a hot and bloody war which left permanent fortifications along a ceasefire line, the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The legacy of war, and the utmost state of alert on both sides against further military engagement has made the Korean situation distinct, for example, from the German situation prior to 1990. Change from a mere ceasefire to permanent peace is the priority among the situational requirements. Second, Korea remains perhaps the last nation still divided among those which suffered unwarranted division after the second world war. Germany and Vietnam have achieved unification. If there is one element which unites the divided peninsula it is the ardent wish of the people in both North and South to see national unification. Third, and finally, a geopolitical peculiarity of the Korean peninsula is becoming more prominent as the fortunes of the major powers undergo change in this period of great transformation. Korea is a rare case, for it has four major powers as immediate neighbours, in a neighbourhood where there are no other minor countries. The former Soviet Union has the largest land mass, China the largest population, Japan the largest cash-surplus with her neighbours. The United States, as a Pacific power and a party directly involved in the partition of the Korean peninsula, still maintains a visible presence. Restructuring, or the re-formulation of either a global order or a regional balance will acquire a special relevance as it is related to the Korean problem in its geopolitical context.

## 1.

Looking at the various regions and countries around the world, one can say that almost every country has its own problems. It is very difficult to determine who has the most serious problems or who has suffered most. There is a great deal of suffering in different parts of the world, and this explains why it is difficult to rank the seriousness and depth of suffering that each people has suffered or suffers.

In any case, Korea has experienced a unique history of suffering in this century. To put the matter into perspective, almost no Korean living today has experienced citizenship in a country independent and united. In 1910, Korea was annexed by Japan, so for 35 years until 1945 the nation was not an independent state but merely a colony. Immediately following liberation, Korea was divided. Until today (1992), the division has lasted for nearly 47 years. So, for the last 82 years Koreans have not enjoyed both a united and independent country. I, and all Koreans, simply do not know what it is like to be a citizen of a country that is independent and united; we do not want to claim we suffered most—because suffering seems so universal in the 20th century—but I have to say we have experienced a very peculiar fate.

Now, in looking back at the period of colonial rule, we see perhaps the last throws of what we may call the Age of Imperialism. The large powers were engaged in territorial expansion, and we were a victim. And then, from 1945 until very recently, we experienced the Cold War; we saw ideological confrontation combined with military hostility.

We may talk about unification or re-unification, but the truth of the matter is that the question we face today is not so much re-unification (as in the original title of my presentation) as unification. The reason is that "re-unification" sounds as if we have an original state to go back

to, but the last time we had a unified country was in 1910 at the end of the Chosŏn Dynasty. No one is willing to go back to the kingdom as it then was, for in 82 years so much has happened. What we want to achieve is nation-building through unification. When we talk about unification plans, formulas, and methods, we are really discussing ways to create nationhood. We are trying to create a modern nation for the first time on the Korean peninsula. Many countries have gained independence and started to modernize either early in the century or following the second world war. As far as Koreans are concerned, this is still to be achieved.

I know it is not an easy task to achieve unification, because for the last half century or so, to be more precise 47 years, Koreans have lived in two different ways: the peninsula was divided in two. In South Korea, we made progress in terms of modernization in conjunction with what may broadly be called the west. In the North, development has been very strongly tied to Communist societies. The two experiences are extremely divergent and different. Again, during our suffering, many moved from Korea. Today approximately 7% of Koreans live outside the Korean peninsula; unlike in 1910, Koreans are now spread all over the world. When Koreans talk about new nationhood, they have in mind a new meaning in the spatial sense, not just a nation restricted to the peninsula. Taken together, all of this makes the question of unification complex and special.

The same processes based on the same experiences are also tied to the development of Korean nationalism. We have seen various nationalistic tendencies develop and sometimes erupt in our world. During the days of Japanese occupation, Korean nationalism led to the movement for independence. In that sense, ours was a very exclusive nationalism that tried to reject outside influence and assert the independence and uniqueness of the Korean people.

More recently, of course, economic and social development has prompted a more international and inclusive nationalistic sentiment. How should we mix these two together as we approach the question of unification?

We must pay attention to geopolitics. The end of the Cold War—the end of superpower hegemony—has once again highlighted the importance of more traditional geopolitics. It has become more and more important to consider what kind of neighbourhood you are situated in. On the peninsula, Koreans live in a very special neighbourhood. In our part of the world you do not find small nations. We have only three immediate neighbours—China, Russia and Japan. And when these three are your immediate neighbours, you have to say that for Korea, a relatively small country, it's a pretty rough neighbourhood.

Yet Korea is not really a small country, for the combined population is something like 66,000,000—a population bigger than the United Kingdom. Everything, though, is relative: What is 66,000,000 when your immediate neighbour is China? We are a small country in terms of space, but not *that* small, as former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yu told me in response to my comment to this effect. So we have some space, but when your immediate neighbour is Russia, you still feel you are indeed small. Again, we have experienced tremendous economic development, and cannot claim to be *that* poor. Our per capita income now exceeds \$6,000. But when your immediate neighbour is Japan, you really feel you are very poor. Korea, then, has a very special geopolitical setting, which has to be taken into consideration in any talk about unification.

Given all this background, we have to ask whether the general world trend, involving the demise of the Cold War, really does apply to the Korean context. After all, the

division of the Korean peninsula was primarily the result of superpower decisions. The United States and the former Soviet Union have played major roles in maintaining the division for 47 years. The answer to my question has to be rather mixed. In some senses, the world trend does apply to Korea, but at the same time we must acknowledge that Korea, like every other geographical region, has its own peculiarities and special features. Even if my answer appears somewhat tepid, the world changes mean that for the first time the Korean unification question has become an issue to be tackled and solved primarily by the Koreans themselves. This marks the "Koreanization of the Korean question," because, ever since the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1895, the Korean question has been handled more by various involved powers than by the Koreans themselves.

Finally, as a special characteristic which influences the whole process, may I note the need to carefully study the anatomy of totalitarianism. Totalitarianism is a very special political, social, and ideological phenomenon in the modern world. We now know how the Soviet system operated; we now know how the East German system operated. Like them, most totalitarian systems have faded away, but what remains in North Korea today is basically a unique totalitarian system. This may sound like a pejorative characterization of North Korea, but I have no other way to describe the surviving system. Textbook definitions say totalitarian systems should have one leader, one ideology, one party, a total mobilization of population, total isolation of the population from outside influence, and so on. In every category, North Korea excels as totalitarian, though I evaluate their system positively: North Korea has the most effective totalitarian system in the modern world. The regime has been in power longer than any other regime (since 1945), led by Kim Il Sung. Although Kim is approaching 80, he remains relatively healthy. And his

regime is more successful, at least in terms of longevity, than either Hitler's Germany or Stalin's Russia.

Given the end of the Cold War, can the North Korean type of totalitarianism continue? We need to ask how any changes in the system will effect the question of Korean unification, how they will alter North-South relations.

## 2.

In South Korea the government has made some major decisions, developing a specific policy which reflects the activities of the last few years. By 1987, as *perestroika* was smoothly progressing, the relaxation in super-power relations became apparent. South Korea, particularly the new leadership, decided to chart a new course on both the domestic and international fronts. South Korea had already succeeded in modernization and industrialization through close linkage to the international economy and the maintenance of a high growth rate through the development of an export-led economy. Our efforts towards industrialization, however, were carried out under strong leadership, often at the risk of the government becoming a totalitarian regime. In the middle of 1987, a decision was made to immediately execute full-scale democratization with, as the opening shot, free and direct presidential elections. This decision was made with the full awareness that the end of the Cold War would be accompanied by an irreversible move towards democratization and demilitarization. The successful hosting of the Seoul Olympics in 1988 symbolized the determination of South Koreans to ride the new wave of history through a simultaneous economic internationalization and domestic democratization.

South Korea inaugurated a new foreign policy which was felt appropriate to the post Cold War era. We launched our *Nordpolitik*, fashioned after the German *Östpolitik*, to normalize relations with the Soviet Union, East European countries, and China. It is needless to add that this effort received encouragement with the transformation of the Soviet Union, as well as with the dramatic completion of German unification. It was hoped that the new policy would not only secure South Korea a more balanced global position, but would also exert indirect pressure on North Korea for greater access to reform.

We decided that nation-building through unification could not happen overnight, but had to be a gradual step by step process. The process involves a formula in which the two Korean states maintain individual status, yet at the same time set up joint institutions to promote development. The principle is to build a national community, which implies not simply a political decision or aggregation of political power, but much more: building one social community, one cultural community, one economic zone, and only then a suitable political structure. The one political structure will need to manage and govern the one national community. Taken together, this forms the scheme called the Korean Commonwealth. Since the Soviets have recently adopted the term, I feel that the idea has become popular in recent months, but we formally announced it as our unification plan on 11 September 1989.

This is the South's plan, and it appears a natural outgrowth of our social and economic modernization, our promotion of an open market mechanism through contact with the rest of the world. In short, South Korea felt that the existence of two states should not permanently impede the development of a unified national community. The first substantial result of these new foreign and unification

policies was the simultaneous admission of both Korean states to the United Nations in September 1991.

By the end of the 1980s, we came to the conclusion that the process of modernization and the process towards unification could not be completed without political democratization in the South, and this meant we had to institutionalize democracy. That is precisely what we have begun during the last four years, and we are still struggling on. In Britain as I prepared this paper, everybody was talking about an election, but compared to the situation in South Korea, everything is relatively calm. South Koreans have a parliamentary election in March 1992 and a presidential election at the end of 1992. Through the transferring of power in elections, South Koreans will have consolidated the process of institutionalizing democracy. Modernization and democratization, taken together, will furnish the ground for unification process which, as I said, is to build a commonwealth of North and South Korea, and perhaps also establish a viable link with all the Korean communities around the world.

### 3

There are a number of issues involved in the unification process; let me point out a few which relate to developments in North Korea. In many ways the North faces a much more difficult task than the South. The North is currently experiencing a difficult period as it reacts to the disintegration of Eastern Europe, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the world-wide decline of communist and totalitarian experiments. The regime has to accomplish two objectives, two immediate tasks. The first concerns succession. Kim Jong Il, the son of Kim Il Sung, is designated as heir, but to achieve a successful dynastic succession in this time and age, particularly in a Stalinist

regime, is not easy. A similar experiment in Romania under Ceausescu came to a tragic end, so the North cannot be sure that their succession will go well. In 1992, the drama is coming to its climax: The younger Kim celebrated his 50th birthday. He is already Commander-in-Chief of the North Korean Army, and most probably will become the head of state. The second concerns economic problems. The North can no longer count on the economic support of the former Soviet Union, and so are in an extremely difficult economic position. They need the help from outside. I think that North Korea has now realized that without making a major adjustment they have no way to solve this problem. They have begun to make moves which the South has welcomed. These include the decision to co-operate with the South in producing a joint declaration for peace, unification, co-operation and exchange, and the decision to co-operate in producing a joint declaration on a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. The creation of a commonwealth will be a further, interim step. We do not know how long the creation will take, but as we pursue our goal of creating a single nation, a structural commonwealth will help our management of the whole process.

Let me single out one specific problem in this process: the nuclear issue. The topic has recently been discussed extensively, particularly in connection to Iraq, where the nuclear programme focussed global awareness of the potential danger of nuclear proliferation. North Korea is now skillfully using the threat of the development of nuclear weapons as a major bargaining chip in dealing with South Korea, the United States, Japan, and others in the international community. In some way, Kim Il Sung feels a certain satisfaction, because he does not actually have any nuclear weapons. By saying he may soon have one, everybody else is so worried that they are prepared to make concessions to him. This is a nice way to live, but this type of threat may or may not pay off. One must handle this threat

very subtly and well, or else you get into the type of situation that Iraq did in 1990. Kim has so far handled the threat quite well. Just by signing, for example, an inspection agreement in Vienna at the end of January 1992, he gave the impression of doing a big favour to the international community, although signing was an obligation for every party to the Non Proliferation Treaty. Nonetheless, this became a bargaining chip. By engaging in this type of negotiation, by gaining concessions from South Korea and so on, Kim believes he is managing the political problems related to the succession and the economic difficulties he faces. There are now serious talks about South Korean and western capital and technology going to the North. People like the head of Daewoo Corporation have spent time in P'yongyang discussing setting up a series of factories. Kim Il Sung has reason to feel elated and confident. But have any concessions really been made? It was what we wanted: we wanted to see the welfare of people in both North and South increase. We wanted a breakthrough that would change our relations, for that is how we can build a commonwealth. So both sides have gained.

Now, let me turn to expectations. The question is always asked whether, by pursuing our policy, we expect the northern system to remain forever. At least in the short-term, we do not want to see a sudden collapse or disruption on the Korean peninsula; we would prefer to go step by step. In the heyday of ideological debate, the nationalistic sentiment of many Koreans led them to say they would like unification at any cost. But now we must ask whether we really mean at any cost: there are no policies and no objectives which a nation can be prepared to follow at any cost. The successful unification of Germany has taught us a lesson. Even though successful, the Federal Republic was perhaps the most resourceful system in the world. East Germany was a smaller entity than North Korea, with only 16 million people. We have learned that the process of

building a single nation is not easy, but involves very complex problems even when the process is fully prepared.

Following the nuclear treaty signing, the next step for the North is ratification. North Korea said that the ratification process was so complex it might take one month but just as easily might take one year. As long as South Korea and the international community continues to put pressure on the North and continues to show willingness to make "concessions," the process will continue because of the dire needs of the North. In the coming months and years, the South expects a gradual process towards building a single Korean national community. At least by the turn of the century we hope to lay the foundation for an independent Korean nation.

#### 4.

Our ambitions will depend on developments in the international community. Our three neighbours are so big that a crisis in any one could affect the entire situation on the Korean peninsula. The Chinese economy is booming, but there are many political problems. The Chinese have made a successful evolution from totalitarianism to authoritarianism, but how to go further remains a big question. The difficulties of Russia are well known, and we committed \$3 billion of loans and assistance in 1990. Given the limited means we have, this sounds extravagant, but the reason we had to give so much was that Russia is our immediate neighbour: during winter, the cold wind from Siberia makes Koreans really cold. If something goes seriously wrong in Russia, we will also be in trouble. The South Korean economy is now in trouble, with a \$10 billion deficit balance. More than \$9 billion of the deficit is with Japan. It looks like the deficit will get bigger in the coming years, and this imbalance with our immediate neighbour will

certainly constitute a major problem. We are concerned, and certainly the Japanese are concerned, but the problem cannot be solved merely by applying the logic of market principles: Japan also has to make a political decision.

In these pages, I have summed up the problems facing unification. On one hand we are continuing our effort to build a unified national community, and at the same time we are doing our best to deal with our big neighbours in an effort to build a mechanism for a balance of power. New World Order is a term which is currently fashionable but may be too hopeful. What we are aiming at is a reasonable balance of power just in our neighbourhood. To achieve this end, we are trying to maintain and develop ties beyond our region, and thus both the United States and Europe are extremely important. We always feel that we face more than our fair share of problems, but we have a fatalistic outlook: you cannot pack up and move to another neighbourhood. We will try to deal with our problems to the best of our ability.

#### **RESPONSES**

*Michael Yahuda, Department of International Relations,  
London School of Economics.*

First of all I must say what a wonderful presentation we have just had. I'd like to draw attention to two major issues it seems to me that arise out of the paper. One concerns, if you like, the neighbourhood, and one unification. It seems to be that there is a contradiction in seeking to establish some type of peaceful transition. Stage by stage there has been a build-up of communication between North and South in which an economic community is developing, in which the tightly-controlled totalitarian state gradually adapts itself into a free mode basically decided by the South.

If one looks at China, they sought as early as 1982 to encourage the North to follow them in setting up special economic zones and adapting to the international economy and, in particular, to the economies of the Asian-Pacific region. In some half-hearted way the North Koreans did try, but nothing came of it. There's a sense, then, in which the Chinese have been quietly putting pressure on the North to adapt, while in South Korea there is consciousness of a parallel with Germany. Of course, for the people in Beijing, the issue of comparison is Taiwan, and in 1984—specifically after the agreement with Hong Kong—Deng Xiaoping let it be known that the formula of "one country, two systems" could be applied to the Korean peninsula. But little has come of this and, indeed, the Chinese have not pressed.

The North has found itself in the last two or three years having to retreat very rapidly from declared positions. It did so over the question of the dual entry into the United Nations. And it is clear that, although nothing was said in public, the Chinese decided not to veto the decision and put pressure on the North. So there is a sense in the North of being beleaguered. Far from having this sense of confidence which Ambassador Lee suggests in the way they played the nuclear card, I think one could better describe the actions as of desperation.

Furthermore, although one can say that the collapse of communism has been primarily a European matter (East Asians look back to different kinds of cultural traditions, hence communist parties seem to have survived in Vietnam, China, and North Korea), I do not see any sign that the Chinese have sought to erect some new kind of East Asian Communist International. They seem, on the contrary, to be concerned primarily with themselves and treat both Vietnam and North Korea not as fraternal comrades-in-arms who collectively face the difficulties of the outside world, of the end of the Cold War.

This raises a further issue about the end of the Cold War and how it applies to this part of the world. I think one of the contrasts is that Europe is part of the Cold War itself, taking part in multilateral organizations, multilateral discussions and multilateral negotiations, involved in security matters as well as economic matters and so on. This has not been the case in Asia. The United States has had a series of bilateral treaties resulting from the formula of four plus two. This formula might be thought to be applied to Korea, but it does not seem to really have much life in it.

The question, therefore, really turns on the adaptability of the North. There is an issue of asking Japan to introduce political change so that Japan will adopt an approach to Northeast Asia in which it sees not simply its own short-term self-interest but also looks at regional good. In this, Japan will have to pay a short-term cost for a long-term gain. So far there is no sign of political

structures within Japan that lend themselves to this. For Japan, international questions have really centred primarily on their relationship with the United States. In so far as Japan seeks to assert a greater sense of national identity, it does so in the sense of antagonism *vis-à-vis* the United States. Even in South Korea there is an element of the same thing.

I think what we have seen not just the Koreanization of the Korean issue, but also a sense in which the Chinese, for one, still have an important role to play in seeking to distance themselves from the links they used to draw with Taiwan. From Beijing's point of view, it is alright for countries to recognize both Koreas, and it is alright for both Koreas to be represented in the United Nations. I suppose they would favour not so much the idea of commonwealth but the Kim Il Sung idea of confederation. This is really a question of how do we get from where we are now to the future that all the neighbours of North and South Korea seem to want. This will clearly involve a dismantling of the political system that exists in the North.

*Jin Park, Lecturer in Politics, University of Newcastle.*

First of all thank you very much for inviting me to this excellent forum to discuss the Korean issue. As a Korean myself, I always have difficulty balancing my sensible approach to the Korean issue as a political scientist on the one hand with my position as a Korean who was born after the Korean War on the other. I myself am basically optimistic as a Korean, but as a political scientist I always have to remain cautious.

Perhaps I can add some footnotes to the major points made by Ambassador Lee today. Let me start with North Korea. I'd like to discuss further the implications which follow from the notion that the North can be described as the most successful totalitarian system in history. I entirely agree with the argument. It is, however, precisely because of that success that North Korea faces a critical economic problem because, in terms of domestic political control, *chuch'e* ideology (the self-reliance approach) has made one of the most stable and long-surviving hardline communist regimes. Now it has reached a point where it has to shift its domestic and international approach, and Kim Il Sung has perhaps to undermine his own achievement in order to move forwards. Therefore, I think the succession process has been accelerated in recent months, in a sense to partly help solve the problems faced.

Secondly, and more important perhaps for us to discuss here, would be what sort of developments can occur after Kim Il Sung disappears, and in that case, what would be the most desirable



Southern approach to North Korea. I think perhaps we can make an analogy between the Korean and German cases. The Ambassador mentioned the Koreanization of the Korean problem. Comparing the Korean with the German case, perhaps in the case of Germany a different dimension—that is, the Europeanization of the German problem—might have helped stabilize the situation. In the course of the integration sought by many European countries, settlement of the German problem can be noted for the conspicuous early lack of nationalism. Perhaps all of us were rather surprised to see German nationalism erupt after the crumbling of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. I think as far as nationalistic sentiment is concerned, Korea is no less strongly nationalistic, as the Ambassador pointed out, because of the history of imperialism.

In the case of Korea, however, anything similar to the Europeanization of the German problem doesn't exist. Therefore, in this post-Cold War era, Korea has to localize détente without a regional framework. Perhaps a compromise solution to the lack of regional involvement in the process would be the two plus four idea as Dr. Yahuda has suggested. Two plus four again, according to our viewpoint, has different implications. We know that when American Secretary of State James Baker mentioned this idea, there was a rather sensitive reaction from the Korean side precisely because of nationalism. Korea is our own problem, the problem of two not four.

Perhaps, then, we need to re-define two plus four to address the particularities of the Korean case. In other words, two plus four exists in a different context: it can be divided into two plus two plus two. That is, two Koreas, the U.S. and China, and Russia and Japan, giving an inner circle and an outer circle of outside powers. It is very logical to me that the two members belonging to the outside circle—Japan and Russia—would normalize their relationships with the two Koreas much more easily than the inside members. We know that North Korea would demand that Deng Xiaoping that before Japan normalizes its relations with North Korea China should not open its doors to South Korea. That is perfectly logical.

Here, as the Ambassador has pointed out, we have to pay costs in three dimensions: the domestic cost of democracy, the inter-Korean cost for unification—giving concession to the Northern side so it can move towards a more liberal position—, and finally, the cost for building a more friendly environment in the Pacific community—to make Japan approach North Korea. Of course, there are a lot of problems. In a way we can equate the situation between North Korea and Japan and China to that of the situation a century ago. I think Martina Deuchler has written an excellent book on this. Korea, trying to maintain its traditional sense of friendship and identity with China on the one hand, as economically Japan becomes strong. I do not mean that there will

be a Sino-Japanese War again before the year 2000, but the situation is very similar. Therefore, what South Korea should do in order to localize détente, I think, is to first secure a more stable transition of political change in North Korea. The Southern government announced several years ago in its so-called "Seven-seven Declaration" that Japan and the United States should begin to talk seriously with North Korea. Japan is already doing so and the U.S. is now opening up a channel for dialogue.

So what is my conclusion? I think that the most striking difference in the German and Korean cases is that the two Germanies agreed on the modalities of division. That is, they were committed to the *status quo*, but differed on the principle of unification. In contrast, in the case of Korea, the two countries agree on the principle—that is, unification—but differ on the modalities. This is exactly because of the existence of the Korean War and because of the different international contexts covering the Korean peninsula. We may need to approach the issue in three different ways, paying three different costs, but I think the process will be very rewarding and we might see the visible results before the end of this century.

I can imagine a sort of triple crisis when Kim Il Sung departs. The first stage would be a crisis of identity, to be applied to the North Korean people in general, resulting from the psychological vacuum left after the disappearance of the kingpin from their highly indoctrinated society. To the extent that the elder Kim has succeeded in establishing an unparalleled personality cult around him, the post-Kim Il Sung North Korea might have to suffer an equally serious identity crisis. So the next stage would be a crisis of authority. The younger Kim, Jong Il, would want to preserve at least the surface stability of the North under the inherited banner of *chuch'e* ideology. But that would not be an easy job, because of his questionable leadership qualities, and because of growing economic hardship, embarrassing diplomatic isolation, and emerging political opposition in the state. North Korea at this stage could be compared to China in its post-Mao chaos.

Third, there would be a crisis of ideology. Although it might take some time for the North to reach this last stage, given the expanding economic gap between the two Koreas and the inevitable penetration of the capitalistic and liberal influence, plus information—whether from Japan, China or South Korea—fundamental doubts about the validity of the centralistic Stalinist approach encapsulated in the *chuch'e* principle will unavoidably creep into the disoriented minds of North Koreans. This is the same as the critical stage which the Soviet Union passed through under Gorbachev's reforms.

The three stages of crisis could come one after another or could be experienced all at the same time. If the former happens

the new North Korean leadership, providing they are convinced that the only sensible way out of the crisis is to move towards reform, can aim to change their society gradually by loosening their tight political grip and allowing limited economic freedoms to the people. This may prolong the timespan of the reunification process, but would offer a more predictable path of inter-Korean integration like that of the two Germanies before. If the latter occurs, the potential for a radical political transformation will be significant. The extreme case will be along the lines of the Romanian model. Whether this proves conducive to a stable Korean reunification, however, is open to question. The reason for this is that South Korea, despite its apparent economic advantages and democratic flexibility, is not at present fully prepared to absorb North Korea without intolerable economic, socio-political, and cultural disruptions.

Given the current situation, the first scenario looks more plausible and desirable for the South Korean regime. For the time being this looks best in terms of securing a stable transition of the Northern society to make it internally more positive about the idea of gradual integration. But, because of the peculiar nature of the Northern society, the South cannot afford to disregard the necessity of having to prepare for a contingency scenario, which would include the political collapse of post-Kim Il Sung North Korea. This may possibly lead to the surprising emergence of a unified Korea like that of unified Germany.

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When Germany was united, the newspapers were full of speculation about the possibility of Korea becoming united. And of course there are striking similarities. We've heard some mentioned already. I will just run through a couple.

Both countries were divided as a result of the second world war with Allies prepared to fight for the independence of one half in the case of West Germany, and with Allies actually fighting for the independence of one half of Korea. The West German state is a Western-style liberal democracy, just like South Korea, and was concerned during the entire period of division that the people living in the other half should have better living conditions. There is also a parallel here, as we have just heard. In the last stages before German reunification, there was also talk of a confederated structure between the two Germanies. There was some speculation whether it might be possible to preserve two states that would somehow be linked, but which would still preserve two governments in East Berlin and Bonn. So, there again, similar

intellectual exercises were gone through though this, I think, is where the similarities end.

For, if you look at the reasons for the reunification of Germany you find that one half of the country was dominated by Moscow under a Brezhnevite regime in East Germany. It was, in fact, always Moscow that had the last say, as was shown by the fact that the German question was never Germanized. This is unlike the Korean question, which we hear has been Koreanized. The final decision to bring the two countries together was made by the leader of the West German government and the leader of the then Soviet Union. East Germany was always short-circuited. So, in a way, I think one of the most important questions is which outside power has control of North Korea. If no outside power has much influence we are really talking about a very different constellation.

A very important element in the reunification of East and West Germany was the pressure that built up in the East German population for reunification. In fact, this was probably the most important factor. The fact that immigration, first via Hungary then, with the crumbling control of Moscow, over the various borders of Eastern Europe, was the first element of a series of chain reactions. It led to a massive flow of migrants from East to West which in turn led everybody in the West German government to conclude that there was no way that they could simply accept all the immigrants without changing their policy towards East Germany, which meant ceasing to look at East Germany as a state.

It was, most importantly, the crumbling of the East German regime's claim to leadership, and the collapse of its authority under pressure from Moscow from above and rebellion from below, which made reunification possible. So, again, linking into the comments that have been made by the last two commentators, it appears that the German issue was very different from what could possibly be the Korean issue. For reunification to take place in Korea, the totalitarian regime may also have to be swept aside first—the East German state had to be totally dismantled. It was not the case of two sovereign entities negotiating among each other and with each other in order to reunify.

Very important differences are also there on a different level. There has never been a hot war between East and West Germany. Germany is—or was—at the centre of a NATO-Soviet conflict that was only ever political, never a war, and therefore was very much in the centre of the interests of rival powers; it was never peripheral, it was always at the centre of clashing interests. Germany was occupied on both sides by troops of these different entities, obviously by the Allied Occupation forces that increasingly were forces defending West Germany more like friends than occupation forces. That is quite similar to the situation of South Korea, but the direct confrontation of Eastern and Western troops (that is

American, British, and French, versus Soviet troops on the other side along the inner German border) made for a very special case.

A further very important difference is the fact that, as we have heard, Korea's history this century has been very much the history of the victim. Germany in the first half of this century was the aggressor, the villain. So, historical precedent meant Germany's neighbours were worried about reunification and had a lot of reason to think that this might bring along with it dangers. I cannot see that Korea's neighbours could have similar worries. So, in fact, you have a total inversion of problems from the point of view of Korea's neighbours.

In the German case, I would argue that the re-education of the Germans by the Allies has been successful. And I think that these worries of Germany's neighbours are not particularly valid any longer. Nevertheless, one can see that the Europeanization of the German question was necessary from the point of view of Germany's neighbours. It wasn't something absolutely necessary for reunification from the German point of view.

The final point I would like to make is the nuclear issue which, of course, was entirely absent in the German question. Neither of the German partners ever tried to use nuclear weapons in any sort of blackmail attempt against the other side to achieve certain political ends. The two Germanies did not threaten each other outside the context of the Warsaw Pact versus NATO confrontation—which again is part of that context of saying that there never has been a hot war between East and West Germany—so that any sort of direct confrontation and animosity between North and South Korea was never there in Germany.

I would like to finish with the point that was made about the cost of reunification. The West German government had, of course, decided relatively early on that if there were a hierarchy of priorities it would always be freedom before reunification, that it would always choose democracy—being members of the Western alliance and Western democracy—before insisting that there should be a reunified state. All efforts that were made on behalf of the East Germans were always made in order to alleviate their lot and make it easier for them to live under their oppressive totalitarian regime. So that was the aim of *Östpolitik*, a policy which recognized the division of East Germany before proceeding to negotiate. Bonn was always trying to make things easier for the other side, but did not insist on reunification for the sake of nationalism at the cost of democracy and freedom. I think this list of priorities was also very strongly reflected in the reactions in West Germany when reunification suddenly became a possibility, and on the whole it was shown in opinion polls. West Germans thought it was their duty to help their countrymen, their fellow Germans in East Germany and that the only way to stop mass migration from East Germany was

somehow to unite the two states and pay for it. The Westerners would do it, but they were determined not to make any political concessions. I myself, and French colleagues who have been studying Germany and who spent much time in Germany during the critical months (and whose judgement I trust), did not see much of an outburst of nationalism on the eve of, or after, reunification.

*REPLY: Hongkoo Lee*

Thank you very much for your very useful and enlightening comments. I cannot really find a single point of disagreement. The comments really add up to further issues on points I have made. So may I just make a few additional statements to illustrate some of the points I made earlier.

You can see my position. I am someone who represents a government, and in the past I have negotiated with North Korea. Therefore, I am doing my best to refrain from making any comment that could be taken by the North as somewhat less than friendly. I will just try to make some statements which generally sound good. In this sense, I am trying to encourage North Korea to do certain things. As for exactly what will happen I have my own judgement, but I am not making a statement about that.

It is true that I would like to see North Korea follow the example set by China. China is certainly not an ideal model for either freedom or democracy. Nevertheless, I think it has evolved from the Leninist totalitarian base of Mao Zedong to a much more authoritarian system today. Take, for example, the Chinese farmer. If he works on his farm, as long as he does not make political comments, he is free to go about his own work. But, if you are in a totalitarian system, just engaging in your work is not enough. You have to attend sessions to denounce American imperialists, you have to attend sessions to denounce the South Korean government. Mobilization is involved. I would very much like to see North Korea move in the Chinese direction. In other places, this might seem like a very small improvement, but from my viewpoint it's a very major change, and I think it would provide a better atmosphere for negotiation. In other words, I would like to see the North Korean regime move from totalitarianism to authoritarianism.

Our relation to China is very pragmatic. I think both sides recognize the benefits which come from it. As for the normalization of relations, we are prepared to wait. To some extent it is very much up to China to decide because, in a sense, the old world picture has somewhat changed. We do maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan and we do not take the issue of two Chinas too lightly. Taiwan is a long-standing friend and, if I may, I will just

say a little bit about the history because some people here may like to know.

During our 35 years of Japanese Occupation, our government-in-exile was in China. It was not recognized by anybody but by the then Chinese government, the Kuomintang government under Chiang Kai-shek. This was a government which gave shelter to us to maintain our government-in-exile. We have a lot of complex feelings toward our friends in Taiwan. It is not that we have any ill feelings toward the people in Beijing. They, in their own way, have provided shelter for Koreans engaged in the independence movement. The internal issues are problems the Chinese themselves have to work out, but what we are saying is we are taking a very pragmatic attitude and will just let the Chinese make their own decisions. We will move along on both the Korean question and our regional problems.

About Japan, I agree with Professor Yahuda's comments. The problem gives me a little bit of concern at the moment. As I say, it is basically a Japanese problem, but in some sense, by accumulating an enormous amount of wealth, what Japan does now and in the future will have a large rippling effect globally. Their decisions have to be based on political considerations, not just economic criteria. The question we have to pose to specialists on Japan today is: Does the Japanese political leadership have a capability to make a long-term political commitment and lead the people in that direction? This is a very serious question and, as an immediate neighbour, we are very much worried.

In respect to the commonwealth and North Korean confederation proposal. In fact, when we came out with the commonwealth scheme, we had very carefully studied the North Korean problem. Our proposal is geared toward a future compromise: It is open to negotiation. The problem is that the North Koreans are not clear about their own plan. We asked them if they wanted to have a confederation or federation. They say, "confederation, federation—we don't know what this is all about." Basically, that is what they are saying. It is the changing situation and the dynamics that make the North Koreans somewhat confused because for many decades they have believed they had the upper hand in ideological warfare and propaganda, the manipulation of symbols. So they were moving towards federation, not confederation. But, as I said, in terms of population, it is 2-to-1 in favour of the South. In terms of the economy, it is at least 10-to-1. In any merger of two systems, North Korea will be weaker. Nevertheless, what we are really guaranteeing in the commonwealth proposal is that all future decisions will be made by a 1-to-1 relationship. In other words, we will give a 50% share. If they do not like this, that is alright. I think finally North Koreans are beginning to admit that, in fact, this is what they want: a guarantee of the continued existence of the North Korean system.

So, they have to rely on such a confusing expression as "confederal republic." I do not know if they want to have a republic or a confederation, but I think it is best left somewhat confused so that they can make a decision without losing face. Face is very important in all these matters.

I totally accept Dr. Park's suggestion that it is really important to prepare for the post-Kim Il Sung era, but again, because of my own position, I cannot make any statements along that line because we are very much willing to settle all these issues with Mr. Kim Il Sung, so we do not talk about post-Kim Il Sung. That would be rather impolite. In fact, our view is that if the elder Kim does not make the necessary decisions while he is alive he will leave such a heavy burden on the shoulders of the younger Kim that as soon as the elder passes away the weight is such that the younger will collapse. Given this, we are urging and persuading the elder Kim to make moves while he is in good health, and I have reason to believe that he is moving along that line. That's why I am partly optimistic.

Dr. Heuser made a number of interesting comments comparing Germany and Korea. There are lots of similarities and, quite frankly, we have learned a great deal from the German case. Also, we have a very good working relationship with the government of the Federal Republic and have utilized their materials. The differences really are so great that, in many parts, the parallel does not really apply, and so we do have to rely on our own course of action.

My last comment is that there is one thing we learned, which I alluded to earlier. That is, there is no such thing as reunification at any cost. I do not think that the people of South Korea are prepared to sacrifice their freedom or their democracy. That is why I have told many Koreans, particularly students: "Do not say unification is the utmost priority, because it may take five or ten years to realize, when we cannot wait five or ten years to realize democracy." So, there are certain priorities we have to think about.

## THE SECRET OF KIM IL SUNG

JOHN GITTINGS

Kim Il Sung celebrated his 80th birthday in April 1992, the last surviving dictator of a "communist" country with the last surviving cult of personality. Fragile though North Korea's future may be, and hard though life continues to be for many of its people, his was still a considerable achievement. Certainly he had used the tools of repression with ruthless skill. Certainly he owed much at the start to the supporting hand of the Soviet Union. And certainly China saved him from extinction at an early stage.

For the past two decades and more it has been hard to see Kim's real features through the clouds of a suffocating cult. Yet there must have been more to his career than the mere use of force and the secret police. It will be suggested here that Kim was able to tap and exploit a deep vein of insecurity and self-doubt among the Korean people arising from their historical subjugation first by China and then by Japan. He appealed to the sense of shame of the Korean nation. He denounced his enemies as "flunkies" to a foreign power—it did not much matter which one.

Against the crime of "flunkeyism" he counterposed the spirit of "Juche" [*chuch'e*]—the doctrine that man (and particularly Korean man) is "master of his resources." This appeal had probably lost most of its genuine attraction by the mid-1980s. The doctrine had become routine. The economic gains had been squandered on empty projects. Even a well-sealed society could not remain immune from changes abroad. The succession—in the dubious person of his son, Kim Jong Il—caused elite dissension and required an even more extravagant ritual of political cult. But the charade of North Korean political culture by this time should not distract attention from its earlier more genuine features. We understand very well how Mao played on the ambivalent feelings of the Chinese people towards social order and disorder. Stalin's self-projection as mythical Russian father figure is also well understood. The secret of Kim's appeal is more elusive, but this essay seeks to explore an important aspect of it.

Let me begin with a speech by Kim from 1965 on the subject of "revolutionising" Korea's intellectuals. After Marxism-Leninism, he said, opposition to "flunkeyism" should be the most important aspect of education and scientific work:

As you know, geographically speaking, our country is situated among the Soviet Union, China and Japan. These adjacent countries are all big countries, with larger territories and populations than ours... Therefore, unless our country joins advanced nations by quickly developing its science and technology, flunkeyism towards these neighbouring countries will remain in our people's minds...

From old times, our country [has been] known as a golden garden for its beautiful mountains and clear rivers; it has rich natural resources though the territory is small. Ours is an industrious people with refined sentiments, outstanding talent and sturdy will. They have a long history and [rich] cultural traditions. Why should such a wise people as we blindly admire and worship others?

Even after the world-wide victory of communism, the Koreans will live in Korea. Why should we leave the golden garden of three thousand *ri* and live in an alien land? We must exploit our inexhaustible natural resources and build a wonderful paradise in this land where our people will live through all generations.<sup>1</sup>

### The Legacy of Shame

During fifty years (1895-1945), first under Japanese influence, then as a Japanese colony, Korea produced many brave patriots and revolutionaries who suffered discrimination, imprisonment or death. Yet liberation was achieved at a time when the resistance both internally and across the Manchurian frontier was quelled. A people whose sense of united nationhood dated back a thousand years to the beginning of the Koryŏ dynasty in 918 had become passive and guilty. Korea was adjacent to its colonisers and therefore more easily subdued than most nations elsewhere. In 1937 some 21 million Koreans were ruled by nearly a quarter of a million Japanese with only 63,000 Koreans in subordinate positions. Industry and commerce was also dominated by Japan, through the triad of the government, the banks, and the big *zaibatsu* houses of Mitsubishi and other familiar names.<sup>2</sup>

On 1 March 1919, two months before similar events in Peking, Korean students led a wave of demonstrations for independence in all the major Korean cities. Independence, said the declaration signed that afternoon in a Seoul restaurant, was the only way forward "if we are to deliver our children from the painful heritage of shame..." Japan had broken many solemn treaties and had shown contempt for Korea's civilisation, but "We, who have greater cause to reprimand ourselves, need not spend time in finding fault with others..."<sup>3</sup> The note of self-reproach is characteristic.

The post-war rekindling of Korean nationalism led to the "cultural policy"—an easing of direct Japanese rule which allowed some hope of independence in the far future. But Japan's hand was too heavy to encourage a significant national bourgeoisie of the type which emerged in China. Small nationalist and communist groups, always penetrated by effective Japanese intelligence, were active in the 1920s, but were crushed or driven abroad as Japan's pressure intensified after the Manchurian take-over in 1931. Rapid industrialisation now created new tensions among the Korean working people, many of whom were abruptly transplanted from field to factory. There were rent protests, strikes and many acts of bravery which led to imprisonment or worse. But armed struggle was only possible beyond the frontier in Manchuria, sometimes seeping back into the border region. When Japan's open war against China began—soon to merge into the Pacific War—the "cultural policy" of the past two decades was reversed. Korea was to be wholly Japanized and integrated into the war effort. Humiliation was complete for thousands of young Koreans at school and college who were forced to study in Japanese, to sing martial songs about the "invincible Imperial forces" and to adopt Japanese names. The somewhat idealised memory (for some at the time were more impressed by Japan's power) persists in many post-war writings. The novelist Richard Kim recalls his father's apologetic words:

Sure, we had some people abroad carrying on the independence movement, and so forth, but they accomplished very little for the people inside the country. Those of us who had to stay in the country and carry on...well, we could do very little, too, except, perhaps, as your grandfather said in his prayer, to sustain our faith and remain strong in spirit, hoping, just hoping, that, someday, a day like today would come. Survival, yes, that's it. Survival. Stay alive. Raise families, our children, like you, for the future. Survival, son, that's what my generation has accomplished, if that can be called an accomplishment.<sup>4</sup>

One former student at college during the war describes his growing disillusionment with his "respected teacher" who had signed the 1 March Declaration but now advised patience. "...I was driven to despair by thoughts of the possibility of losing our national identity altogether," he recalls. "For me, the Korean nation was suffering precisely from an identity crisis—due primarily to inadequate national leadership."<sup>5</sup> For others, schoolhood humiliations remain fresh decades later. Peter Hyun, revisiting the north after 35 years absence, would have his memory jolted after being briefly mistaken for a South Korean spy. That night, he recalled a confrontation with his Japanese headmaster who had intercepted a letter from a friend who did not even have "a proper Japanese name." Hyun had been beaten and then forced to kneel *samurai* fashion in the snow. Now he remembered both the admiration of his fellow-students and the humiliation later that day of a visit to his home by the repulsive headmaster, who forced this mother to bribe him with a bowl of black market apples.<sup>6</sup>

Behind the shame of subjugation to Japan lay a deeper shame from the past of a much longer submission to China. The historian John Fairbank has written of the Chosŏn dynasty's "unwavering loyalty" to China over a period of five centuries (it lasted from 1392 to the Japanese takeover), during which it became an almost model Chinese society. Since Korea was relatively small, he writes, and thus a more manageable and homogeneous unit than the Chinese empire, "it may have become more uniformly and fully permeated by Confucian ideas than China was itself."<sup>7</sup> Official Northern history now condemns the Chosŏn dynasty for "flunkeyism" —a concept which as will be seen has been the central target of Kim Il Sung's political career since 1945. The term was originally used to denote the central principle in the conduct of foreign relations by the Chosŏn court. This was embodied in the phrase *sadae kyorin*: *sadae* (literally, "serving the big") referred to Korea's

deferential relations with China, while *kyorin* (literally, "friendly relations with one's neighbour") referred to those with Japan. The first half of this phrase, used by Chosŏn diplomats approvingly, became the pejorative term "flunkeyism" (*sadae-juũũ*), a term not invented by Kim Il Sung, but already a term of abuse amongst pre-war Korean nationalists. As for relations with Japan, the friendly relationship between equals which was implied by the term *kyorin* became transformed into a further humiliation.<sup>8</sup>

### Fighting beyond the border

There is an old photograph of four young soldiers, hands in pockets, somewhere in a Manchurian forest, two of them leaning familiarly against each other. In 1958 it reappeared minus one soldier in a North Korean publication, captioned "Comrade Kim Il Sung and his comrades-in-arms in the period of armed struggle against the Japanese imperialists." Twelve years later the same photograph appeared once more. Kim was now standing straight (though another colleague leaned on thin air). The third man had been reduced in height so that Kim was now the tallest. In the final version first published in 1975 Kim was moved into the centre.<sup>9</sup> In more recent publications even this version rarely appears and Pyongyang's [P'yŏngyang's] museums now rely entirely on paintings to portray the official record of Kim's revolutionary past. (It is reported that the most recent version of the photograph had reappeared in the Revolutionary Museum by 1992). The new record dismissed in a few words the 1 March 1919 movement and the foundation of the Korean Communist Party in 1925, or ignored the period altogether. Kim Il Sung's appearance was now back-dated to October 1926 (when he was fourteen years old), when he formed the "Down-with-Imperialism Union." A few years later he was in

Manchuria, where he was said to have founded the Korean People's Revolutionary Army in April 1932. In 1936 Kim set up the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland, with its base in the forest around Mt Paektu—Korea's most sacred mountain—on the Chinese border. Every victory against the Japanese was ascribed to him and no one else.

The elaboration of Kim's early revolutionary record reached its height in the mid-1970s. In earlier versions published in the 1950s, Kim was described only as "joining" the youth organisations which in the later accounts he founded. The KPRA was said to have been set up two years later in 1934, and the inspiration for it was attributed to "the staunch communists headed by Comrade Kim Il Sung" rather than to Kim alone. Some attention was also paid in these earlier accounts to the role of revolutionary leaders unrelated to Kim. Peasant leaders in the 1890s were mentioned, and there were references to the development of the peasant struggle and the spread of workers' strikes in the late 1920s. But the later hagiography focused exclusively on the alleged exploits of Kim's family. His great grand-father was said to have led the assault in 1866 on the General Sherman, an American merchant ship which sailed up the Taedong River to Pyongyang, while his father had founded the only true revolutionary organisation of the 1919 period.<sup>10</sup>

These exaggerations have made it easy for South Korean propaganda to dismiss Kim's entire revolutionary past as a fraud, yet they overlay a substantial and not entirely unknown record. "Kim Il-song had a revolutionary past," admits Dae-Sook Suh in his otherwise critical study, "not as splendid as he claims and perhaps not devoted solely to the spread of communism in Korea or to the independence of Korea, but still a revolutionary record of some repute, of which any man thirty three years old [at the time of the Soviet liberation] could be proud. He is certainly



not a nonentity."<sup>11</sup> By glossing over the fact that Kim operated mostly across the border in Manchuria, the North Korean sources invite the derision of hostile commentators. Yet by the 1930s, this area was strategically a critical part of the Japanese war effort, and peopled by Koreans who had migrated for economic reasons or had been driven into exile. The trains across the Yalu and Tumen Rivers into Manchuria appear frequently as symbols for displacement and flight. Richard Kim describes in *Lost Names* how his parents, stopped at the border by Japanese Thought Police, were forced to cross at night on the ice.<sup>12</sup> The poet Yi Kwangsu, Korea's most famous nationalist writer who went into exile soon after taking part in the March 1919 events, described the sensation of exile in a poem:

My train rushes on,  
Whether early or late, at night,  
It never slackens its rapid pace.

In the crowded third-class car,  
Passengers lie cramped in narrow places.  
How weary look their sleeping faces!

Where in the world are they all going?  
What is the work they have to do,  
Travelling ceaselessly the whole night through?<sup>13</sup>

Kim Il Sung's own family migrated to Manchuria in the early 1920s. Kim joined them in 1926 after living with his grandparents and attending primary school in Pyongyang. He then continued at a Chinese secondary school—the Yukmen Middle School in Jilin province. Some of his school books, returned as a gift from China many years later, are preserved in the collection of foreign presents to Kim at the "International Friendship Exhibition" at Mount Myohyang. All in Chinese, they include Gorky's *Mother*, Lu Xun's collection of essays *Call to Arms*, and Marx on *Wages*,

*Labour and Capital*.<sup>14</sup> Many young Chinese of the same age were inspired by a similar selection. Kim had briefly attended a Korean school in Manchuria before moving to the Yukmen Middle School for a proper Chinese education. Not surprisingly the Chinese flavour of his education—which probably helped his later career with Chinese-led guerrillas—is obscured by the official biographies. If, as claimed, he joined the Communist Party in 1931, this must have been the Chinese Communist Party.

After internal resistance had been largely crushed, Manchuria was the destination for all young Koreans who wished to join the guerrillas. By 1935, Kim was the leader of a detachment of soldiers in a guerrilla force set up by the local Chinese Communist Party, incorporating Korean communists and Chinese nationalists. The only previous contemporary reference to Kim in the Japanese police records shows that in May 1929 he attended the abortive founding of a small communist youth group in Jilin province. He was quite probably jailed for some months after the youth group leaders were arrested. The much later inflation of Kim's revolutionary record obscures the fact that he had undeniably committed himself at an early age (he was born in 1912) to the dangerous path of revolution. He survived a purge of Koreans in the Northeast People's Revolutionary Army and by 1937 was a divisional commander in its successor, the Northeast anti-Japanese United Army. Kim conducted several daring raids across the border to attack Japanese forces in Korea. One of these—the Battle of Poch'ŏnbo on 4 June 1937—is authenticated by Japanese records which admit that they suffered a serious defeat. By 1939, as Bruce Cumings has established, Japanese police reports judged Kim to be the equal of his Chinese superior Yang Ching-yu, founder of the NEAJUA, and both had about 400 partisans under their command. A "Kim Special Activities Unit" was set up to track

him down. A Soviet journal published in 1937 described the daring performance of Kim's detachment.<sup>15</sup>

As occurred elsewhere in China, successful guerrilla operations invited more intensive Japanese counter-measures and the NEAJUA came under severe pressure from 1940 onwards. Kim himself has admitted that it was necessary to re-group in smaller units because of a special Japanese security operation in that year and official accounts refer to measures taken by Kim to "preserve and reinforce the revolutionary forces." The First Route Army to which Kim belonged headed north to join the Third Route Army, which had already begun to move into Soviet territory north of Khabarovsk. Japanese intelligence at the time reported from several sources that Kim and his men moved to the Khabarovsk area early in 1941, although there is no confirmation from Soviet sources. The story that Kim joined the Red Army, and in another version even fought in the defence of Stalingrad, appears without foundation. There is no doubt that Kim did move onto Soviet territory: it was a sensible strategic move and Soviet help was acknowledged fulsomely after 1945 until it was deleted from the official Pyongyang version in the 1970s. Russian sources indicate that his eldest son Kim Jong Il was born in Khabarovsk. His birth date was 16 February 1941—though Kim himself may not yet have crossed from China.<sup>16</sup>

To summarise: Kim Il Sung was not a theorist and probably not a Marxist either. Until 1970, the official record had failed to produce the text of a single speech or writing by Kim allegedly dating to the revolutionary period of 1930-45. Nevertheless, the record shows that Kim was a fighter in a nation which mostly did not fight. That would be a strong asset in bidding for the leadership after Korea was liberated by Soviet forces in 1945.

### **New Face in the North**

The pride and self-respect of our nation which had been repressed and trampled down under the long Japanese imperialist colonial rule, began to revive and unfurled (its) wings and soared higher with each passing day in the struggle to create a new life after liberation... Our nation can never again be reduced to a humiliating status as before (Kim Il Sung).<sup>17</sup>

On 14 October 1945—just six days before Syngman Rhee was welcomed by General Hodge further south in Seoul—Kim Il Sung appeared on the platform before the main square in Pyongyang, wearing a suit and tie, a Soviet-style fedora hat, and with a cheerful but slightly tentative smile. There are three versions of the event. Hostile South Korean sources claim that he was merely a Russian puppet, whose speech had been written in Russian and translated into Korean. Even his tie had been knotted for him by a colonel of the Red Army. The audience had heard of a legendary Kim Il Sung but were puzzled by the appearance of this young man. The official North Korean version now presents Kim as declaring the liberation of the Korean people to an ecstatic crowd. The Soviet officers on the platform have been blotted from the written and pictorial record, and Kim is said to have founded the Workers' Party of Korea just four days previously. (It was in fact founded nearly a year later in August 1946, as is correctly recorded in official histories until the 1960s). The third version, which is closest to the truth, acknowledges that Kim was sponsored by the Russians, but not to the exclusion of others, and that his rise to leadership was not a foregone conclusion. The veteran nationalist Cho Manshik (who introduced Kim at the rally) was chairman of the Pyongyang People's Committee with Soviet support. The Southern communist leader Pak Hōnyong was also looked on favourably by the Russians. Korean communists who had operated under the Chinese Communist Party—known as the Yanan faction—were allowed to return and to set up

the New Democratic Party. But although Kim could not have established himself without Soviet approval, his own qualifications were considerable and would ensure that he never appeared as a "puppet"—indeed, that he would shake off Soviet tutelage in the future.<sup>18</sup>

Kim now acquires for the first time an audible and distinctive voice. His speeches from the 1945-48 period already reveal the characteristics of the later Kim. There is an appeal to simple national sentiment on the theme of making Korea great again, a single-minded concern for control of the leading organisations (especially of the Communist Party) while being very ready to condemn his opponents as factionalists or traitors. There is a corresponding concern to build a broad base of mass support, particularly in the countryside with a high proportion of party to non-party members, and a ready borrowing of appropriate theoretical concepts from Stalin and Mao, but there is no indication of independent thought on Marxist themes. The beginnings of a cult of the leader and family can also be noted from around this time.

The Russians kept their grip on the top political command in Pyongyang, but otherwise encouraged the Koreans to establish their own authority at provincial and local levels. Later Kim was able to contrast effectively the inconspicuous Soviet approach with the much more visible American intervention in the south. "You have attained liberty and liberation. Now everything is up to you!" Kim quoted the Soviet command as saying in its first message to the Koreans. Meanwhile General MacArthur proclaimed formalistically that, "All powers of government...will be for the present exercised under my authority," and declared English as the official language for the purposes of military control.<sup>19</sup>

In December 1945, when Kim became secretary of the Northern Bureau of the existing Korean Communist Party (which at the time was nominally subordinate to the central committee led by Pak Hōnyong in Seoul), total membership in the North was 4,530. In August 1946, when the Northern party merged with the New Democratic Party to form the North Korean Workers' Party, the combined membership was 366,000. By January 1948 it had risen to 708,000. Outside the party, local People's Committees were organised which by September 1946 already embraced, or so Kim claimed, more than six million people from all walks of life. This was then nearly the entire adult population of North Korea. The real strength of this "united front" lay in the countryside where land had been redistributed to nearly three-quarters of a million peasant households. Kim ordered that "tested activists" from the ranks of poor peasants should be selected to run the new peasants' associations which should merge with the rural People's Committees. The party, he said, must establish "deep roots" among the workers and peasants, and its most important task was "to expand and reinforce its positions" there.<sup>20</sup>

Only in the course of struggling, said Kim in one of his first speeches, "not in words but in deeds," for a People's Republic, could the Party win over the masses to its side. Kim's concept of the Party was both Stalinist, in its insistence that it should be totally involved in all spheres of society, and Confucian, in its idealised view of a teacher-student relationship with the masses. The Maoist view that the party should also "learn from the masses" was expressed by Kim more perfunctorily. Cadres, he said, should not "decry the masses for their backwardness instead of breathing the same air as they and teaching them kindly."<sup>21</sup>

Doctrine did not loom very large in Kim's presentation. North Korea's economic construction, he said without

further explanation, was "not a socialist one, and yet, it is not, of course, going in the direction of capitalism." However Kim appealed strongly to a sense of national pride. The reconstruction of the North, he said in January 1948, demonstrated that the Korean nation had exceptional qualities. Any "ordinary nation would probably have perished" in the face of Japan's persecution and efforts to suppress Korea's cultural identity. But the Korean people did not give in. They "carefully preserved the history of their country and their national sagacity, loved their culture and did not abandon their language." One of earliest post-war reforms in the North was to abolish the use of Chinese characters and to rely entirely—unlike the south even to this day—on the *han'gŭl* phonetic script. Kim even claimed that North Korea's new labour law was ahead of the countries of Eastern Europe, and that its "democratic reforms" were a "heartening example to the people of many Eastern countries."<sup>22</sup>

Another feature of the early post-war Kim was his readiness to label party opponents as splitters and pro-Japanese. In reality the Northern branch of the Communist Party set out to absorb first the pro-Chinese New Democratic Party and then those who belonged to the Seoul-based central organisation to which it was nominally subordinate. Disunity, he argued, played into the hands of the enemy—an argument which had some historical basis in the leftwing politics of Korea in the 1920s. Those who claimed loyalty to the Seoul party centre, he claimed, only did so because it was unable to supervise them properly so that they could behave as "factionalists and individualist heroes." Kim's first party purge was conducted at the second congress of the Workers' Party in March 1948 when he turned against many of the "domestic" communists from the South. He accused the "factional elements" of drawing people to their side for the sake of kinship, school or provincial ties, or even friendships formed when in prison

together, and by "making sly mischief and inviting and treating them to a drink at their homes."<sup>23</sup>

But over and again Kim played the national card, taxing the Koreans with their failures against the Japanese and hailing their escape from humiliation.

How is it that we suffered from Japanese imperialist aggression and failed to repulse it all by ourselves? It is, first of all, that we lacked a national sense of dignity and power before and our people were weak in awakening and in united strength...

Today ours in a nation that is conscious of its ability and mission, a stout nation now which no force can bring to it knees and override. Particularly, the North Korean people have become masters of the country who handle everything by themselves according to their own decisions, the masters of a new, free and happy life.<sup>24</sup>

### The Scars of War

Korea's was a war of overwhelming destruction. It was started by Kim, and over time significantly helped him to consolidate his power. The scale of military casualties was reminiscent of the first world war, with a similar protracted struggle along a fixed line. There were an estimated half a million casualties on the North Korean side, while the US announced over 140,000 on the United Nations side and a further three hundred thousand among the South Korean forces. A million Chinese were killed—an important number, given Kim's later claims of "single-handed" victory. But Korea also echoed the second world war in the vast displacement which the war caused among the civilian population. Civilian deaths have been estimated at one million, and when the war ended there were between two and a half and three million refugees—or one-sixth of the population.<sup>25</sup>

The physical devastation of the Korean peninsula was immense, especially in the north where centres of population were regularly bombed in 1952-53 by the United Nations airforce in an attempt to force concessions at the Panmunjŏm armistice negotiations. Economic targets in North Korea—railways, bridges, factories, power stations, and so on—were regularly attacked. In May 1953, in a further effort to secure UN objectives at Panmunjŏm, an assault was launched against dykes and irrigation dams, with the aim of destroying the rice crop and thus causing famine both among civilians and the Northern armies.

Five out of the targetted 20 major dams were destroyed before the armistice was signed. "Floodwaters poured forth and left a trail of havoc," the official US history of the war records. "Buildings, crops and irrigation canals were all swept away in the devastating torrent."<sup>26</sup> There were very few other targets in the whole of North Korea left standing by this time. Only two buildings remained intact in Pyongyang. The North's own statistics show that national income declined by almost a third during the war, while prices rose by more than 150%. Famine in 1952 may only have been averted by food aid from the Soviet Union and China.

The Korean War was not a revolution which encouraged a spirit of individual initiative and heroism, but a national trauma which could only be endured by the exercise of the tightest collective discipline. It reinforced Kim's ability to eliminate all sources of dissent and to make the party a super-loyal tool of power. It is no accident that the main documents from this period included later in Kim's *Selected Works* all stress the need for "the improvement of the Party's organisational work" (the title of his concluding speech to the party's Fourth Plenum in November 1951).<sup>27</sup> Later editions do not include Kim's earlier report to the Third Plenum, held soon after he had been saved from

defeat by Chinese intervention, in December 1950. Characteristically he used this occasion to launch a bitter attack against Mu Chŏng, the Korean leader who was closest to the Chinese. Mu was made a scapegoat for the retreat to the Yalu and accused of resorting to "military cliquism similar to the emperors in the feudal period, shooting people at will without any legal procedures." Thus Kim diverted the brunt of criticisms which could have been levelled against his own impetuosity leading to the retreat and a breakdown of social discipline. He now demanded "stern revolutionary discipline" and called on the party to act as "one man" under the orders of the leader.<sup>28</sup>

During the retreat, many Koreans had collaborated with the enemy, and some had hunted down and massacred those known to be supporters of the Northern government. As the North re-established its control, it had to decide how to deal with civilians whose loyalty was now in doubt. At the Fourth Plenum, Kim admitted that even those "who had shared in the distribution of land and were of the same class position with us" committed "criminal acts" during the retreat. His approach was again characteristic: he insisted on broadening the party's organisational base, recruiting large numbers of peasants with few political qualifications, and he blamed party secretary Hŏ for having pursued a "closed door" policy in party recruitment and for having punished those who "wavered" too severely. Hŏ had favoured the entry of urban workers and before the war had been too partial, in Kim's view, to the recruitment of members of the former South Korean party. Kim's policy of rural recruitment coupled with the losses of the war resulted in a largely new party, poorly educated but loyal to the leader. A year later at the Fifth Plenum, Kim reported that the party had absorbed 450,000 new members during the war, of whom the absolute majority were "green both in the political level and experience in work, and about half of all the recruits barely manage to write and read the Korean

letters." Here, to borrow Mao's phrase, was a blank sheet of paper on which Kim could write his own script.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Rise of Juche**

What is Juche in our Party's ideological work? What are we doing? We are not engaged in any other country's revolution, but precisely in the Korean revolution... Therefore, all ideological work must be subordinated to the interests of the Korean revolution. When we study the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the history of the Chinese revolution, or the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, it is all for the purpose of correctly carrying out our own revolution.<sup>30</sup>

The "Juche Idea," which by the 1970s would be hailed as a beacon illuminating the path of mankind towards revolution, emerged a decade or so earlier from a complex mixture of motives. It was in part a necessary process of fashioning an authentic Korean approach to the post-liberation task of building a "socialist" state. Kim identified quite frankly (although this perception was later blurred from the official record) some of the new state's weaknesses, particularly the low political level of the working force and the incompetence of many cadres. A national ideology would be needed to underpin the enormous efforts which Kim demanded of the Korean people to overcome their material and political weaknesses (efforts which some of his colleagues felt would place too high a demand). Such an ideology also helped establish a barrier against excessive influence from Pyongyang's two powerful socialist neighbours, although at first Kim both encouraged and welcomed their help—also a feature later deleted from the official version.

All of this was interwoven with a fierce factional struggle which began even while the Korean War was on and extended well into the 1960s. The comparison is often made

with Mao Zedong's "Sinification" campaign during the early 1940s in Yanan. This had confirmed Mao's authority independently of the Soviet Union, provided a revolutionary path which led the Chinese Communists to victory, and finally isolated the "returned students" faction from Moscow. But there were important differences with Kim's Koreanification. Mao's campaign occurred in the course of revolutionary struggle with a considerable degree of genuine popular participation, and the factional aspect was less evident. Kim's own revolutionary credentials were not inconsiderable, but had to be rewritten after the devastating effect of the war.

Discussion of the Juche idea is complicated by a simple bibliographical fact. The struggles, material and political, of the 1950s were over before the word Juche was publicly used. Since then the idea has been backdated not just to the mid-1950s, but to the very start of official revolutionary history in the 1930s. The paragraph quoted above occurs in a speech dated December 1955 which is the first officially recorded use of the word Juche, but which was not published until 1960. The section on Juche occurs at the beginning and reads as if it has been inserted later into the original text.<sup>31</sup>

North Korea after the war was almost entirely dependent upon foreign aid and foreign example from China and the Soviet Union. In psychological terms, the end of the war could be greeted with nationwide joy, but it could never be seen as a national triumph. The Chinese could—and did—congratulate themselves on having vanquished US imperialism. North Korean satisfaction had to be qualified not only because this had been achieved with massive Chinese help, but because Korea was still divided. South and North suffered much the same blow to their self-esteem, although with different results. For Southerners the war revived, writes a Seoul professor, "the emasculated outlook

on life based on strong self-contempt which Koreans had felt during the Japanese occupation." From this it was only a short step to "the unconstructive and impulsive escapism that gained headway" and to the attitude that "anything of foreign origin, be it an idea or a manufactured article, automatically meant that it was superior to anything Korean."<sup>32</sup> Northerners were not faced with the variety of foreign stimuli first brought to the south by the allied forces and then greatly multiplied by the post-war inflow of foreign capital. But the Chinese armed forces remained in the North until 1958, having completely written off the cost of the war, while Soviet advisers dominated the work of post-war construction. In 1954, more than 30% of North Korean state revenue was provided from foreign aid. China helped to restore the railway system; the Russians rehabilitated power stations and iron and steel works; Hamhŭng was rebuilt with the aid of East Germany; thousands of Korean students and technicians were trained in eastern Europe.<sup>33</sup> However necessary this "fraternal aid," it also threatened a similar process of cultural assimilation, which Kim soon labelled as "flunkeyism"—the term was also used by post-war critics in the South.

North Korea in the mid-50s had its Marx Square, its Stalin Street and its Mao Zedong Avenue. The Peking resident Rewi Alley, who visited Pyongyang in 1956, writes of a long line of industrial plants on the bank of the Taedong River: "They have all been erected since the armistice and machinery has rolled in from the USSR and the new democracies..." Alley asked a young student of philosophy what he studied in his classes: "Various schools of Chinese philosophy, Indian, European, Graeco-Roman... It is all very interesting. I think it will help us to understand much about the rest of the world."<sup>34</sup>

Kim's own political initiatives were inescapably influenced by Russian and Chinese models even while he

began to criticise party leaders for "swallowing whole" the experience of "the parties of other countries." "Those who lack Party spirit," he said, "who have no enthusiasm to work for the Party and the revolution and think themselves outstanding figures, are of no use to our Party, whether they returned from the Soviet Union, China or even from Heaven."<sup>35</sup> His criticisms in the December 1955 Juche speech of (at this stage) mostly pro-Soviet features of political behaviour in Korea echoed those being voiced by Mao Zedong in China:

In our propaganda and agitation work, there are numerous examples where only things foreign are extolled while our own are slighted. Once I visited a People's Army rest home, where there was a picture of the Siberian steppe on the wall. Russians probably like that landscape. But we Korean people prefer the beautiful scenery of our own country...

I noticed in a primary school that all the portraits on the walls were of foreigners, such as Mayakovsky and Pushkin but there were none of Koreans. If children are educated in this way, how can they be expected to have national pride?<sup>36</sup>

In the same speech Kim referred approvingly to the Chinese rectification campaign, saying "There is a need to conduct a rectification as in the Chinese party." Echoes of Mao can be detected in many of Kim's pronouncements on subjects such as the "mass line" and relations between the army and the people. Started in 1958-59, the Chŏllima "Flying Horse" movement for rapid economic growth, with speeded-up collectivisation in the countryside, owed much to the example of the Chinese Great Leap Forward. Similarly, Kim's insistence on making heavy industry a priority in the post-war programme, although criticised by the post-Stalin leadership in Moscow, clearly derived from orthodox Soviet thinking on the need to give top priority to development of the means of production. Kim's opponents also sought encouragement in the de-Stalinisation theme which emerged at the Soviet 20th Party Congress in February 1956, challenging Kim's leadership at party

plenums in August and September in what proved to be the final showdown. Leading members of both pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese factions were accused by the victorious Kim of "babbling about freedom" and of having denied that his economic policies were "consistently correct." Both Moscow and Peking appear to have intervened to reduce the intensity of Kim's purge, but by 1958, after a further campaign against "sectarian influences," all of Kim's main rivals appear to have been eliminated.<sup>37</sup>

How did Kim succeed in establishing his ascendancy in just over a dozen years in spite of a disastrous war for which he could be largely blamed? The support or acquiescence of the Soviet Union and China was a prerequisite, yet this could have been withdrawn in favour of other contenders. He was no doubt ruthless in the factional struggle, but those with Soviet experience must have been equally skilled in waging it. It is suggested that the combination of revolutionary myth and assertion of national identity offered by Kim was attractive to many and seemed appropriate to a people seeking recovery from half a century of shame.

But for how long? Historical myths have a finite life: their period of greatest attraction lies not in the immediate aftermath of the events which have been mythologised but at a certain remove. As North Korea recovered from the catastrophe of the war, the role of Kim Il Sung and the theme of standing up against foreign intervention had a genuinely inspirational character. The threat plausibly presented—at least to a North Korean audience—by a South Korea with nuclear-tipped backing from the United States reinforced its appeal. But in the 1980s and 1990s the message of the Kim cult is being undermined from two directions.

First, it has simply become more remote and more routine. This writer has observed on the basis of three visits to North Korea (1976, 1986 and 1988) that much of the fervour has disappeared. Workers' Party cadres who once spoke with real conviction now more often sound as if they are merely reciting by rote the marvellous deeds of the Great Leader. Second, the myth has been conscripted and inflated to impossible lengths in the succession struggle by Kim's son, the Dear Leader Kim Jong Il. Its most powerful element, the doctrine of self-reliance to which was attached the label of Juche, has become Kim Jong Il's principal weapon. Loyalty to Juche, to the father, and to the son, are presented as an indissoluble trinity. In so doing, Kim Jong Il has antagonised the Party's old guard both on political and ideological grounds. In a revealing speech in 1986, he admitted that some officials still "regard our Party's Juche idea as something that is contrary to Marxism-Leninism". The Great Leader's works were only being studied "in a perfunctory manner". Kim Jong Il complained that there were still unnamed "defeatists" who "worshipped the major powers" and took "a dogmatic approach to things foreign". In a particularly revealing passage, he warned:

The first thing we must realise is that our Leader, not some great man from some other country, won back our lost country by overcoming all the hardships and difficulties in the dark years of Japanese imperialist rule and he has built a prosperous socialist nation in this land.<sup>38</sup>

The necessity for such a warning after 40 years of insistence on the leader's supreme revolutionary role indicates a very deep problem. North Korea is not so totally insulated from outside influence as is commonly assumed. In his other capacity Kim Jong Il is himself engaged in building up a core of younger cadres with a more outward-looking commitment to modernisation (and with better access to foreign goods and other material rewards). It may well be that the historical myth which sustained Kim Il Sung



and gave him powerful, and often lethal, ammunition during his rise to supreme power, is now repeating itself less as epic and more as farce. North Korea's crisis in a much changed world is not only the loss of a "socialist camp" at its rear which, despite the claims of Juche, it could rely on and manipulate. The deeper damage may be to the credibility of its central doctrine. In the world of inter-dependence and global markets, who is the flunkey now?

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#### NOTES

1. Kim Il Sung, *On Juche in our Revolution* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House (FLPH), 1980), pp.490-91. A *ri* is a unit of distance; Korea was once known as "the 3,000 *ri* land," based on the distance from northern border to southern coast.
2. Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), I: pp.12, 20.
3. C. I. Eugene Kim, "Nationalist Movements and Students," in Kim & Dorethea E. Mortimore (eds), *Korea's Response to Japan: the Colonial Period* (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University Center for Korean Studies, 1977), pp.266-68.
4. Richard E. Kim, *Lost Names* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1971), pp.185-6.
5. Young Hoon Kang, "Personal Reminiscences of my Japanese School Days," in Kim & Mortimore (eds), pp.287-90. Kang admits that there was a significant number of "pro-Japanese" students who argued that Korea was too small to constitute a separate nation-state.
6. Peter Hyun, *Darkness at Noon: A North Korean Diary*, (Seoul: Hanja Publishing Co., 1981), pp.87-100.
7. John K. Fairbank *et al.*, *East Asia: Tradition and Transformation* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1973), p.300ff.
8. C.I. Eugene Kim & Han-kyo Kim, *Korea and the Politics of Imperialism 1876-1910* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967), pp.134-5; see also Cumings, *Origins...* I: p.475, note 17.
9. Photograph sources: (1) Dae-sook Suh, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p.45; (2) *Democratic People's Republic of Korea* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958); (3) *Revolutionary Activities of Comrade Kim Il Sung* (Pyongyang: FLPH, 1970); (4) *The Immortal Revolutionary Traditions* (Pyongyang: FLPH, 1975). Suh ascribes the original photo to 1943 when Kim's guerrillas were operating from the Soviet Union. The Korean volumes imply an earlier dating, because Kim looks much younger than 31 years old. My thanks to Tony Coogan for help with this.
10. Compare the relatively modest account of Kim's revolutionary role in *Korean Handbook, 1959* with the hagiography in *Korean Review, 1974* (both Pyongyang: FLPH).
11. Dae-Sook Suh, *The Korean Communist Movement, 1918-1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p.261.
12. Kim, *Lost Names*, p. xx.
13. Andrew C. Nahm, "Themes of Popular Songs and Poems of the Koreans as Oppressed People" in Kim & Mortimore, (eds), p.212.
14. My observation in April 1986.
15. Kim's early exploits and subsequent historical detail are taken from Cumings, *Origins...* I: pp.35-8.
16. *New information on Kim's wartime record*, Associated Press, 8 April 1992; *The Independent*, 6 April 1992.
17. Speech of 12 January 1948, quoted in Lim Un, *The Founding of a Dynasty in North Korea* (Tokyo: Jiyu-sha, 1982), p.149.
18. See further Robert Scalapino & Chong-Sik Lee, *Communism in Korea*, Vol. 1 (Berkeley, UCLA, 1972).

19. Kim contrasted the two statements in his 28 March 1948 report, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1 (Pyongyang: FLPH, 1971) (cited below as SW1), p. 217. See also Suh, *Kim Il Sung...*, p.65.
20. Kim Il Sung, speeches of 10 April & 26 Sept. 1946, SW1, pp.48 and 105.
21. Kim, speeches of 13 October, 17 December 1945; 28 August 1947, SW1, pp.4, 15, 150.
22. Kim, speeches of 20 June 1946; 12 January & 28 March 1948, SW1, pp.64, 156, 228.
23. Kim, reports of 28 & 29 March 1948, SW1, pp.238-39, 266.
24. Kim, speech of 12 January 1948, SW1, pp.158-59. Note that for all these texts we are in the hands of Kim's editors.
25. Much higher estimates are given in Jon Halliday & Bruce Cumings, *Korea: The Unknown War* (London: Penguin, 1990), pp.200-1.
26. Walter G. Hermes, *Truce Tent and Fighting Front* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military Science, 1966), p.461; see also John Gittings, "Talks, Bombs and Germs: Another Look at the Korean War," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, V:2 (1975), pp.212-16.
27. Kim, report of 2 November 1951, SW1, pp.337-49.
28. Suh, *Kim Il Sung...*, pp.122-23, 358 note 15.
29. Kim, reports of 2 November 1951; 15 December 1952, SW1, pp.344 and 390; see also Scalapino & Lee.
30. Speech of 28 December 1955, "On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing Juche in Ideological Work," SW1, pp.582-83. This speech was first published in the 1960 edition of *Selected Works* (Korean edition).
31. Scholars at the Institute for the Study of the Juche Idea in Pyongyang confirmed to me in 1986 that the 1955 speech was the first recorded use of the term. See the useful discussion of Juche in Suh, *Kim Il Sung...*, chapter 17.
32. Kim Chong-un, "Postwar Korean society and the short story," *Korea Journal* 26/4 (1986), pp.23-31.

33. Yoon Kuark, "North Korean industrial development during the post-war period," *China Quarterly*, No. 14 (1963), pp.55 and 61-2.
34. Rewi Alley, *Land of the Morning Calm* (no publisher given, 1956), p.35; *Children of the Dawn* (Beijing: New World Press, 1957), p.184.
35. Kim, speeches of 1 & 4 April 1955, SW1, pp.533 and 565-67.
36. Kim, "On Eliminating Dogmatism...", SW1, p.586.
37. Suh, *Kim Il Sung...* pp.141-57.
38. Kim Jong Il, *On Some Problems of Education in the Juche Idea*, talk of 15 July 1986 (Pyongyang: FLPH, 1987), pp.9, 25, 27, 29.

**KOREAN DEMOCRACY IN THE VORTEX:  
THE CHALLENGE OF 1992**

JIN PARK

The year 1992 will be remembered, like the critical and turbulent year 1987, as another landmark in the advancement of South Korea's growing democracy. Most of all, the direct presidential election scheduled for December 1992 will be a crucial juncture in choosing a new political course for the country after five years of the *minjuhwa* democratization policy of the Roh Tae-woo [No T'ae-u] government. The voting results will reflect not only the popular verdict on the trials and errors of the Roh government, which will depart in February 1993, but also the people's rising expectation of a liberal civilian democracy to match both the prestige and burden of the country's fast advancing economy.

The Roh government promised new hope when in February 1988 it declared "a decisive departure from the authoritarian past" and it has since enjoyed both achievements and limitations in terms of pushing the

country towards a liberal civilian democracy. While pursuance of the democracy policy has generated positive results, to the extent that the basic issue of democracy versus dictatorship has now practically lost its political appeal, the Roh presidency has been constrained by increasing tension between conservative pressure and reformist demands in a visibly pluralizing society. Despite Roh's known penchant for patience and flexibility, criticism of his political indecision and supposed economic mismanagement has grown and undermined the authority of the national leadership in a traditionally Confucian country. As a result, the governing Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) suffered a setback in the March 1992 general elections when it failed to maintain its majority position within parliament.

### **The Emerging Power Struggle**

The intensifying power struggle in South Korea for the post-Roh leadership is the result of the three-party merger between government and opposition in January 1990 which launched the DLP. The main beneficiary of the conservative alliance is apparently the moderate parliamentarian, Kim Young-sam [Yöngsam], in early 1992 executive chairman of the DLP. Previously an opposition leader, Kim took a risk in joining the government side through a political somersault that eventually won him the presidential nomination ticket in May 1992. This created an opportunity for the third and perhaps final contest for the presidency between the two arch-rival Kims. The other Kim is Kim Dae-jung [Taejung], a more populist leader who now heads the largest opposition group, the Democratic Party (DP). Kim Dae-jung outmanoeuvred Kim Young-sam in the opposition party's presidential nomination in 1971, but was narrowly defeated by the incumbent president Park Chung Hee [Pak

Chönghüi] in the popular voting. Dae-jung challenged the government candidate once again in the heated 1987 presidential election, initially alongside Young-sam. But suicidal rivalry between the two Kims for the country's top job gave the crucial edge to Roh.

The two Kims, known as the leading civilian "fighters for democracy," shared strong antipathy towards the authoritarian rule of the military-supported government during the last three decades. The former Chun Doo Hwan [Chön Tuhwan] government excluded the two from politics in the early 1980s, which merely helped bring them closer in a common crusade. But now, because of democratization, they face each other as the main adversaries in Korean politics. The electoral race extends far beyond such personal rivalries, for it has strong regional implications. Kim Young-sam maintains his political foothold in the southeastern Kyöngsang provinces (the Yöngnam region), particularly in his home town of Pusan. Kim Dae-jung, in contrast, has been closely identified with the anti-establishment political sentiment of the southwestern Chölla provinces (the Honam region), the site of the tragic 1980 Kwangju incident. The clash of regional interests between the two Kims is now more pronounced than in the past because North Kyöngsang, with the city of Taegu at its political centre, has produced three successive generals-turned-presidents since 1961.

The emerging balance of power in South Korean politics is more complex than this recurrent bipolar contest might suggest. Within the DLP there is a muted challenge to the leadership of Kim Young-sam from a moderate reformist, Lee Jong-chan [Yi Chöngch'an]. Lee virtually ran against Kim in the party presidential nomination convention. He rejects the "patronage politics" of the two rival Kims and calls for a rejuvenation of the country's political leadership. Secondly, the launching of the new opposition Unification

National Party (UNP) in January 1992 by Chung Ju-yung [Chông Chuyông], former chairman of the giant Hyundai conglomerate, and this party's remarkable showing in the March general elections, significantly changed the rigid political landscape of South Korea. The UNP, as a third force, not only undermined the influence of the two Kims—especially that of the more conservative Kim Young-sam—but also introduced a new specific linkage between politics and business interests. Chung, who has been described as South Korea's Ross Perot, is also running for president.

Finally there is an independent challenge made by a liberal reformist Park Chan-jong [Pak Ch'anjong], the leader of the small opposition New Political Reform Party (NPRP). Although the NPRP failed to secure any parliamentary seats other than that of its own populist leader in March, Park's liberal centrist tendency and some regional support in Pusan, his home town, as well as in Seoul might have an effect, given the divided popularity of the two Kims.

The present picture of quadripolar power competition could be redrawn through surprise deals and strategic coalitions as the election day approaches. Compared to the 1987 elections, when the key issue was a simple choice between "reform within stability" and the ending of military rule, the nature of the power struggle has been transformed into a more diversified establishment of civilian industrial democracy. Apart from the underlying demand for a change of generation and an end to regional antagonism in politics, there is a serious challenge coming from influential *chaebŏl*, the big commercial conglomerates, in favour of more business autonomy and the development of an "economic presidency" commensurate with the country's increasing economic affluence.

### The Parliamentary Elections: A Surprising Prelude

The unmistakable prelude to the presidential election race was provided by parliamentary elections on 24 March 1992, the results of which came as a nasty surprise to the government. The leaders of the ruling DLP, including Roh and his chief party manager Kim Young-sam, showed confidence and even complacency in dealing with electoral pressure. The giant DLP, which had enjoyed a dominant position with 216 seats, or more than a two-thirds majority in the 299-seat National Assembly since the 1990 tripartite merger, expected a comfortable victory. However, it was denied even a simple majority. It gained only 149 seats overall—116 regional seats out of the total of 237 single constituencies and 33 proportionally distributed national seats. 149 was one seat short of a simple majority. It later managed to absorb nine out of 21 independent winners, thus avoiding a hung parliament.

Considering the combined voting for the now-merged three DLP parties in the previous general elections, when they gained 73.5% of the vote, the new approval figure of 38.5% was a crushing blow.<sup>1</sup> After the electoral results were announced, Roh reportedly said that "the government and the ruling party should acknowledge the people's will."<sup>2</sup>

In contrast, the main opposition DP led jointly by Kim Dae-jung and Lee Ki-taek—Lee was previously Kim Young-sam's top deputy, but he denounced the merger and in 1991 joined the other Kim—strengthened its position by winning 75 regional constituencies and adding 22 national seats, 97 seats overall. In terms of voting popularity, the new DP figure of 29.1% was much higher than the meagre 19.3% garnered by Kim Dae-jung's Party for Peace and Democracy (PPD) in the 1988 general elections.

The most notable electoral result, however, was the significant advance made by the hastily organized UNP.

Chung, who pledged to break the mould of bipolarized politics, won a total of 31 seats including 24 regional seats. Encouraged by this 17.4% of the popular vote, the UNP nominated Chung for the presidency and tried to expand its influence by recruiting politicians from amongst sitting independents.

The main reasons for apparent voter disenchantment were economic mismanagement and political uncertainty, the relative slowing down—by South Korean standards—of national economic growth to 7%-8%, and an inflation rate approaching 10% pushed up by rising wage levels, growing trade deficits, and enlarged foreign debts. All of this turned away conservative middle-class voters. Despite Roh's repeated commitment to tackling the country's immediate economic problems through the slogan of "more work and less spending," the government, with no clear consensus on economic management, was placed at an electoral disadvantage. This disadvantage was exploited by the DP and the new UNP, who both sharply criticized the government. As a result, the electorate was both depressed and uncertain; as late as one week before the election day, 36% were still deeply concerned about economic issues and an even larger 59.1% were undecided about which party to vote for.<sup>3</sup>

Voter dissatisfaction was directed at the three-party merger of 1990. The main rationale for the merger had been to restore stability in politics and to re-invigorate economic growth.<sup>4</sup> The continued sluggish economy and the ceaseless jockeying for power among DLP leaders, however, disappointed a large number of pro-government supporters, who by 1992 perceived the "grand conservative coalition" as a convenient means for exclusive power-sharing. Dissatisfaction was strongest among young voters. According to an opinion survey carried out in February 1992, 81.7% of those responding in their 20s and 30s (who now comprise 56% of the total electorate),

expressed negative views about the state of politics, citing chaos, corruption, and inordinate struggles for power.<sup>5</sup> In another opinion poll carried out in March, the majority of younger voters questioned welcomed the emergence of new political parties such as the UNP and the NPRP.<sup>6</sup>

Sensing the growing danger of political antipathy and distrust of the establishment, most DLP candidates chose to refrain from publicizing their special ties, if any, with the "one-Roh, two-Kim" leadership (the other Kim, so far not mentioned, was Kim Jong-pil [Kim Chongp'il], who had been an influential politician under the Park regime). The opposition DP candidates also downplayed their relationship with Kim Dae-jung in order not to provoke young voter distaste for old-fashioned politics. Instead, candidates tried to promote the freshness of their own political ideas. With hindsight, however, the DLP leadership undermined such efforts through a policy of endorsing individual candidates, since its selection procedure relied not so much upon the merits or popularity of individuals as a consideration of the balance of power within the coalition. As a result, many unselected DLP would-be candidates joined the UNP or ran as independents. The DLP also failed to attract floating voters, voters who were typically angered by the claims of last-minute election irregularities attempted in favour of the government party candidates.<sup>7</sup>

On the whole, the March election was relatively clean and smooth. But the voter turnout rate was only 71.9%, nearly 4% lower than the elections in 1988. This reflects a dissatisfaction with politics. In terms of regional voting, the DLP showed a relatively even national distribution compared to other parties. In Seoul and the nearby city of Inch'ön, where voting tended to be evenly polarized between the government and opposition, the DLP managed to take around 35% of the total votes cast. In the central city of Taejön, the DLP garnered 27.6% of the votes, about 2%

more than the DP. However, in Kwangju, where anti-government sentiment was strong, the DLP received only 9.1% of the popular vote compared to an overwhelming 76.4% taken by the DP. Consequently, Kwangju remains a vacuum for the ruling camp, with no parliamentary members to represent the party's interests. This was also the case in surrounding South Chölla where, despite the substantial support of 25.2% of the popular vote, the DLP failed to win any seats. Conversely, they dominated in the traditional strongholds of Pusan, Taegu, and regional Kyöngsang, all of which rejected the DP candidates.

#### Democratization under the Roh Government

The election results were a verdict on the achievements and limitations of five years of *minjuhwa* policy initiated by a surprise televised address in June 1987. The initial address acted as a significant catalyst. Faced with surging people power for freedom against Chun, Roh, the then-presidential nominee of the ruling Democratic Justice Party (DJP), accepted a direct presidential election system as demanded by the opposition after 16 years of rule through an electoral college.

The address was a great political gamble to Roh. The opposition, in order not to lose its so-called "historic chance" to obtain power, pressed hard for a single unified candidacy between the two Kims through political compromise. There was to be a division of roles: one Kim would run for the presidency, and the other Kim would control the party. But apparently irreconcilable rivalry between the two precluded such a strategic unity and led to Roh's election, with 36.6% of popular support, against the combined 55% of the two Kims.<sup>8</sup>

The Sixth Republic, because of its difficult genesis, chartered its initial course by consciously distancing itself from the authoritarian legacy of Chun. Despite its economic successes, the Chun government had been disgraced by its failure to escape from the heavy political burden of the Kwangju incident, which not only sharpened regional tensions between Kyöngsang and Chölla, but also strained the civil-military relationship in the country.

President Roh, himself a former general and a close colleague of Chun, displayed his commitment to more democratic rule by trying to avoid the impression of a commanding presidency, such as had been the hallmark of Chun. Thus, unlike previous leaders, he started carrying his own briefcase in public. He replaced long conference tables with round ones at the Blue House, and refused to be addressed as "*Kakha*" or "Your Excellency" by officials. Although these were surface changes, the political implications of such liberal behaviour within an authoritarian Confucian culture were not negligible. The reduction of political monotheism and authority, to create what we might call a "consulting presidency," was also reflected in Roh's decision-making style. Discussions and consultations ostensibly replaced unilateral orders and decrees. Presidential meetings with opposition leaders became more cordial and even collegial.

More substantially, efforts were also made by the Roh government, based upon its pledge to "civilianize" military-influenced politics, to institute limited democratic reforms. For example, freedom of the press was expanded to allow the media to more openly criticize. Political caricatures of the president were allowed for the first time. Labour unions became more active with the introduction of a new minimum wage law.<sup>9</sup> Student demonstrations were less harshly repressed—at least until May 1989 when six policemen died in a clash in Pusan. The political neutrality of the military was repeatedly emphasised. Local government autonomy

was re-introduced after 30 years, in city, province, county, and municipal district councils. In diplomacy, the Roh government's achievements were even more evident. Helped by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, South Korea vigorously widened its diplomatic horizons through summit diplomacy. Inter-Korean relations have also moved towards a cautious *détente* through prime ministerial talks, eventually facilitating the two Koreas' entry to the UN in 1991.

The Roh government may not, however, deserve all the credit for political reform, and it has not always been consistent in its implementation of democratization. At the initial stage, besides the practical necessity to promote a national image for the Seoul Olympics, a strong campaign for democratization led by the emboldened opposition encouraged liberal reform. The hung National Assembly was a serious constraint on the Roh government despite the underlying conflict of interests among the Kims. This situation seemed to improve after former president Chun went into internal exile following a public apology in November 1988. Moreover the dragging on of negotiations for "liquidation" of the authoritarian irregularities of Chun's Fifth Republic, including the ex-president's testimony in parliament and the award of compensation for Kwangju victims, undermined the reformist image.

Roh was in fact walking a tightrope between conservative hardliners and liberal reformers. Gradually, the centre of political gravity within the government began to move towards the right, which led to denunciations by the opposition and the media of "regression" back to the Fifth Republic. The first sign of this was Roh's indefinite postponement in March 1989 of the "interim appraisal"—a concept implying a national referendum—of his reform policy. This had been promised during the presidential

election campaign. A change of attitude was more clearly perceived when the public prosecution office summoned Kim Dae-jung in August in connection with the investigation of a parliamentary spy case, thus ending the apparent honeymoon between government and opposition.

The conservative drift was also confirmed by Roh's sacking of Lee Jong-chan [Yi Chongch'an], regarded as the leading opposition voice within the ruling party, from his commanding post of secretary general. Lee had earlier clashed with Park Jun-kyu [Pak Chŏn'gyul], the party chairman. At the centre of the conflict was Lee's demand for more democracy within the party hierarchy and for a reduction in the influence of the so-called "TK group" for whom Park was a representative figure. In a narrow sense, "TK" meant politicians from the Taegu and Kyŏngsang area, particularly graduates of the prestigious Kyŏngbuk High School in Taegu. In broader terms, however, it implied an informal but cohesive stratum of a power elite within the ruling party, government bureaucracy, business, and the military who shared the same regional background as, and included, Roh and his predecessors Chun and Park Chung Hee. In an attempt at political damage limitation, Roh appointed two new party officials who did not belong to the group and denounced "factionalism" as undesirable. The initial incident nevertheless indicated the potential for further friction. Meantime, Chun finally testified to the National Assembly about his "misrule," which virtually ended the prolonged negotiations concerning the Fifth Republic controversies, though his testimony was not regarded as wholly satisfactory.

It was against this background that the tripartite coalition of the DLP was launched in early 1990 by the president, Kim Young-sam and Kim Jong-pil, to "save the nation" from instability and dislocation. For the embattled Roh, the merger signified the onset of a second stage of



democratization; for the two former opposition leaders, the merger was a convenient way of entry into the power structure. This was particularly so for Kim Young-sam, who did not relish his position in an opposition led by Kim Dae-jung. His appointment as executive chairman of the new ruling party meant the possibility of succeeding Roh from within.

The merger of the DLP also enabled the three conservative leaders to isolate Kim Dae-jung from the mainstream of politics. For this reason, Kim Dae-jung quickly accused the new alliance of a right-wing *coup d'état* against parliamentary democracy. Despite the formal union, however, there seemed little real cohesion in the merged DLP. Signs of serious friction quickly began to surface. In particular, the largest faction of the *minjung* group, managed by Park Tae-joon as acting deputy to Roh, and a "new TK group" represented by the outspoken Park Chol-un [Pak Chōrōn], repeatedly clashed with the *minju* group led by Kim Young-sam, and this overshadowed any semblance of unity. Then, the disclosure in November 1990 of a confidential memo signed in May by the three leaders for power-sharing through a constitutional amendment that would allow a cabinet system of government not only discredited the merger but strained the partnership between Roh and Kim Young-sam.<sup>10</sup>

The nature of this uneasy political cohabitation was the perceived reciprocity of strategic, if limited benefits. If Roh's support could be counted on for Kim Young-sam to secure the next presidency, Kim's presence on the government side could be counted as invaluable for Roh to control political development and delay the impact of his increasing lame-duck status. Despite serious internal conflict, therefore, cohabitation continued. There were risks on both sides. For Roh, having Kim on his side meant he had to be prepared to sacrifice some of the solidarity of his

own camp, especially the loyalist TK group, for to many Kim remained a potential adversary. On the other hand, for Kim, the alliance was perhaps the greatest gamble of his life because of the uncertainty of his eventual succession and the likely ruin of his career if the partnership with Roh collapsed.

What made the thing work was a common interest in containing the influence of Kim Dae-jung and the intentionally ambiguous position taken by Roh towards Kim Young-sam's succession. While pronouncing a minimum democratic guideline in March 1991 that excluded former soldiers, presidential relatives, and in-laws from the party presidential candidacy, Roh agreed that the final candidate would have to be chosen by "intra-party free competition." This discounted TK influentials such as Chung Ho-yong, a former general and colleague, Kim Bok-dong, another former general and Roh's brother-in-law, but was exactly the position consistently taken by Lee Jong-chan, who was already a declared presidential candidate. Kim's discomfort over this idea was alleviated with the increasing weight of support given to him by other TK influentials such as Kim Yoon-whan, the party floor leader, and Keum Jin-ho, a former minister of commerce and a further brother-in-law to Roh.

The delicate equilibrium was fundamentally disturbed when the media began to speculate in early 1992 that Roh had finally decided to implement the transfer of power to Kim. Rather than promoting him, this immediately stimulated the formation of a broad united front against Kim with the support of the two co-chairmen, Park Tae-joon and Kim Jong-pil, and substantial majority of the DLP's parliamentary members. Lee Jong-chan argued that any non-competitive and prearranged method of power transfer would directly contradict the spirit of party democracy. Lee had firmly established his constituency in the centre of Seoul and, since he was a graduate of the top-ranking

Kyōnggi High School in the capital, a school which had produced a large network of technocrats, academics and businessmen, the media quickly depicted the conflict as a growing regional power game between "TK" with "SK" (Seoul and the surrounding Kyōnggi area) and "PK" (Pusan and the surrounding Kyōngnam area). "PK" was, of course, led by Kim Young-sam, a graduate of a further prestigious school, Kyōngnam High School.<sup>11</sup>

In an effort to defuse the unfolding crisis, Roh clarified his neutral position, a position in which he would support a competitive presidential nomination process. Nonetheless, the serious cacophony developing within the governing structure, including the negative reaction of some TK loyalists to the idea of a power transfer to Kim, clearly impaired the authority of the presidency. On balance, Roh's declared role as neutral manager, in which he would supervise the procedure for the next leadership contest, has had both political benefits and costs. While the uncertainty regarding the official endorsement of Kim's candidacy helped continue Roh's ability to influence the course of politics, it was met by a criticism of his indecisiveness, lack of clear sense of direction, and, ironically, insufficient authority. The disrespectful renaming of the president as "Mul Tae-woo"—*mul* means water, without a distinct colour or taste of its own—, for example, reflected a cynical view of the "democratizing" leadership.

Roh's less authoritarian, wait-and-see approach to politics, in contrast to the "tackle and fix" approach of his predecessor Chun, generated costs in the management of the national economy. On the whole, despite a continuous expansion of gross national production and the repeated political initiative to democratize an economic structure biased in favour of sprawling *chaebōl* conglomerates, the government's economic policy has oscillated between conflicting goals of regulation versus liberalization, and price

stabilization versus growth stimulation. Compared to Chun's tight rein on consumer-price inflation maintained by authoritarian credit controls, Roh's more ad-hoc and laissez-faire approach has had inevitable trade-offs in the form of enlarged autonomy and reduced efficiency in the industrial sector.

Furthermore, the economic vibrancy of South Korea peaked in the 1988 Olympic year with a remarkable 12.4% growth rate. It has been constrained since 1989 by continuously rising unit labour costs, foreign exchange rate pressure, a widening trade deficit with Japan, and by increasing American demands for market opening. Democratization has also brought a rapid expansion of domestic consumption, coupled to a move away from savings and investment. As a result, despite a respectable 8.6% nominal GNP growth in 1991, inflation touched double-digits and the current-account deficit reached a record \$8.8 bn.<sup>12</sup> Unable to forge a coherent policy of stable economic growth partly because of the burden of party political disputes, Roh responded to the increase in private consumption and the decline in savings by resorting to authoritarian measures which ranged from moral preaching against conspicuous consumption to outright punitive taxation. These measures led to a considerable backlash from the overheated private sector.

In the area of business relations, Roh's policy of economic democratization aimed to curb the power and influence of the *chaebōl*. Despite partial success, this created conflict more than compliance. The government's regulatory anti-*chaebōl* measures, taken in May 1990 to penalize real estate speculation, had the impact of weakening the extra-legal financial base of the giant business groups. But the attempt to re-introduce a real-name transaction system for open business practices was confronted by concerted strong resistance from both business and political circles. All of this implies a less than

democratic symbiosis between government and business leaders. In fact, defiant *chaebŏl* leaders went a step further by beginning to express serious concern about the government's "drifting" economic policy. Most striking was the open censure made by heads of the five major economic organizations in May 1991 of the government's "extempore effects."<sup>13</sup> Chung Ju-yung, in particular, became increasingly critical of the government's "misconceived" economic intervention and control. Clearly the conventional partnership between authoritarian government and supportive business was being challenged on one hand by a new political assertiveness and on the other by a demand for more independence in the fast expanding industrial sector.

In sum, Roh's democratic reform initiative broadened the basis of political pluralism by moving towards a less centralized and less authoritarian system. More open criticism of the government and its policies and the less subservient attitude of the business community are both indications of such pluralism. But at the same time, the *minjuhwa* policy brought to the surface latent social tensions, both economic and inter-regional, and serious structural problems which required a determined and cautious approach which would not exacerbate the conflict between conservative hardliners and liberal reformists. In terms of political orientation, Roh moved in the right direction. In terms of political capacity and strategy, however, he exposed his limitations. The three-party merger apparently strengthened Roh, but in fact served to undermine the government's moral authority. Spectacular foreign policy achievements were thus overshadowed by the built-in predicaments of domestic politics.

The *minjuhwa* policy highlighted the acute need for cultural adaptation away from the authoritarian, dependent tradition. This is a transitional dilemma of a country where

the resilience of Confucian social values and the compulsion or radical modernization co-exist. In the case of Roh, the initial policy to create a non-charismatic image of leadership through the decentralization of power was positively received. But gradually this policy began to produce a sense of discomfort and even cynicism towards liberal gestures. The approach of Roh failed to draw lasting support because of a continuing demand for strong leadership. The reason for this lies deep in the public desire for political moralism rather than outward political liberalism.

### The Changing Political Scene: Searching for Leadership

Within the ruling DLP, the electoral blow in March 1992 transformed the simmering contest for the presidential nomination into overt competition. Theoretically, Kim, as executive chairman of the party, was responsible for the perceived defeat. In practice, however, the disappointing electoral performance and the ensuing sense of crisis worked in his favour. He quickly seized the opportunity to press for the support of the politically weakened Roh by arguing that no better alternative was left than to endorse Kim's candidacy. The TK influentials continued to throw their weight behind Kim. Backed by some 53 parliamentary members, more than one third of the DLP's total number of sitting parliamentarians, Kim declared in late March his intention of running for president. However, once again, this catalyzed the formation of an anti-Kim front of about 27 parliamentarians who eventually decided to support Lee Jong Chan at the party's May convention.

Supported by party leaders such as Park Tae-joon, Yoon Kil-jung, Choi Mun-shik and Park Chul-un, who were known figures in the anti-Kim front, Lee put himself forward as a determined and serious contender for the

post-Roh leadership. Kim relied on his long record of opposition to authoritarian rule, like his main rival Kim Dae-jung, and kept his strong regional support. In contrast, Lee counted on his freshness, his appeal to regional neutrality, his relative youth, and his substantial government experience. Between these two was a non-committed "observer" group of about 70 parliamentarians led by the new chief executive, Yi Ch'un'gu, a loyal follower of Roh. This middle group was the critical force coveted by the two contenders.

As the convention approached, it became increasingly evident that Roh's support inclined towards Kim. Kim thus intensified his appeal to the middle group, which in turn began to shift from its neutral ground. Kim also managed to weaken the anti-Kim front by approaching such influentials as Pak Chunbyŏng and Yi Handong, and by securing an alliance with Kim Jong-pil. Lee Jong-chan, perceiving the adverse turn of the party's political tide, lodged a strong protest against Roh's acquiescence in this "unfair competition." But, when the situation became irreversible, he announced his refusal to run for the nomination. This almost amounted to a direct challenge to Roh's authority. At the dispirited convention on 19 May, Kim won the nomination by securing the support of 66.3% of the 6,904 delegates. Nonetheless, the fact that 33.2% supported Lee in his absence imposed a substantial burden on Kim and Roh.

Kim's risky gamble has paid off. To use a popular Korean expression, he "jumped into the tiger's cave" and caught the tiger. But it is Roh who tamed the tiger. Without the veiled support of the incumbent president and cheerleading from Kim Yoon-whan, the senior manager of the old TK faction, Kim would have fought a difficult uphill battle for power. Perhaps the key reason why Roh supported him was his recognition that no other figure in

the ruling structure could be expected to win against Kim Dae-jung. Also, in relation to civilianization and democratization, which are the proclaimed hallmarks of the Roh presidency, the Kim Young-sam card was the most pragmatic, if not entirely comfortable, choice. It may also prove to be the safest choice for an outgoing administration, given the heavy debt owed by Roh to Kim.

One can argue that the eventual rise of Kim within the ruling party structure was the result of the position maintained by his main rival, Kim Dae-jung. By the same token, Kim Dae-jung, who will be 67 in 1992, has been able to justify his prolonged political survival partly because of the continued political life of Kim Young-sam. The two have therefore been locked in a relationship of competitive interdependence *vis-à-vis* military-backed authoritarian rule and, more recently, the growing demand for a new and younger generation in political life. However, in their orientation, their basis of support, leadership styles and personalities, the two are very different. Kim Young-sam is a more conservative and flexible negotiator enjoying greater middle class support. Kim Dae-jung is more progressive and a defiant orator who has more working class appeal. If Kim Young-sam is an instinctive integrator who delegates power to followers and depends on others for advice and expertise, Kim Dae-jung, by contrast, is a charismatic perfectionist who maintains an authoritarian party hierarchy and who has an intellectual grasp on policy. Now surprisingly, Kim Dae-jung has been enthusiastic about holding open policy debates among candidates but Kim Young-sam has shown no interest.

So far the two Kims, with the exception of the critical case of the lost 1987 race, have played a positive-sum game in surviving the turbulent waters of South Korean politics. The progress of democratization under Roh, however, has gradually changed their rivalry into a kind of zero-sum

game. Kim Dae-jung's alliance in 1991 with Lee Ki-taek signified an intensified fight. And, given the endorsement of Kim Young-sam, Kim Dae-jung sharpened his political offensive towards the ruling party structure. The main focus of his criticism has been the decision to postpone direct local government elections, which could have had a crucial impact on the presidential election. (Until now, local governors and mayors have been appointed by central government.) Meanwhile, Kim Dae-jung is trying to create a gentler and kinder image to enhance his appeal to conservative sectors of society, including the military, the "veto group" vigilant against any signs of left-wing activities, the middle class, and women. Kim's morale has been boosted by the DP's "victory" in Seoul in March 1992, where his party gained 27 out of the total 44 districts with 37.2% of the popular vote. The DLP held only 14 seats.

Nonetheless, the high concentration of Kim Dae-jung's support in one particular region, the southwest, remains his Achilles heel, just as it is his source of strength, in what may well be his last bid for power. In addition, the so-called "character" issue, that is his alleged early and brief involvement in left-wing politics, continues to arouse concern amongst sceptical conservative hardliners. In terms of parliamentary politics, the fact that he leads the largest opposition party is another potential source of concern for stability-conscious floating voters. For this reason, Kim proposed the creation of a pan-national cabinet in the event of his winning the crown.

The challenge of Chung Ju-yung from outside the ruling camp, like that of Lee Jong-chan from within the party, provided Kim with a relative advantage, since this was considered to deprive him of less support than Kim Young-sam. For the ruling camp, then, Chung is seen basically as a spoiler. The UNP of Chung, in order to maximize its political benefit as the second opposition party, adopted a flexible

position between the two other camps. It sided with the DP in pressing for direct local government elections, but made clear that it would deal with the ruling party from within parliament rather than fight it from outside. Because of the hasty UNP creation, though, the party lacks manpower, and this hampers its ability to compete. Because of the background of its leader, and despite its public pledge to dissolve the business conglomerates, accelerate the growth of the national economy, and achieve economic justice, the party remained identified with the interests of big business. Partly for this reason, and partly to avoid confusion with the Unification Church, the UNP changed its English name to United People's Party (UPP) in June (the Korean name remained the same). Initial popular support for the UPP, which was visibly being challenged by the ruling camp's hostile taxation policy towards Chung's business group, Hyundai, now seems to be on the decline. In addition, while Chung's outspoken and straightforward political style has given him some popular appeal, it has also been a source of concern. A good example of this was his recent remarks on the possible "legitimization" of the Communist Party of South Korea which, overnight, reduced his party's popularity.

### The Perceptions of Voters

The presidential race is not focused on ideological divisions, contrary to what might be expected. The reason for this is that there are not many significant distinctive ideological differences among the contenders. (The radical opposition party, *Minjungdang*, failed to win a single seat in the March 1992 elections.) This reflects the broadly conservative inclination of South Korean voters, voters more sensitive to the personalities and leadership of the candidates than to the parties or policies they represent.<sup>14</sup> Perhaps Kim Dae-jung and Park Chan-jong of the NPRP

could be described as relatively progressive by virtue of their policies for income redistribution, social welfare, defence, and inter-Korean relations. But neither regards himself as a socialist. Compared to these, Kim Young-sam and Chung Ju-yung are mainstream conservative. But Kim has not yet produced his own clear-cut policy platform, and Chung is trying to appeal to lower income voters through his radical proposal to halve the price of apartments and to dissolve the *chaebŏl* structure. Lee Jong-chan, the DLP "protester," stands somewhere between the two.

In early 1992, the practical issue of economic management, rather than an ideological commitment to democracy, received the highest priority in nationwide opinion polls. Nearly 70% of respondents in one recent survey expressed strong concern about the negative impact of rising inflation and the recession, whereas less than 10% gave "democratization" as their main concern.<sup>15</sup> Together with this dominant concern about the economy, support for a change of generation in political leadership has also visibly grown. In the same survey, about 80% of respondents said they wanted to see younger political faces. As for the renewed presidential competition, nearly half the people asked were concerned that it would intensify regional antagonism.

Despite popular apprehension about the polarization of politics, the current trend is towards an ultimate electoral confrontation between the two Kims. Kim Young-sam remains more popular with voters in their 30s and above, while Kim Dae-jung finds more support with younger voters. In terms of overall potential popularity, however, several surveys carried out in June 1992 revealed Kim Young-sam leading his rival by a margin of 10% - 15% with, on average, support from 30% to 35%. Lee Jong-chan has roughly 15% and Chung and Park Chan-jong about 8% to 10% each.<sup>16</sup>

These preliminary voting predictions suggest that Kim Young-sam has established a position as leading contender. Apart from the premium of central and local bureaucratic support for the governing party candidate, Kim's moderate image and his previous track record will provide him with substantial advantages. In fact, 63.1% of those questioned have predicted that Kim will be elected as the next president, regardless of their own approval or disapproval. In the case of Kim Dae-jung, a favourable prediction was given by only 13.4% of respondents.<sup>17</sup>

Kim Young-sam's position is not altogether secure. He has to deal with the so-called "quality" issue in contrast to the "character" issue of his main rival. Does he have sufficient intellectual and administrative ability to manage complex national and international affairs? In particular, economic management and foreign policy are areas in which he has relatively unproven credentials. The other vulnerability is voter resistance to his political switch from opposition to ruling party. Again, according to polls conducted in June, less than half those who supported him in 1987 said they would vote for him again. (In the case of Kim Dae-jung, the figure for continuous support was much higher, at 63%.) Potential voter resistance to Kim Young-sam from pro-government voters is also substantial. Among those who supported Roh in 1987, only 35.2% said they would vote for Kim while 34.5% were uncommitted.<sup>18</sup>

In order to attract conservative floating voters, whose support is critical, Kim has been trying to expand his working partnership with the governing and former governing elites. In late June, he made a surprise visit to the office of Lee Jong-chan in a gesture aimed at persuading him to stay within the DLP rather than form his planned People's Alliance. Kim also agreed to give top party posts to politicians from other groups. Earlier, he even paid a courtesy visit to former president Chun, his old political

adversary, in an apparent effort to mend fences. Chun did not offer any guarantee of co-operation. This strategy may alienate Kim's former supporters to the benefit of either Chung or Park, perhaps even Kim Dae-jung. Also, if the other Kim decides to enter into an anti-establishment alliance with Park or—though less likely—with Chung, Kim Young-sam's leading position will be undermined. Even if he is elected, he might find his presidency seriously constrained by the combined opposition majority, as did Roh in 1988.

To avoid this eventuality, Kim may find it necessary to redefine his position between opposition and government in order to embrace the moderate pro-reformers on both sides. The most radical option would be to create a new political party with a fresh image and broader support. Failing this, acceptance of the opposition demand for direct mayoral and gubernatorial elections, reversing the presidential decision to postpone these until 1995, could be an option, though with high risk implications. Finally, the formation of an alliance with Chung, which is not totally inconceivable, remains a wild card. In any event, South Korean politics are moving towards a more competitive and power-sharing form of democracy.

## NOTES

- 1 In the 1988 general elections, the three parties which later merged to create the DLP obtained, respectively: Democratic Justice Party (DJP) led by Roh, 34%; Reunification Democratic Party led by Kim Young-sam, 23.9%; New

- Democratic Republican Party (NDRP) led by Kim Jong -pil, 15.%.  
 2 *The Economist*, 28 March 1992, p. 72.  
 3 *Chosŏn Ilbo*, 17 March 1992.  
 4 For the background to the 1990 three party merger, see Jin Park, "Political Change in South Korea: The Challenge of Conservative Alliance", *Asian Survey*, December 1992, pp. 1154-59.  
 5 *Sisa Journal*, 19 March 1992, pp. 20-21.  
 6 *Han'guk ilbo*, 21 March 1992.  
 7 The most controversial irregularities include proxy votings in the military for absentee voters and the involvement of intelligence agents in negative campaigns against an opposition candidate.  
 8 In the election, Kim Young-sam collected 28% of the total votes cast while Kim Dae-jung took 27%. The other contender, Kim Jong-pil, received 8.1%.  
 9 For analysis on the freedom of the press and labour activism under the Roh government, see Bret Billet, "South Korea at the Crossroads: An Evolving Democracy or Authoritarianism Revisited?", *Asian Survey*, March 1990, pp. 303-07.  
 10 The memorandum signed by the three leaders on 6 May 1990 specifies that they will: 1) work towards the realization of parliamentary democracy in which both parliament and cabinet are responsible to the people, 2) introduce a constitutional amendment within one year in favour of the cabinet system, 3) begin to prepare for the amendment within one year.  
 11 *Tonga ilbo*, 7 January 1992.  
 12 See "Economic Monitor: South Korea", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 April 1992, p. 74.  
 13 In the critical statement, the leaders of the business community attributed economic difficulties to "faulty leadership by the administration." *Korea Times*, 11 May 1991.

- 14 According to recent opinion polls, only 14.3% and 26.1% of voters identified the presidential candidates with, respectively, their own parties and policy platforms. 57.7% said they would vote for a candidate based on that candidate's ability and personality. *Kyŏnghyang shinmun*, 16 June 1992.
- 15 Issue of consumer price and economic recession, 55.8%; democratization, 8.8%; overcoming regional antagonism, 16.3%. *Kyŏnghyang shinmun*, 16 June 1992.
- 16 *Han'guk ilbo* on 28 May 1992 put the figures as follows: Kim Young-sam 30.7%, Kim Dae-jung 21.6%, Lee 15.4%, Chung 9.4%, Park 7.7%. More recently, the *Chungang ilbo* on 19 June gave a similar pattern: Kim Young-sam 30.5%, Kim Dae-jung 18.7%, Lee 14.7%, Chung 7.5%, Park 10.1%.
- 17 *Han'guk ilbo*, 28 May 1992.
- 18 *Kyŏnghyang shinmun*, 16 June 1992.

## THE ILHAE FOUNDATION: BEYOND A SCANDAL

JACQUELINE YOOMINH PAK

### Introduction

Before hosting the World Olympiad in Seoul in September 1988 as a symbol of international recognition of South Korea's "economic miracle," there was to be yet another miracle, a "political miracle" unprecedented in modern South Korean history. After decades of authoritarian rule since independence from Japan in 1945, demonstrations and riots embroiled the entire people of the South in the summer of 1987 with a forceful show of political will for democracy in every sector of society, never before experienced in such magnitude. With people angered and frustrated by the prolonged political stalemate between the ruling party and the opposition as to whether to adopt a parliamentary or direct vote system for the Presidential election in November 1987, demonstrations culminated in a massive popular uprising calling for a direct election and a complete ouster of President Chun Doo Hwan [Chŏn Tuhwan]. Chun, a former general who came to power by a



bloody coup in the aftermath of the assassination of Park Chung Hee [Pak Chŏnghŭi] in October 1979 had to agree when his chosen successor, Roh Tae-woo [No T'aeu], declared on 29 June 1987 that the Presidential election would be a direct popular vote.

Roh was elected president by winning 36% of the plurality vote due to a split in the opposition between Kim Dae-jung [Kim Taejung] and Kim Young-sam [Kim Yŏngsam]. Yet, in the subsequent election for the National Assembly, the opposition won a majority of seats for the first time in modern history. This was significant in two ways. There was a new political reality in which there was a balance of power between the formerly all-powerful executive and the legislature. Also, through National Assembly Hearing Sessions, Koreans, for the first time, were allowed to examine publicly and criticize the abuses of the past dictatorial regime.

During the Hearing Sessions in Autumn 1988, an even more emotional outpouring than that during the Olympics was generated. This was over the political and financial Ilhae Foundation scandal, along with the Kwangju Massacre and other "negative legacies" of the Fifth Republic. In this paper, the Ilhae Foundation, its origin, organization, and activities as well as the final scandal will be examined both as an example of Chun's corruption and as a political vehicle to prolong dictatorial rule. By doing so, it is hoped that the extent of abuse as well as the possible sources of systemic weakness in political and economic decision-making processes and infrastructures will be discerned.

This topic is of particular interest to me, as editor and speech-writer for the Chairman of the Ilhae Foundation and the President of the Ilhae Institute, Kim Kihwan, in 1986 and 1987. From my position, I had a unique opportunity to gain an insider's view and knowledge of the inner workings

which, until the Hearing Sessions, were shrouded in secrecy and mystery regarding their true nature and purpose. Throughout the paper, my personal observations will be added wherever appropriate or necessary.

### **The Origin of the Ilhae Foundation**

To evaluate the Ilhae Foundation scandal, it is necessary first to inquire about the origin and purpose of the organisation. It was the tragic episode on 10 October 1983 during Chun's five-nation goodwill tour of Southeast Asia which provided the direct occasion for the establishment of the Ilhae Foundation. A bomb planted by North Korean terrorists in Rangoon, Burma, killed seventeen of Chun's entourage. This was yet another profound national tragedy and sorrow in the enduring legacy of the unresolved hostilities between North and South following the Korean War.

With regard to the origin of the Ilhae Foundation, an article in *Shin Tonga* recaptures the mournful mood in 1983. "In the cabin of his special KAL 727, heading for Seoul after breaking off his goodwill tour, President Chun was unable to speak and simply wept. Among others consoling him, Chairman Chung Ju Yung [Chŏng Chuyŏng] of the Hyundai Group, who was accompanying the group as a special economic delegate, mentioned the necessity of compensation for the bereaved family members and of fundamental countermeasures concerning the South-North Korea problem."<sup>1</sup>

Immediately after Chun's return, some major economic figures in South Korea held a meeting to discuss a proposal to establish a memorial organization to help the bereaved families. A plan was filed in November in Chun's name. This presented the foundation's goals as "scholarship aid for the education of the offspring of

martyred diplomatic emissaries and of the wounded, and of national heroes," and as "support for the nurturing of superior athletes and coaches in preparation for the international games in 1986 and 1988."<sup>2</sup>

The founding sponsors totalled seven people. Among them were chairmen of top-grade domestic conglomerates, including Choi Soon Dal, former Minister of Telecommunications who also became the first Ilhae Chairman; Chung Su Chang, Chairman of the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Chung Ju Yung, Chairman of Hyundai; Koo Cha Kyung, Chairman of Lucky-Goldstar; Kim Woo Choong, Chairman of Daewoo Corporation; Choi Chong Hyun, Chairman of Sunkyung; and Yang Jung Mo, Chairman of Kukje.<sup>3</sup>

Subsequently, on 25 November 1983, the inaugural general meeting of the foundation, provisionally named the Ilhae Foundation, opened in secret in a so-called "safe house" in Samch'ong-dong, Seoul. In addition to the seven sponsors, six more businessmen attended: Kim Suk Won, Chairman of Ssangyong; Kim Seung Yung, Chairman of Korea Explosives; Lee Choon Yong, President of Daelim Industries; Lee Hee Gun, President of Shinhan Bank; Kim Sang Ha, Chairman of Samyang. Lee Chong Won, a lawyer and a former head of the Ministry of Justice, and Lee Woong Hee, President of MBC television, brought the total number of attendees to fifteen.<sup>4</sup>

At this meeting, Accounting Director Cho Sung Hee of the Army Security Command, then a colonel on active duty and later General Affairs Director of Ilhae, explained the goals of the foundation and its articles of incorporation. In the election of officers and directors, Choi Soon Dal was elected chairman and Lee Chong Won auditor. All the business leaders were named directors. The founders accepted 50 million wŏn (approx. \$72,000), donated by

President Chun as an endowment through a motion for an assessment of pledges.<sup>5</sup>

It is noteworthy that an active duty military officer, Cho Sung Hee, was chosen as the head of business affairs in place of any business leader. Moreover, it is intriguing to notice the participation of Yang Jung Mo from Kukje because, one year later, he experienced the dissolution of his company, then Korea's fifth-ranked conglomerate, due to his "uncooperative attitude" toward the Ilhae Foundation.<sup>6</sup>

On 1 December 1983, six days after the inaugural general meeting, the Ilhae Foundation completed its registration with the Seoul City Educational Commission as a non-profit making scholarship association. In this registration document, the Ilhae Foundation specifies that its founder should be its president, meaning Chun. This provision was eliminated on 14 August 1987, after Roh's June Declaration which, of course, radically changed Chun's political fortunes. A revision of articles at a hastily-arranged 8th Temporary Directors Meeting of the Ilhae Foundation took place.<sup>7</sup> Such a politically influenced decision to dissociate Chun from the foundation indicates that Chun had much to hide in terms of personal use of public funds, and ulterior motives as to the future purpose and direction of the organization.

### **The Ilhae Foundation as an Organization**

From its inception in November 1983 until it began to hold public functions in January 1986, lavish physical facilities were planned and constructed at Sŏngnam on the outskirts of Seoul. While details of the construction were kept a strict secret, a large and imposing mausoleum of a building as well as a beautiful guest house were constructed on the sprawling green acreage of land donated by Chung

Ju Yung. The main building for the Ilhae Foundation was designed by an internationally renowned architect, Kim Su Gun, who also designed the main Olympic Stadium in Seoul.

During this time, the name of the organization was changed from "88 Institute," to "Security and Reunification Institute" and then to "Peace, Security and Reunification Institute."<sup>8</sup> This mirrored a process of transformation of the Ilhae Foundation from a scholarly association for the offspring of Rangoon to a research institute studying the root cause of such incidents, through long-term research on peace and unification issues. On 26 October 1984, under the name "Peace, Security and Reunification Institute," the organization was registered as a non-profit research institute with Choi Soon Dal as its first Chairman.<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, opposition to the government grew in 1984 and 1985 and Chun suffered a setback in the February 1985 National Assembly elections. As funds were continually collected from the top fifty businessmen in South Korea, Chun increasingly came to view the foundation as his personal political base. There is evidence of this in a 40-page 1985 plan—a confidential report for inter-office circulation prepared by Chun's Democratic Justice Party (DJP)'s Central Bureau—which calls for preparing Chun's base so that even after turning over the government in a new election, Chun would hold real power.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, it can be seen that Chun was beginning to build a power base from 1985. Perhaps, this political purpose was clear as early as the Second Directors meeting in September 1984, when the Foreign Ministry gained supervisory influence from the Education Ministry. From then on, the research focus of the organization shifted to topics with more political connotations including security and trade with the U.S., the most domestically troubling issues for Chun.<sup>11</sup>

In January 1986, Kim Kihwan, a former head of the International Economic Policy Council which specialized on U.S.-Korea trade affairs, and former Chief of Red Cross talks between South and North Korea, was appointed by Chun as the new chairman of the foundation. Kim Kihwan decided to change the foundation's name to "Ilhae Foundation" using Chun's pen-name "a rising sun from the sea." During the same month, at the opening of a joint symposium with the Brookings Institution (which also was the very first public event arranged by the Foundation), Kim Kihwan described Ilhae as "an institution founded for public good to promote national development and peaceful reunification through research of mid- and long-term domestic policy, fostering superior talents in all aspects of society, and developing the latent power of the people by encouraging those who can contribute to society in many fields." He also said that the Foundation would focus its research on unification, foreign policy and security issues. He explained that Chun's pen name was attached "to commend Chun's ambition to put the concept of peace at the centre of his philosophy of government."<sup>12</sup>

With Kim Kihwan at the helm, the organizational structure gradually evolved to reflect the needs and purpose of the organization as well as to increase its administrative capabilities and functions. With a rapidly growing number of personnel, the organization was essentially structured in two parts:

- 1) the Ilhae Foundation, which existed at least ostensibly to provide scholarship funds for the offsprings of victims of the Rangoon bombing incident;
- 2) the Ilhae Institute which soon became the most prestigious research organization and a think tank due in large part to its immense political clout and financial resources.

Actually, the Foundation arm was a group of individuals distinguished only by their staunch loyalty to Chun. They were in charge of massive funds, totalling almost 600 million wŏn (approx. \$86 million) by the end of 1986, collected from over fifty conglomerates. Perhaps this was not surprising since they were responsible for utilizing funds for Chun's personal use, such as building Chun's personal mansion and entertainment complex, complete with golf course, modern gym, botanical garden and an artificial pond, and for overseeing the whole project with proper care and security.

This group was headed by a former Presidential Security Office man, Kim In Bae. Kim later went to jail for embezzlement of funds. Under Kim as the General Affairs Director, there were various administrative and clerical assistants who managed to attain their positions through blatant nepotism. At one time, there were almost twenty people who were related to each other. In addition, there were about thirty Presidential bodyguards.

The Institute was structured as follows:

- President
- Distinguished Fellows
- Research Fellows and Research Assistants, divided into Foreign Policy, Economics, and Security Studies

The organizational structure is an almost wholesale imitation of the respected Brookings Institution think-tank in Washington, with which Ilhae held a number of conferences in 1986 and 1987. The overall structural framework and the planning of functions at the Institute owe much to the spirited imagination and guidance of Kim Kihwan, who was an urbane and polished U.S. trained economist. He emphasized the need for Ilhae to adopt and emulate the best structure and modes of operation from already well-established institutes.

Kim served as both chairman of the Foundation and president of the Institute. Thus, he was the most responsible person in terms of setting short and long-term goals and agendas and he unquestionably enjoyed a virtual monopoly of power during his tenure from January 1986 to July 1988. Along with Kim, the Ilhae Institute was jam-packed with the most powerful men in the Korean government. Indeed, virtually all former ministers of the Chun cabinet were "Distinguished Fellows." Since there was a "musical chair" quality in cabinet positions during the Chun years, these men were often recalled to serve in ministerial positions. Moreover, although they were salaried by Ilhae, they did not play any active role in academic research.

As for research fellows, there were three divisions: Foreign Policy, Economics and Security Studies. These were, for the most part, senior specialists in their own respective fields. Among them were highly respected academics and scholars who had taught at major universities either in Korea or abroad. Research assistants were selected from the pool of top-calibre graduate students from the most prestigious universities in Korea, such as Seoul National, Yonsei, and Korea University, with strong recommendations from well-known academics. There were five research fellows and assistants in each of the three divisions. The generally progressive and open-minded atmosphere in the Research Division can be discerned from the fact that there were two women research assistants from Ewha Women's University and three assistants who came originally from Kwangju.

In examining its organizational structure and personnel, it becomes evident that the Ilhae Foundation was more than just a scholarship association and research institute. Right next to the Foundation's main building, for example, Chun was secretly building a private palace for himself as a "Second Blue House" (this was how the Ilhae

began to be nicknamed in Seoul). He was also preparing to use the organization as his political base after he stepped down as President in 1988. With an extravagant new home enveloped within a prominent research institute staffed by his former cabinet members, Chun envisaged his role in retirement to be that of an elder statesman and scholar wielding great political influence. This is well demonstrated in an internal report from the DJP, which noted Chun's desire to keep power over numerous policy areas, including the South-North dialogue and any state of emergency.<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, even if the Institute side of Ilhae had any potential to be a pure research organization with no taint of politics, this could not possibly be realised while the chairman was Kim Kihwan, one of the closest political aides to Chun. Kim had accompanied Chun to the White House as the first foreign guests received by President Reagan, a trip Chun considered one of his major accomplishments. Kim had also been dispatched as Chun's special economic envoy to Reagan to discuss U.S.—Korea trade problems and was implicated in the Michael Deaver lobbying scandal of 1986.

### **The Activities of the Ilhae Foundation**

An account of the activities of the Ilhae Foundation from January 1986 to November 1987 reveals the extent to which Chun attempted to utilize the organization for his own political goals and purposes. The beginning of public functions at the Institute, in the form of lectures, conferences and banquets, closely coincided with the arrival of Kim Kihwan. With a great deal of enthusiasm and energy, and obsessive attention to every detail of operation, Kim initiated such events to enlarge the political role of the Institute. The following are some of the more notable events held at the Institute:

- Korea-U.S. Trade Relations: Issues and Prospects I & II (Ilhae/Brookings Joint Seminars)
- U.S. and Soviet Policies Toward Asia and Implications for the Korean Peninsula (with Henry Kissinger)
- Trade as an Element of the Korea-U.S. Security Relationship (Ilhae/U.S. Congress Seminar)
- The Emerging New Power Relations in Northeast Asia (with Zbigniew Brzezinski)
- Security Issues in the Pacific (with Robert Sennewald)
- Korea-U.S. Economic Relations: Current Issues and Future Possibilities (Ilhae/Brookings Joint Seminar)
- China in the Year 2000: Economic and Security Implications (Ilhae/American Enterprise Institute Joint Seminar)
- Korea—U.S. Relations: Current Issues and Prospects (Ilhae/Heritage Foundation Joint Seminar)
- Progress in Democracy: The Pacific Basin Experience (Ilhae/Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Peace Joint Seminar)
- Korea-U.S. Relations and Northeast Asia (Ilhae/Centre for Strategic and International Studies Seminar)
- U.S. Policy toward Asia and Korea-U.S. Relations in the Twenty-first Century (with Gerald Ford)
- Superpower Policy in the Asia Pacific Region (with Harold Brown)

This is an impressive array of activities involving some of the most respected scholars and politicians from America. However, in view of the fact that the Ilhae Foundation was a political vehicle, a few questions about the nature and purpose of these events naturally arise. From my own experience as an editor who prepared summaries of these lectures and conferences for the Blue House, a standard operating procedure right after every event, I believe that the purpose of these events were three-fold: i) to use Ilhae as a political lobby for Chun in the more intellectually sophisticated and legally acceptable mode of a think-tank which followed the examples of ideas and policy lobbying of think-tanks in the U.S.; ii) to employ the brain-power of Ilhae to acquire in-depth intellectual analyses as well as "cutting-edge" knowledge and information on some of the most troubling domestic political issues such as trade

and security; iii) to pursue Chun's more "visionary," but sensitive, pet projects like the opening of Korea's diplomatic and trade ties with China and the Communist bloc.

Chun clearly saw the "economic miracle" of Korea through trade surpluses from exports as the most important achievement of his regime between 1980 and 1987. He felt threatened by rising protectionism in the U.S. With exports accounting for nearly 40% of Korea's GNP and roughly 40% of exports going to the U.S., growing protectionism in Washington was indeed the most serious challenge facing the South Korean economy as well as Chun's career. Since Chun had to deal with an increasingly vociferous opposition at home on these trade and security issues, he recognized an urgent need to deflect domestic and American pressures through successful lobbying in Washington. With protectionist pressures against Korea brewing on Capitol Hill, Chun desperately sought a reliable lobbying channel for himself, particularly after his personalized, but rather unsuccessful, attempt in sending Kim Kihwan as his special economic envoy to Reagan.

Thus, the Ilhae Foundation played a major role as Chun's lobbying body at this opportune moment. The fact that lectures and conferences focused on the most visible policy makers and opinion-makers in Washington, as individuals and institutions, amply proves this point. The participants at Ilhae included several dozen ranking U.S. Congressmen as well as influential trade representative and security experts, in addition to the most vocal critics of the Chun regime itself. The latter included Congressman Stephen Solarz and staff members of the House Human Rights Subcommittee on East Asia. To best represent Korea's views, a veritable all-star cast from the Korean economic and diplomatic/security bureaucracy as well as the National Assembly, and chairmen of major conglomerates presented papers and perspectives.

At every possible opportunity, the South Korean participants tirelessly pointed out the security burden of Korea as a unique feature of Korea's economy and its relations with America. This arose from an unusual set of historical circumstances which distinguished South Korea from Japan and the other "four tigers" or NICs. In vigorous and sometimes quite emotional exchanges, such assertions from Koreans were mercilessly attacked by American participants who insisted on further opening of the Korean market so that bilateral trade could be conducted on a more level playing-field. Meanwhile, as the two subjects of trade and security dominated conferences and policy roundtables, in-house experts were constantly urged to develop more coherent and sound policy arguments regarding Korea's position. Hence, research fellows were invariably under much intellectual pressure to improve their arguments (as well as their English) to better represent Korea's position for these polemical policy debates.

As a by-product of this dialectical process, Chun was privy to the most cogent and up-to-date intellectual analyses for the best possible policy development and guidelines. Since the topics were increasingly becoming a hazardous source of political liability and vulnerability for Chun, he anxiously wanted to achieve a major diplomatic success by a breakthrough in relations with China and other Communist states. Ilhae achieved some success in this regard, for it held Korea's first academic seminar and policy discussions with mainland Chinese economists on the prospects of opening direct Korea-China trade.

The special role that Kim Kihwan played as one who could successfully bridge the cultural and linguistic gap between Koreans and Americans should be noted. Kim was an exceptionally able and talented, albeit politically ambitious and self-promoting man, who proved to be a remarkable lobbyist and spokesman for Chun. His open

advocacy of market liberalization in Korea as a conservative monetarist economist gained him many bitter critics. Yet, it also naturally earned him many friends in Washington, which increased his effectiveness as a lobbyist for South Korea's trade and economic policies in the U.S. Congress.

Therefore, the Ilhae Foundation provided a most sophisticated and well-systemized Korean effort in Washington such as had not been accomplished by a Korean government before. The events at the Ilhae were also highly successful as a forum for discussion of the most sensitive and thorny issues in trade and security relations. This was also possible because Ilhae was able to reap the benefits of South Korea's new economic status and international recognition by attracting U.S. participants. With the anticipation of the 1988 Olympics, Korea's ultimate coming-out party, U.S. policy makers were thrilled to visit and congratulate Korea and to engage in dialogues about the changing nature and implications of U.S.-Korea relations.

### **The Fall of the Ilhae Foundation**

The Ilhae Foundation's fall from grace closely paralleled the end of Chun's dictatorial rule. From the Summer of 1987 onwards, one could not fail to observe that nervous jitters gave way to a palpable sense of doom at Ilhae, particularly from Chun loyalists on the Foundation side. However, the dramatic news of Roh's announcement on 29 June 1987 was greeted with much fanfare by the people on the Institute side. Such a striking contrast in perceptions and reactions toward Chun's military dictatorship clearly underscored what were by now serious internal problems between Foundation and Institute personnel. There was a great deal of tension between the two parts, since ignominious and uneducated Chun cronies in the

Foundation handled the funds and attempted to play the role of management over well-educated and pro-democracy Institute people as their employees. In this awkward labour management scenario, an explosive potential for conflict was inherent in the organizational structure.

In most cases, people in the Institute had been invited to join the Foundation with Kim Kihwan in early 1986 and were quite idealistic and enthusiastic about building a world-class research institute. Yet, at the time, the Institute staff were powerless given the political reality of South Korea, which dictated the management of affairs as well as the organizational structure and personnel in the initial phase. But, with a more defiant democratic mood in the country, the research staff, particularly a group of young and dedicated research assistants, struggled almost daily with the Foundation personnel to bring about significant and democratically-oriented internal reforms.

In this situation, Kim Kihwan proved to be a miserable administrator and exhibited a dismal lack of leadership. Terribly frustrated, all 15 research assistants staged an internal coup soon after Roh's 1987 declaration. They demanded a fundamental restructuring of the organization and sweeping personnel changes, including the dismissal of the General Affairs Director, Kim In Bae, and some of the key people on the Foundation side. They all turned in resignation letters in the case these demands were not met.

Since these research assistants were the most indispensable work-horses in preparing and arranging events at Ilhae, Kim Kihwan pleaded with them to stay. He explained that his hands were tied since the Foundation staff were beyond his authority. In an exasperated tone, one research assistant commented that the authoritarian organizational structure which allowed the Foundation side to usurp power was, most ironically, "a microcosm of the

Korean political reality between a despotic dictator and the people who have long yearned for a true democratic system." In fact, the internal problems at Ilhae often closely resembled a true-to-life parody of an authoritarian state. This was all the more tragicomic considering the true nature of the organisation.

From the beginning of their tenure, research staff faced a moral dilemma: to work for the dictator or to quit. Some did quit, but most stayed on, believing that the nature and purpose of the organization would change to accommodate increasing political pressures for democratic reform. Furthermore, it was at times extremely difficult to distinguish Chun's personal political agenda and Korea's national interest.

In such an environment, the political demise of Chun certainly had a highly uplifting psychological effect on the Institute staff whereas it was a devastating blow to the Foundation staff. But more importantly, the end of the Chun era was also a beginning of the unravelling of the organizational structure of Ilhae as Chun's cronies began to lose their grip on power and were forced to adopt more democratic and fair means to cooperate with the Institute people for the Ilhae's survival. Yet, it was also a time of confusion and uncertainty for the organization as a whole. There was, for instance, a sense of loss and sadness among everyone at Ilhae, coupled with the loss of reputation and prestige which the Institute staff had worked assiduously to build in such a short time.

Meanwhile, there was an immediate response from the Ilhae board of directors to the sudden turn of events. At a directors' meeting, some of the most meaningful and thorough changes to this date were introduced in Ilhae organizational structure and personnel. Kim Kihwan was demoted to a single position as president of the Institute

while Chung Ju Yung was selected as chairman of the Foundation.

Also, to answer a rumour of stock-market manipulation concerning Ilhae, both Kim and Chung had to appear in a televised interview in October 1987. Chung explained the origin and activities of Ilhae in the most general and evasive terms and flatly denied any role in stock-market manipulation. To the best of my knowledge, the rumour was false. There was nobody on the Foundation side clever enough to manipulate the stock market. Nevertheless, this was the beginning of what became "the Ilhae scandal," for it planted seeds of suspicion about the true nature of the Foundation among average Koreans. It is also interesting to note here that the scandal was initially a financial, not political issue.

### **The National Assembly Hearing Sessions**

Korea's political drama unfolded with Roh's election by a narrow majority as president in November 1987 and the subsequent National Assembly elections in which the opposition parties defeated the ruling party. Buttressed by an outpouring of popular support, the opposition members of the National Assembly started to tackle the legacy of corruption and malpractice in Chun's Fifth Republic. Thus began Korea's first televised National Assembly Hearing Sessions, with special investigation committees on the most egregious examples of Chun's dictatorial abuse of power, including the Kwangju Massacre of 1980, human rights violations, financial scandals, media censorship and the Ilhae Foundation.

Calling this a "political show" for its entertaining quality, an article in *Shin Tonga* states that "whole process of National Assembly Hearing Sessions was unprecedented in Korea with even higher ratings than the Opening



Ceremony of the 1988 Olympics."<sup>14</sup> In the first moments of political openness, the average ordinary Korean was thrilled to see some of the most powerful men of the former Chun regime embarrassed, harassed, and downright humiliated.

Among wrongdoings and irregularities during the Fifth Republic, the Ilhae scandal was one of the most emotionally provocative to the public because it became the most celebrated example of Chun's personal corruption. From 4-9 November 1988, a special investigation committee of the National Assembly questioned witnesses such as Chang Se Dong, the former Chief of the National Security and Planning Agency (previously known as the KCIA); Yang Jung Mo, the former Chairman of Kukje; Chung Su Chang, Chairman of the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Choi Soon Dal, the first Chairman of the Ilhae Foundation; Chung Ju Yung, the Honorary Chairman of Hyundai and then Chairman of the Ilhae Institute. Among others, Ahn Hyun Tae, the former head of the Presidential Security Office who played a significant role in the initial start-up phase of Ilhae and Kim In Bae, the underling at the Presidential Security Office who later became General Affairs Director at Ilhae, were also interrogated.<sup>15</sup>

In the course of the National Assembly Hearing Sessions, it was revealed that irregularities and corruption had indeed occurred in the establishment and administration of the foundation. To understand the exact role that Chun and his loyal circle of subordinates at the Blue House, the Presidential Security Office, the National Security Planning Agency and the Army Security Command played, the committee concentrated on the question of how much political coercion was used to collect the massive funds. While being interrogated about the extent of political pressure, Chung Su Chang acknowledged that he was at first put in charge of deciding the amount of funds to be collected from 50 *chaeböl* by using company sales figures and assets.<sup>16</sup> But Chang Se Dong denied any

political pressure had been used and maintained that the donations from *chaeböl* were strictly voluntary. He supported this view with the fact that support from some conglomerates such as Hanyang and Hanbo were refused because these were believed to be in an unsound financial situation.<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, Yang Jung Mo insisted he suffered the "spontaneous combustion" of his conglomerate because he was not always cooperative with the various causes of the Chun government and that Chun had wanted to demonstrate this absolute autocratic power by liquidating a major group like his own.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, referring to the authoritarian political climate at the time, Chung Ju Yung said that "businessmen did not want to go against the flow of the times, wanting to keep government favour." He also admitted that, "After the second collection in 1985—the collection of funds were in three phases from 1984 to 1986—the Blue House set a higher goal in terms of the size of contributions from *chaeböl* toward Ilhae. At that time, I gave reluctantly to live comfortably under this regime."<sup>19</sup> This also went along with Chung Su Chang's assertion that "even if the businessmen did not willingly contribute, judging that it would otherwise mean trouble, most of them voluntarily gave."<sup>20</sup>

It was thus disclosed that donors were able to lobby the Blue House, as it appeared that they could receive special favours in return. Assemblyman Kim Dong Ju made public a list of favours to sixteen donors. These included approval for a huge land reclamation project by Hyundai, permission to establish a golf course by Ssangyong, permission to write off a bad debt on a golf course in Cheju island by Hanjin, permission for a combined steel mill, along with reduced taxes and special financing for Dongkuk Steel, and long repayment and refinancing favours for Daelim Industries and Daewoo. Pohang Steel, in contrast, appeared to have

been forced to donate while the Daenong Group gave willingly to receive approval for their business.<sup>21</sup>

The testimonies unveiled a complex process of political push and pull, as well as outright collusion, between the political and economic elites in Korea. This showed that it was not easy to distinguish political pressures from other considerations in the collection of Ilhae funds. However, in light of the tyrannical nature and high-handed style of politics during the Chun era, it seems reasonable to assume that the process of collection of funds was characterized by arbitrary political pressure from Chun more than by the eagerness of major conglomerates to make hefty voluntary contributions.

In addition, through Chang Se Dong's and Ahn Hyun Tae's attestations, it was shown that the Blue House almost single-handedly managed the designing, planning and construction of the facilities plus the allocation of funds at Ilhae. In fact, both admitted that they reported the financial situation and administrative details of Ilhae directly to Chun and that Chun gave personal orders and approval in the management of affairs. When asked about Chun's future intentions to use Ilhae, Ahn stated that "after Chun retired, it was believed that he would stay at Ilhae and I, as the head of Presidential Security Office, thus went to the construction site and oversaw the whole project." Ahn added that "after Roh's declaration, however, we realized that it would be difficult for the President to stay at Ilhae. So we changed the provision of article of association which specified that its founder should be its president because, with the name "Ilhae," we know that we could not extinguish people's suspicions."<sup>22</sup>

Chang took personal responsibility for the extravagant home, garden, and golf course as well as a helicopter pad near Chun's parents' tombs. He said, "Yes, I built Chun's new home, 'Chõngnamdae', and spent

altogether about 100 million won (approx. \$1.5 million) Although one might say that this should not be a duty of the head of the Presidential Security Office in a strict legal sense, I felt that it was all for the protection and security of the president." With curious logic, he further defended his actions: "It is silly to say that this is a crime of the Fifth Republic. It was for Chun's personal use. It was supposed to be his home."<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, it was proved that Kukje was sacrificed for political reasons due to its passive or uncooperative attitudes in contributing to Chun's causes, including the Ilhae Foundation. As this made Kukje "hateful in the eyes of the ruling elite, they felt a need to revenge and punish [the group] for such behaviour." Regarding Kukje's overnight dissolution, Kim Manje, former Deputy Prime Minister and by then Minister of the Economic Planning Board, testified that it was Chun's personal decision to dismember the company because Kukje neglected its "lobbying activities" with the Chun government.<sup>24</sup>

In the aftermath of the National Assembly Hearing Sessions, Chang Se Dong was arrested on charges of abuse of power and was sentenced to prison for nine months. Kim In Bae was jailed for embezzlement of funds at Ilhae. One by one, Chun loyalists left Ilhae, either voluntarily or involuntarily. Kim Kihwan was removed. By then, Chun had appeared on television before the nation to apologise for the negative legacies of the Fifth Republic.

As for the research institute, the name was changed to "Sejong Institute" to commemorate the high cultural achievements of the 15th century King Sejong and to shed its unfortunate association with Chun. Most of the research fellows and assistants remained. Lee Yong Hee, a former professor of Political Science at Seoul National

University and Minister of National Unification, was invited to join as president of the Institute.

### **Conclusion**

From this examination of its origin, organizational structure and personnel, and activities, in addition to the findings of the National Assembly Hearing Sessions, I have shown that the Ilhae Foundation was the most important example of Chun's personal corruption as well as a political vehicle to prolong his dictatorial rule. As was evident, it was also designed to become Chun's personal mansion and power base. The Ilhae scandal thus showed the extent of his abuse of power, and proved an illuminating commentary on the political reality under military dictatorship in an unfortunate chapter of Korea's modern history.

As we apply closer scrutiny of the Ilhae Foundation—as an organization as well as the basis of a scandal—it becomes necessary to inquire about the nature of dictatorial rule under Chun in regard to South Korea's political and economic decision-making processes and institutions. For example, I cannot help but ponder why and how such self-aggrandizement was possible. How was Chun able to control the political and economic situation of Korea in such a way that he never even conceived a possibility of being held accountable for such immoral and illegal behaviour?

From my work experience at Ilhae, I learned that Chun was a quite well-informed and politically aware man who surrounded himself with the best of academic and bureaucratic minds. Moreover, starting from his days at the Army Security Command as a political protégé of Cha Ji Chul, a hard-liner killed in 1979 with Park Chung Hee, Chun seems to have clearly understood the importance of controlling the media and suppressing political opposition.

Hence, he was most calculatingly brutal in quelling the uprising in Kwangju and systematically efficient in dealing with the opposition and the media.

Chun was able to substantially weaken the opposition by his "divide-and-conquer" method. This weakened the legislative branch, turning it into a mere rubber-stamp for Chun's executive orders. As for the judiciary system, "a constant pattern of gross violation of human rights" during Chun's rule generated by legal manipulation and practice ignored constitutional and legal provisions and acted more as "sentencing machines" of dissidents at political trials.<sup>25</sup> So it can be seen that Chun eliminated virtually all possible sources of political dissent effectively and efficiently and managed to succeed in concentrating all political power in his hands. As such, there were no institutional mechanisms of political recourse to make Chun accountable for his abuse of power.

In the arena of economic decision-making processes and institutions, Chun also proved to be skilful and manipulative in using the government economic bureaucracy and quasi-governmental institutions. The Korean economic bureaucracy had already been overly elitized and centralized during the Park era and could be characterized as "Korea, Inc"—with the state as the chairman of the board and performing a guiding function in the national economy. Chun exacerbated these tendencies all the more in his heavy-handed authoritarian rule. He was a "macro manager" of the Korean economy, but unlike his predecessor Park, his strictly hierarchical top-down economic decision-making process was anti-democratic and dictatorial. This, combined with capital provision through a central banking system allowed him to select and foster firms that would have comparative advantages in the world markets.<sup>26</sup>

Needless to say, economic-decision making under Chun could only be a highly politicized process as Chun could either make or break a company. This, in large part, explains behind why he was able to exert such political influence to demand contributions from fifty *chaeböl* for the Ilhae Foundation, practically as an additional state levy. It may also explain why such a high level of collaboration existed among the ruling and economic elites when collecting funds for Ilhae, as manifested in the 16 cases in which conglomerates lobbied the Blue House for special favours.

These blatant examples of collusion between the political and economic elites raise unsettling and troubling questions about the legacy of elitism, opportunism and collaboration in the process of development in the modern Korean political economy. More significantly, they point to possible sources of weaknesses in the decision-making process and infrastructure in the model of modern Korean political and economic development. In this regard, are businesses in Korea protected from such an abuse of power and political coercion in the future? Furthermore, are there adequate institutional mechanisms and have there been reforms in the political and economic-decision making process which will prevent and restrain such personalization or centralization of power?

The Ilhae scandal highlights a serious and urgent need to reform the political and economic decision-making process to create sufficient institutional mechanisms to protect the viability of fragile democracy in a developing country like South Korea. No doubt, the current reforms are moving cautiously, although at times too slowly, in this direction. Finally, as the Ilhae Foundation was dramatically eclipsed by unexpected and cataclysmic political events in 1987 and 1988, it should remain as the Sejong Institute to remind us of the ardent democratic aspirations and fearless

courage of the Korean people at a tumultuous historical crossroads between authoritarianism and democracy.

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## NOTES

- 1 Pak Chongyul, "Ilhae Foundation suspicions still remain," *Shin Tonga*, October 1988, p.336.
- 2 *Ibid*, p.337.
- 3 *Ibid*.
- 4 *Ibid*.
- 5 *Ibid*.
- 6 *Ibid*.
- 7 *Ibid*.
- 8 *Ibid*, p.342.
- 9 "Ilhae Foundation: A Sanctuary Hidden behind a Veil", *Shin Tonga*, September 1987, p.555.
- 10 Pak, *ibid*, p.342.
- 11 *Ibid*, p.341.
- 12 Kim Kihwan's speech from the First Joint Symposium of the Ilhae Foundation with the Brookings Institute on 25 March 1986.
- 13 Pak, p.343.
- 14 "Failed Political Show: A Summary of the National Assembly Hearing Sessions", *Shin Tonga*, January 1989, p.212.
- 15 *Ibid*, p.213.
- 16 *Ibid*, p.217.

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- 17 *Ibid*, p.215.
- 18 *Ibid*, p.217.
- 19 *Ibid*, p.217.
- 20 *Ibid*, p.217.
- 21 *Ibid*, p.216.
- 22 *Ibid*, p.216.
- 23 "The Ten Most Important People in the Fifth Republic on Trial", *Shin Tonga*, February 1989, p.375.
- 24 *Ibid*, p.381.
- 25 Ed Baker, *Democracy in South Korea: A Promise Unfulfilled, A Report on Human Rights 1980-1985* (International League for Human Rights and the International Human Rights Law Group), pp.127-128
- 26 Bruce Cumings, *The Two Koreans*, *Foreign Policy Association Headliner Series 269*, p.62

**ROBERT HART AND CHINESE  
DOMINATION OF KOREA  
A STUDY OF MISGUIDED IMPERIALISM**

YUR-BOK LEE

**Introduction**

The place of the British administrator, Robert Hart, in modern Chinese history is well known. As the Inspector General of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service between 1863 and 1911 and as a Westerner who had "more influence on the ruling Chinese than any other foreigner" during his tenure, Hart had a great impact not only on the operation of China's Customs Service but also on matters of modernization and foreign policy. Profound as Hart's influence on Chinese leadership was, his role in the history of China has been the subject of considerable controversy among scholars. Patriotic Chinese historians are insistent that Hart was simply a collector of revenue designed to meet indemnity payments to the treaty powers and, more significantly and more revealingly, was an archetypical defender of Western colonialism in China.<sup>1</sup> Several

outstanding Western scholars portray him as a "modernizer," who tried to do what was best for the Chinese people within the context of Western imperialism.<sup>2</sup> As recondit as his role in China might be, all students of history, both Chinese and Western, concur that Hart left a tremendous legacy in China. Unlike his place in China, however, Hart's role in the affairs of Korea is less known even to East Asian historians. Because Korea was important to China even after it supposedly had become independent in the 1880s, Hart paid a great deal of attention to it, and especially to the Korean Customs Service and financial matters. Hart's conception of what China's policy toward Korea should be after 1882 did not differ substantially either from the course the British government advised the Chinese to adopt or from the course the Chinese in fact pursued.

The traditional Sinocentric East Asian world order was disintegrating under pressure from the West's imposition of modern treaties on China from the 1840s onwards, by Japan's conclusion of a treaty with China on the basis of sovereign equality and the annexation of the Ryukyu Islands, by Korea's negotiation of modern treaties with Japan and the Western powers, and by the French colonization of Vietnam. Nonetheless, the Chinese continued to claim that Korea was still their dependency and acted as if nothing had altered the status of traditional Sino-Korean relations. Of all the treaty powers, only Great Britain appeared to support China's assertion of suzerainty over Korea, even after the British had concluded a modern treaty with the Koreans. What the British government did was to urge the Chinese to tighten their control over Korea as a means of inhibiting Russia from penetrating the peninsula.

In general, Hart actively supported the British government's policy of encouraging China to control Korea *vis-à-vis* possible Russian expansion. Hart, who had helped

the British conclude an agreement whereby Burma would despatch a tributary mission to China, even after it had become a part of British India in 1885 and 1886,<sup>3</sup> felt that nothing was wrong with Britain's apparently contradictory policy toward Sino-Korean relations. In order to tighten control over Korea, Hart strongly urged that China dominate Korea through sundry economic and financial measures. Hart convinced himself that, as the Inspector General of China's Imperial Maritime Customs Service, he should have not only supervisory but operational control of Korea's Customs Service.

This study is based on the broad premise that, even though imperialism is viewed pejoratively by those victimized, it is not by necessity a deleterious condition if the colonizers and the colonized mutually benefit from it economically, culturally or otherwise. If the colonized did not want this form of domination and if imperialism brought nothing but harm both to victims and to imperialists, then such a system cannot but be condemned as destructive and unavailing. The focus of this work is threefold: one is to analyze how and why Hart tried to control the Korean Customs Service and urged China to dominate Korea as if it were a new colony; the second is to see if China's new imperialism in Korea proved to be constructive, sagacious and prescient, or self-destructive and myopic; the third is to determine if Hart, as foreign adviser, should be held accountable for providing advice which turned out to be tragic and detrimental to the very fate of China.

#### **Hart and Von Möllendorff**

Despite the fact that Korea entered into treaty relations with other powers during the 1880s, when King Kojong and his independent-minded advisers strongly

desired to make their kingdom a fully sovereign state, the Peking government persistently interfered in Korean affairs. In order to give an air of historical legitimacy, China attempted to justify its interventionistic and imperialistic policy in terms of the old suzerain-dependency relations.<sup>4</sup> Even though Hart, like many others, failed to comprehend the essentially new nature of Chinese interventionism in Korea, China's radical interference amounted to no less than imperialism. Recent studies show conclusively how Korea moved towards independence from the negotiation of a treaty with Japan in 1876, through international treaties with the United States and other Western powers. China's intervention had no justification, regardless of the rationalization Chinese leaders gave it.<sup>5</sup> Among other measures, China tried to dominate Korea by controlling Western advisers in the service of the Korean government. Mainly to promote and expand China's interests in Korea, but partly to help the Korean government in benefiting from the services of Western advisers in the conduct of diplomatic and commercial relations with treaty powers, viceroy Li Hung-chang persuaded the Seoul government to request him to recommend a Western adviser to Korea.<sup>6</sup>

After formally receiving a Korean request in late 1882, Li sent Paul Georg von Möllendorff, a 35 year old German diplomat, to become the Inspector General of the Korean Customs Service and an adviser to the Korean government.<sup>7</sup> Von Möllendorff had served both in the Chinese Maritime Customs Service under Robert Hart and as German Vice Consul at Tientsin. At the time of his new appointment, von Möllendorff was working on Li's staff.<sup>8</sup> When Hart, who disliked the Germans, learned of von Möllendorff's assignment, he strongly opposed it.<sup>9</sup> He wanted to send one of his own men to Korea, so that he could control the Korean Customs Service. But Li refused to change his mind.<sup>10</sup> Feeling sour and ignored about the choice of the Head of the Korean Customs Service, Hart complained that Li wanted to

have in Korea "low-class men who will obey orders rather than better-class men who will give advice."<sup>11</sup> This remark proved very interesting and prophetic in view of the fact that later when Hart was allowed to select and send his men, he despatched a series of "low-class" yes men to Korea.

Despite Li's expectations, von Möllendorff established and ran the Korean Customs Service independently of Chinese control.<sup>12</sup> Once in Korea, von Möllendorff identified himself with the Koreans, believed Korea should become independent of China, and initiated various reform projects designed to modernize the archaic kingdom. He was promptly made a Korean noble and became an important confidant to Kojong, who was delighted with von Möllendorff's pro-Korean posture *vis-à-vis* China.<sup>13</sup> Somewhat surprised by von Möllendorff's swift ascendancy, Hart remarked, "I must confess v M. has gone ahead very cleverly: perhaps he'll end by being King of Corea (with German support)!"<sup>14</sup> Worried erroneously by possible German involvement in Korea, Hart stated that "we may find Germany intervening to protect and support 'Prince' von Möllendorff!!!"<sup>15</sup> This kind of Germanophobic statement makes one wonder if Hart really understood the nature of German Far Eastern policy. On the Li-von Möllendorff controversy over Korean independence Hart scoldingly wrote, "I hear Li is *inwardly* wild over this, but *outwardly* says that it's what he intended!"<sup>16</sup>

Before, but especially after the *Kapshin* coup of 1884, von Möllendorff concluded that, due to Korea's weakness and geopolitical situation, it needed a strong protective ally against outside aggressors. He believed that China, the old suzerain but now a degenerate state, should leave Korea alone, that Japan was too selfish and treacherous, and that the distant United States was indifferent to the fate of Korea. To him, Germany was not yet a sufficient Far Eastern power to be deeply involved, while Great Britain was most supportive of China's policy, and only Imperial Russia,

ever-expanding and the largest power in the world, would be interested in protecting Korea's independence. Russia after 1860 shared a common border, and support would come if Korea leased Port Lazareff and hired Russian advisers to train its army.<sup>17</sup>

When von Möllendorff's pro-Russian ploy became publicly known through Korea's Sinophile Foreign Minister, Kim Yunshik, Japan and Great Britain put maximum pressure upon Li to remove von Möllendorff.<sup>18</sup> Li liked von Möllendorff's anti-Japan stance, but his anti-China plot proved unacceptable. Besides, he felt his government should respect pressure coming from London and Tokyo for the removal of this controversial diplomat. Kojong still had confidence in von Möllendorff and strongly wanted to retain him, but the monarch had no choice but let him leave. Li advised the king to relieve him of all his official duties and positions and to take another adviser, preferably an American, as new adviser to Korea.<sup>19</sup> In forcing von Möllendorff out, Hart was not consulted. In selecting von Möllendorff's successor, however, Li made a drastic change: he wanted to share the responsibility with Hart. Since von Möllendorff, his unilateral choice, had turned out to be the "wrong" person and since Hart's over-all posture toward Korea was identical with his own (ie, China's control of Korea), Li felt that he and Hart should together select the next Head of the Korean Customs Service.

#### **Hart, Merrill, and King Kojong**

Following the dismissal of von Möllendorff in July 1885, the king requested Li to select and send an American. Even before the king's request reached Tientsin, Li had already asked Hart to recommend a successor. Hart was more than pleased to nominate one of his most trusted aides, the American Henry F. Merrill.<sup>20</sup> After carefully

interviewing Merrill, Li became convinced that the American would remain loyal to China and would promote Chinese rather than Korean interests. Li specifically instructed Merrill to run the Korean Customs Service according to the Chinese system and to respect and promote Chinese suzerainty over Korea.<sup>21</sup> In addition, the contract stipulated that Hart, as Inspector General of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs, had the right to recall Merrill at any time with Li's agreement. Moreover, unlike von Möllendorff, who had both customs and foreign policy responsibilities, Merrill's authority and responsibility were confined strictly to customs matters.<sup>22</sup> Because of his unfortunate experience with von Möllendorff and his mistrust of Hart, Li decided to divide these two functions by recommending and sending another American to become a Korean foreign policy adviser.

Compared with the contract that von Möllendorff had signed,<sup>23</sup> it is clear that Merrill was made much more dependent on the wishes of Li. Hart's wish and design were, in fact, to annex the Korean Customs Service to that of China without consulting or even informing the Korean government of the act.<sup>24</sup> As early as 1882 he had urged the *Zongli yamen*, the Chinese foreign ministry, to incorporate the Korean Customs Service into the Chinese Maritime Customs Service. Moreover, Hart now advised the ministry to urge the Korean government to entrust him to take over the Korean affairs officially.<sup>25</sup> But Li was opposed and instead preferred a *de facto* but covert way of controlling the Korean Customs, or any other branch of the Korean government.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, Li had no desire to make Hart's already significant position any more powerful and influential by integrating the Korean Customs Service into the Chinese Service. After all, one of the most important reasons that Li had divided von Möllendorff's functions was to reduce Hart's strong influence over Chinese foreign policy.<sup>27</sup>



Kojong resented the arbitrary manner that Li employed in selecting and sending Merrill. Once again, however, the monarch did not dare to protest to Li or any other Chinese official. Besides, learning Merrill's nationality and believing that any American would become a good friend of Korea, he decided to welcome him. The king was also pleased to learn later that another American, Judge Owen N. Denny, former American consul general at Shanghai, was selected to be the foreign policy adviser to his government.<sup>28</sup>

On 3 October 1885, the 33-year-old Merrill and the Taewŏn'gun, escorted by Resident Yuan Shikai, reached Inch'ŏn on the same ship.<sup>29</sup> Merrill took over the office of Chief Commissioner (*Ch'ong semusa*) of the Korean Customs Service from A. B. Stripling, who had temporarily held the position since von Möllendorff's dismissal. Unlike von Möllendorff's title, Merrill's was merely "Chief Commissioner." As Hart instructed, Merrill's most important job was to incorporate the Korean Customs Service into the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs to demonstrate that "Korea is China's tributary." Hart also urged Merrill not to make the kind of mistakes that von Möllendorff had committed: "so do not be tempted to hook on, or drop your moorings, elsewhere."<sup>30</sup> Merrill's mission was as much political as financial, to effect the union of Korean and Chinese customs in order to make Korea more dependent on China and, in addition, to make the position of Hart more powerful. Merrill was supposed to implement Hart's design without disclosing this intention to the Koreans and without giving any impression of direct intervention in Korea's internal affairs.<sup>31</sup>

Hart acknowledged that Merrill might find himself sympathizing with "Korean aspirations and angry over China's interference and system of vetoing." But he advised the young American to serve the interests of China rather than those of Korea, for China would rather fight than allow

independence to Korea. Like most Chinese leaders of his time, Hart insisted that Korea should not become independent for this would "endanger Korea more than the dependent condition;" China could take better care of Korea and keep "all comers" out.<sup>32</sup>

Hart was apparently unable to see that, since Korea had become legally independent through entering into treaty relations with various international powers, China's control would constitute not only imperialism but also an interference which Kojong felt undesirable and unwarranted. It was due to Great Britain and China, which were now trying to inhibit the evolution of an independent Korea, that the Sinocentric East Asian order had begun to dissolve after the treaties of Nanking and the Bogue in the early 1840s. Yet, when it came to Sino-Korean relations, these same powers acted as though the old system was still operative and accordingly had to be respected, the feelings of Koreans, Japanese, Americans, Russians, and others being irrelevant.

More importantly, Hart proved unable to realize China could not have it both ways; it could not exercise new colonial control while at the same time loudly proclaiming the same old dependency relationship continued. If China was to have tight control of Korea in a new manner as though it were a colony, then Korea must be a new colony. And if Korea was still the same old dependency then China must remain non-interventionist except for Korean crises of the most profound magnitude, and have other powers abrogate the treaties they had mutually concluded on the basis of sovereign equality.

Apart from any legalistic argument in favour of the recognition of Korean independence, one could also question the political and diplomatic sagacity of the British government's encouragement of China. Since China's new

imperialism in Korea led to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 and 1895, with tragic results for China, one wonders whether the British should not have supported Peking and other treaty powers to strengthen and sustain Korea as a strong, independent buffer against foreign aggressors. The consequences of such international diplomacy could not have been worse than what the interventionist policy did do, with China's humiliating defeat at the hands of the Japanese.

Among all of China's former dependencies, only Burma had a dualistic status—the country still remained a kind of vassal or tributary to China after it had become part of British India and therefore subject to British jurisdiction. It is not only intriguing but important to understand how Hart was disinclined to perceive obvious differences between Korea and Burma *vis-à-vis* China: Korea had concluded modern treaties with several powers while Burma had undertaken no such action. Furthermore, the peculiar arrangement Hart manoeuvred to accomplish in respect to Sino-Burmese relations in the mid-1880s did not endure, and only one decennial mission was despatched.<sup>33</sup> The important point is that Hart's position on Chinese/Burmese relations was neither long-lasting nor well-conceived.

The old but still relevant ceremonial aspect of Korea's status also needs elaboration. Even after 1882, Korea did not become a completely sovereign and *bona fide* independent nation because it kept dispatching tributary missions to China, whether or not forced, until 1894. Then, Japan compelled Korea to cease such activity. Therefore, one should say that by the 1880s Korea was *partly* independent and *partly* dependent. That this kind of dual role made Korea a unique and peculiar nation in international terms is apparent. But, if a formerly dependent country moves to semi-independence on the way

to becoming genuinely independent, should it be considered a more independent political entity than dependent? All the treaty powers with the exception of Great Britain treated Korea more or less as a sovereign and independent nation. Perhaps just as importantly, Kojong himself, whenever and wherever possible, acted more like a sovereign and independent monarch than as a dependent king. Together, these factors seem to sustain the proposition that treating Korea as nothing but a vassal to China—worse still a new colony to China, as the British did—was grossly unfair and wrong.

As badly thought out and unfair as it might have been to the Koreans, the British government could have argued that while the consequence of their policy was a disaster to China, it was not against the longer term, strategic interests of Britain. In the case of Hart, however, his major concern should have been the interests and welfare of the Chinese people, there being no intimation here that he should have acted against the national security and interests of Great Britain. As an employee of the Chinese government, he should have been demonstrably more sensitive and solicitous about both the short and long-term interests of the Chinese than was the British government. According to Spence, British merchants and consuls in China accused Hart of "using the customs service to help the Chinese against the British interests,"<sup>34</sup> but there is no evidence corroborating this view. With regard to Korea, Hart should not merely have danced to London's tune, to prod China to dominate Korea. Rather, he should have advised the Chinese leaders to do what would be wise, innovative, and good for the Chinese, even if doing so would not invariably supplement or assist London. After all, he was hired and paid by the Chinese. The problem with Hart's role is fundamentally that he not only danced to China's (and Great Britain's) policy of controlling Korea but went way beyond what Li and other Chinese wanted to do in

colonizing the peninsula. Most of the time Hart acted as if Britain had no treaty obligations with Korea and as if the kingdom was already a new province of China. Worse still, he believed that the Koreans would be somehow better off under Chinese control. However, he failed to explain how China, utterly unable to take care of even itself, could control Korea. His self-centered disposition was the most important reason why he urged China to take over the Korean government. Placing the Korean customs under his office would expand the sources of his revenues and also constitute a significant addition to his authority and prestige. Besides, such a new arrangement would strengthen the Anglo-Chinese policy of treating Korea as a dependency.

American diplomats such as chargé George C. Foulk and Denny, who championed the independence of Korea *vis-à-vis* China, were of course displeased with Hart and Merrill and the latter's role as a westerner employed by the Korean government but serving the interests of China. When Korea became semi-independent, a number of westerners came to be involved either directly or indirectly in Korean affairs. Some were employees of their own governments, while others found work with the governments of Korea, China, Japan, or private organizations such as mission boards and trade companies.

By and large, there were two distinctively different kinds of westerners, as far as the Koreans were concerned. One group campaigned against the interests of Korea for the sake of China or Japan, whereas others promoted the welfare and independence of the Korean people. To the first belonged Hart and Durham White Stevens;<sup>35</sup> to the second belonged Paul Georg von Möllendorff, George C. Foulk, Owen N. Denny, and Horace N. Allen.<sup>36</sup> Foulk actively supported the policy of Washington with regard to Korea's status while in official service of his own government in Seoul (1883-1887). During the period of his tenure (1886-1890) Denny,

an American citizen in the service of the Korean government, determinedly fought for the cause of Korean independence against China. Thus, when Hart learned of the pro-Korean postures of these two, he wrote that "the best place for F [Foulk] would be—the quarter deck of his own ship,"<sup>37</sup> and that "D's [Denny's] presence in Korea has been a mistake from the first to last."<sup>38</sup> In Hart's view westerners, whether working for the government of Korea or for their own governments, were praiseworthy if they promoted China's interests, but dismissible if they did anything constructive for the welfare and aspirations of the Koreans. From his standpoint, those who tried to do for Korea what Hart himself had done for China should be removed. His basic idea was that any westerner hired and paid by the Koreans must work against the interests of Korea in favour of the British and Chinese governments.

The worst thing about Hart from the perspective of the Koreans was that he was avaricious and prejudiced enough to remove semi-independent status from Korea in his own personal interests, but was not benign enough to promote the well-being of the Koreans. Since Hart considered himself as the ultimate and *de facto* head of Korea's Customs Service by successfully contriving to take it over, he should have also felt an obligation to do, or at least try to do, something constructive to promote the industrialization and commercialization of the country. But there is no evidence showing that Hart even entertained such thoughts. He wanted to merely collect Korea's customs revenues and add these to the revenue sources in China. Acutely conscious of Hart's anti-Korean stance, Kojong correctly and perspicaciously regarded him as an enemy but, lacking strong will power, dared not criticize or condemn "the most powerful Westerner in China."

Contrary to his stance toward Korea, Hart was deeply involved with various modernization programs in China. An important and interesting question arises as to why

Hart condemned those who attempted to do in Korea exactly what he himself had done in China. The answer is not complicated: in spite of a strict Wesleyan background, he was a man not only of double standards but also of paradoxes with a bifurcated personality. Wright states that Hart led a spartan and solitary life, yet enjoyed expensive ceremonial display and lavish parties.<sup>39</sup> Spence writes that this Irish Methodist had three children with a Chinese mistress. "When it came time for him to wed a lady of good British family, he paid off the Chinese woman with \$3,000 and shipped their children off to England so they would not embarrass him with their presence."<sup>40</sup> Following separation from his legal spouse, Hart provided her with luxurious living arrangements in England. In addition, he saw to it that all his children lived well,<sup>41</sup> a circumstance that clearly indicates he was a man of conscience and honour. At the same time one could also raise the wholly legitimate question of where he obtained the money for lavish entertainment and for maintaining his family. His regular government salary could scarcely have been the only source of his revenue, which might have included the tapping of additional outlets. Respecting Hart's appetite and eagerness for money and the accumulation of wealth, Li stated that he "is malicious at heart, yet, driven by lust for money, he is quite willing to serve us," while Chen Zhi, a Chinese contemporary, testified that Hart "looks sincere but in reality is a blackguard" whose "vast fortune may be compared with the wealth of a nation."<sup>42</sup> Commenting on Hart's demonstrable kindness revealed toward others, Wright said that he "showed a keen appreciation of the value of money, but he tempered this with a warm hearted impulsive generosity."<sup>43</sup>

Merrill did sympathize with the Koreans' aspirations for independence and even felt that Yuan was too high-handed in trying to control Korean affairs. But, in general he carried out Hart's instructions faithfully and efficiently.

From the beginning of his service in Korea he decided that his first and utmost loyalty should be to Hart and to Li, not to the Korean king or government. Among other things, he not only reduced the number of customs officials in Korea, mostly von Möllendorff's appointees, but replaced them with his own appointees.<sup>44</sup> The reason for this was mainly to make Hart's control easier but partly to make the administration appear more efficient. In addition, he tried to subordinate the Korean Customs to the Chinese Customs and allow Hart to exercise virtual control. Because of Li's opposition to outright legal seizure, even Merrill did not actively campaign for such a move.<sup>45</sup>

Unlike von Möllendorff and his staff who had been paid entirely by the Korean government, Merrill and his staff in Korea were paid mainly by the Chinese Customs under Hart, with only a portion coming from the Korean government through a special commission. This was in spite of Merrill's contract, which stipulated that the Korean government was to pay a full salary. The Koreans would have been glad to honour this, with full salaries of 300 silver taels—\$400—monthly owed to Merrill, based on the amount von Möllendorff had received. In fact, the Koreans did insist on paying, "without reference to what I [Merrill] was receiving in China." By doing so, Kojong and his Foreign Office wanted to induce him to be more loyal to Korea, as von Möllendorff had been. Yet Hart and Merrill continued to pursue their scheme.<sup>46</sup> Without notifying the Korean or Chinese governments, Hart and Merrill made a private arrangement whereby the former deposited the latter's salary at a bank in Hong Kong. In addition, Merrill received a salary from the Korean government. As a means of maintaining tight control over such officials, Hart continued this dubious practice with Merrill's successors, J. F. Schoenicke, F. A. Morgan, and J. McLeavy Brown.

Without explaining the political implications, Merrill proposed that the Korean government should have the

Statistics Department of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs publish the statistics of import and export goods and related items of Korea in the regular *Gazette* (published in China) as a joint publication.<sup>47</sup> Hart instructed him to do this in order to strengthen the argument that Korea was a dependency to China. Somewhat misled by Merrill, the Koreans believed that such an arrangement would have no political implications and readily consented. Insisting that it would compromise another piece of evidence showing that Korea was China's tributary, Hart told the *Zongli yamen* that this constituted a "successful implementation of our policy to maintain the privilege of a superior country [China] without intervention in the domestic affairs of the dependent state [Korea]."<sup>48</sup> As for China's control or takeover of the Korean Customs Service, therefore, Li and Yuan did not have to be bothered inasmuch as Hart and Merrill had misled, fooled, and practically cheated the Korean government and Kojong.

Westerners such as Foulk who had been supporting Korean independence complained of the Hart-Merrill conspiracy. Foulk complained to Washington that, by publishing Korea's Customs Trade Reports as a section of the General Reports of the Chinese Customs, Korea "would appear to have been incorporated into the Customs of China...as though Korea was a province of China."<sup>49</sup> But the American government showed no intention or inclination to get involved, since it was still hesitant to become entangled with China or with any other power to sustain the integrity and independence of a small far-away kingdom, which was of no vital strategic or economic interest to it. Even after Merrill left Korea in 1889, the Korean Customs Reports continued to be printed as a part of the Chinese Customs and Trade Statistics.<sup>50</sup>

To the extent that the king was made aware of Merrill's scheme, he was unhappy with the American and his effort. Merrill was, nonetheless, able to keep doing as instructed,

usually reporting his actions as *fait accompli* to the Korean Foreign Office for nominal approval. In 1889, at his superior's instruction, Merrill finally tried to persuade the Korean king to issue a royal decree to the effect that the Korean Customs should be superintended and administered by Hart.<sup>51</sup> But the king rejected the idea. The British Consul General, E. Colborne Barber, a close friend of Hart, and Yuan, ever anxious to strengthen China's suzerainty over Korea, supported Merrill. But Li, as noted already, was opposed to such an outright incorporation and feared international protests. Besides, he wanted to exercise and enjoy the rights and privileges of China in Korea without at the same time assuming any responsibility. Moreover, Li did not wish to add more power and prestige to the already-too-powerful Hart, whom he considered a strong rival. Li thus favoured a *de facto* rather than *de jure* control of the Korean Customs, and of other branches of the Korean government.

#### Hart and Korea's Foreign Loans

In the case of Korea's loans from foreign governments and bankers, Hart not only danced to the Chinese tune but went beyond what Li did. Since his government's revenue was meagre, the king sought to borrow money from abroad to modernize the country and to satisfy indemnities owed to Japan. Fearing the negative impact that China's political loans might have on independence, the monarch was ready to borrow money from the Americans, the French, the Germans, and even the Japanese (until the mid-1890s), using China only as a last resort. But whenever the king and advisers such as Charles W. LeGendre (in Korea from 1890 to 1895)—the successor to Denny—tried to negotiate western loans, Li and Yuan thwarted their efforts. From the

Chinese perspective, a Chinese loan would be a "very effective way to protect the dependent status of Korea."<sup>52</sup>

In 1889 Hart went so far as to recommend to the *Zongli yamen* that China send a memorandum to foreign powers declaring that, since Korea was a tributary to China, no foreign government should make a loan to the Korean government without Chinese approval. He argued that such formal and open declaration would strengthen Chinese suzerainty.<sup>53</sup> However, Li preferred to control Korea in a more covert and indirect manner. Moreover, he feared that such an open declaration might trigger a protest from other treaty powers and also feared that such a naked declaration might induce Korea to ask China for more financial aid or cause older creditors to sue China for repayment. Consequently, he rejected Hart's suggestion. But the *Zongli yamen*, supported by the Guangxu Emperor (1875-1908), overruled Li and took the unprecedented step of delivering such a memorandum to foreign powers:

Since the Korean government is wasteful and incapable of repaying any loan, foreign governments and merchants should never conclude a loan contract with it. Besides, the Chinese government would never approve any loan arrangement with the Korean customs as security.<sup>54</sup>

So, here was another incident in which the traditional elder brother (China) was telling the world how incompetent and unreliable his younger brother (Korea) was. But, who was telling whom? Was the China of the 1880s and 1890s in so much better shape than Korea? There is no doubt that the Korean government was, indeed, incompetent and corrupt; but the Chinese leadership under the Empress Dowager Cixi, the *de facto* ruler, was undoubtedly even more self-destructive, corrupt, and incompetent. Apparently, not only Chinese leaders but Hart himself failed to grasp the extent of China's problems.

As was to be expected, the Japanese government reacted negatively to the memorandum, declaring that "each country has its own right to handle the matters of loans, and China has no right to intervene in the loan affairs of the Korean government."<sup>55</sup> Although the Japanese government was reluctant to compete with China, it was dismayed by the expansion and intensification of Chinese control. The British government supported the Chinese position, while the governments of the United States, France, Germany, Belgium and Italy were indifferent.<sup>56</sup>

#### **Schoenicke, Morgan, and Brown in Korea**

In November 1889, after serving in Korea for four years, Merrill decided to take a two-year leave of absence from the Korean post. J. F. Schoenicke, a German national and the Commissioner of the Inch'ön Customs House since 1886, replaced Merrill as acting Chief Commissioner. He had served as Assistant Commissioner at the Customs House in Qiung Zhou, a port on Hainan island in south China, until June 1885. In April 1886 Hart sent Schoenicke to Korea to work under Merrill.<sup>57</sup> Even though a German, he felt he owed a great deal to Hart. While serving at Inch'ön, he became a good friend of his superior, Merrill. Then, when Merrill left, Hart became worried that Kojong might finally expel his proteges and let "Denny take the Customs," thereby creating a "crisis" for him and the Chinese.<sup>58</sup> Kojong dared not take advantage of this opportunity, and the Chinese government influenced him to accept Schoenicke.

Kojong was in fact pleased to have Schoenicke as acting Chief Commissioner, partly because the latter sympathized with the Koreans' desire for independence and partly because he was a German like von Möllendorff. However, Hart promptly influenced his employee to change his mind

and supporting China's policy of domination.<sup>59</sup> While he served in Korea for three years, Schoenicke never became a confidential adviser to Kojong, as von Möllendorff had done. Thus, whenever the king and his government, with the support of American advisers such as Denny and Charles W. LeGendre, tried to take over the Customs Service, Hart, Li, Schoenicke, and Yuan would gang up together to frustrate the Korean efforts. Hart was especially afraid that a new commissioner, if unchecked or uncontrolled, might investigate the management of the Korean customs and expose the secret and irregular financial arrangements he had made with Merrill, thus damaging his public integrity.<sup>60</sup>

Consequently, Hart maintained a tight control over Schoenicke. This, plus his secret arrangements, does not necessarily prove he was a trickster or swindler, but it does indicate that he was not only an immoderate accumulator and spender of money but also a manipulative book-keeper. Unlike Merrill, who left a tremendous imprint on Korea by making customs a *de facto* branch of Chinese customs, Schoenicke and his successors did not change what had been done, but merely continued the same policies. LeGendre, who became the chief adviser to Kojong in 1890, succeeding Denny, ran into difficulties with Schoenicke because he tried to oust the German from Korea as a means of helping the Korean government *vis-à-vis* China. But LeGendre was unable to accomplish this because Hart and the Chinese government supported Schoenicke.<sup>61</sup> In Hart's opinion, Schoenicke "did excellently well" in Korea.

When Merrill was due to return to the Korean post, he decided not to do so. Instead he accepted the position of Commissioner at Ningpo, China. To begin with, back in 1885, he had gone to Korea with reservations and a great deal of reluctance. He enjoyed living in China and relished his position as acting Assistant Chinese Secretary under Hart. While serving in Korea, however, he faithfully carried out Hart's and Li's instructions and policies, but often ran

into difficulties with the dictatorial Yuan.<sup>62</sup> When the terms of Merrill's leave of absence were to expire, Yuan told Li not to send the American back to the peninsula. Besides, Hart decided to honour Merrill's desire to stay in China and appointed him as the new Commissioner at Ningpo.

In 1892, when Schoenicke left Korea on leave, F. A. Morgan was appointed acting Chief Commissioner.<sup>63</sup> In those days when westerners in the service of the Korean government decided to leave, they preferred to take leave of absence rather than to resign, so that they would continue to be paid by both the Korean government and by Hart's office.

Morgan, who had been Assistant Audit Secretary under Hart in Peking, was sent to Korea in April 1893 to become acting Commissioner at the Inch'ön Customs as J. C. Johnston went on leave. Hart planned to keep Morgan at Inch'ön until November, when Schoenicke was to take leave, and then have him appointed as acting Chief Commissioner of the Korean Customs.<sup>64</sup> Each time that the position of the head of Korean Customs was vacated, Hart became worried that the king might take the drastic action of appointing his own man, who would champion the cause of Korean independence as von Möllendorff had done.<sup>65</sup> But the king and his advisers, under the close and tight control of Yuan, dared not do so.

Like Schoenicke, Morgan generally subscribed to the instructions and policies handed down to him by Hart and Li. Thus, Hart praised him as a man of "common sense and amiability" well suited for such a delicate position.<sup>66</sup> Morgan left no significant influence on the matter of the Korean Customs however, nor on any other matters, because his tenure was too brief. Suffering from a leg problem, he had to leave in July 1893 for surgical attention.<sup>67</sup>

In September 1893 J. Mcleavy Brown became the Chief Commissioner of the Korean Customs Service (he was to serve from 1893 to 1897, and again from 1898 to 1905). Brown, a British subject, had served as an interpreter at the British legation in Peking and had also worked at the Chinese Maritime Customs under Hart for about twenty years.<sup>68</sup> Hart, who was responsible for Brown's new appointment, described him as a "first-rate man," but "terribly lazy."<sup>69</sup> He had been Commissioner at the Maritime Customs in Shanghai before being selected and appointed as the Chief Commissioner of the Korean Customs Service, and enjoyed close associations with Hart and Li. Unlike two of his immediate predecessors but like von Möllendorff, he became closely involved in the financial and political affairs of Korea.<sup>70</sup> But his main concern, following Hart's instructions, was with promoting British interests, be they economical or political.<sup>71</sup> Toward the Japanese he took a posture of conciliation and he advised the Korean government to take a similar position.

Commenting on Brown's service in Korea, Hart noted that the British servant was "head over ears in work" and was "an uncommonly able man."<sup>72</sup> Just about every time Hart made a comment on Brown, he called him "lazy," yet he kept him in Korea for the obvious reason that Brown did what was expected. Even the Japanese preferred to retain Brown as Head of the Korean Customs Service. After driving the Chinese from Korea following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, the Japanese required British support to counterbalance Russia's growing influence and consequently encouraged the British servant to remain at his post,<sup>73</sup> which he did until 1905 despite some temporary interruptions.<sup>74</sup> Unlike Hart, who tended to be biased in favour of China against Japan, Brown kept a more balanced view.

After 1895, Hart lost his control over the Korean Customs Service. Brown was able, however, to remain in

charge as Chief Commissioner, and he even became an adviser to the Department of the Treasury in the government. Kojong and many of his advisers retained faith and confidence in Brown while the Japanese and the Americans found him useful in counteracting Russian influence.<sup>75</sup>

### Hart in China's Expulsion from Korea

Without question one of the gravest mistakes made by Hart during his entire tenure in China was in the final showdown between China and Japan, when he believed that the Japanese would be defeated. None of the advice given to Chinese leaders by Hart was designed to prevent an armed conflict. He also failed to comprehend the real motives of the Japanese when they demanded radical reforms of the Korean government prior to the outbreak of fighting.

Even in the 1880s and early 1890s when the Japanese maintained a low posture toward Korea politically and militarily, they deliberately sought economic penetration.<sup>76</sup> During the same period, China, by contrast, made Korea a virtual new colony. By 1894, Japan's leaders had decided to remove the Chinese from Korea and place the kingdom under their influence.<sup>77</sup> As far as they were concerned, either Korea should become genuinely independent of China or, if any country had to dominate it, this country ought to be Japan. The most tragic error Li made during his entire political career and another significant mistake on the part of Hart was that neither perceived the importance of Korean independence nor foresaw the far-reaching consequence of China's military defeat in the event of a Sino-Japanese conflict.

Using the crisis created by the *Tonghak* rebellion and the Chinese despatch of troops to Korea in 1894, the Japanese sent a large number of soldiers and demanded



that the Korean government adopt and implement radical reforms.<sup>78</sup> The Korean king and his government would have been unable to carry out these reforms, even if they had wanted to. There is no question that the salvation of the rotten Korean government required drastic reforms, but the Japanese proposals were too radical, too unreasonable, even absurd. After suppression of the rebels, the Chinese insisted that both Japan and China withdraw troops simultaneously.<sup>79</sup> But on 23 July 1894, the Japanese military broke into the palace and took the reluctant king, Queen Min, and their children as prisoners to the Japanese legation.<sup>80</sup> Even though Hart disapproved of their methods, he apparently took the Japanese demand for reform at face value and felt their motives were genuinely good.<sup>81</sup> In the words of Wright, therefore, "Hart's idealism and hatred of corrupt government [of Korea] blinded his vision to Japan's real aims."<sup>82</sup> Hart failed to see that the Japanese strategy was to make unreasonable demands which the Koreans would reject or delay implementing, and then use this rejection or delay as an excuse to drive the Chinese out and install a pro-Japanese clique.

Even after the outbreak of war, Hart believed that China would eventually be victorious. He grossly underestimated Japan's actual and potential military strength, and predicted that "if China would bravely go on fighting, I think victory would be hers in the end."<sup>83</sup> Even after much of China's navy and army were soundly beaten, Hart still stated that "Chinese grit, physique, and numbers will beat Japanese dash, drill and leadership: the Japs are at their best now, but we'll improve every day."<sup>84</sup>

Hart finally came to realize how wrong he was when he learned that Chinese soldiers on all fronts were being overwhelmingly defeated. Now he wrote that "the sooner we're out of it, the better."<sup>85</sup> But he again erroneously predicted that the Chinese would learn a lesson from this war and "go through the revolutionary process in a healthy

way and come out right in the distant future."<sup>86</sup> He added, "I would still rather have China than Japan for an ally, but of course only on condition that she'd follow my advice, and accept my guidance and nursing."<sup>87</sup> Here again, Hart failed to admit that China's acceptance of his advice and guidance had led to a humiliating defeat.

Toward the end of the war as Li vainly searched for foreign mediation, Hart lamented that "China has given no offense—has done no wrong—does not wish to fight and is willing to make sacrifice: she is a big 'sick man,' convalescing very slowly from the sickening effects of peaceful centuries, and is being jumped when being down by this agile, healthy, well-armed Japan,—will no one pull him off?"<sup>88</sup> Since he had led or at least assisted China in getting into this disastrous situation, since he was "the most powerful Westerner in China," and since the government of the entire British Empire for all practical purposes stood behind him, Hart should have attempted to do something constructive for swifter peace negotiations. He did no such thing. Rather, he merely acted as though he were a pampered and spoiled child. Even after it became abundantly clear that China's imperialistic policy had led the Middle Kingdom to this humiliation, Hart refused to admit that his policy had been a tragic mistake. The Japanese were not interested in anything less than a direct Chinese appeal for peace, which Li did, in fact, give, following a further inglorious defeat at Weihaiwei.

Apparently expecting that the victorious Japanese would treat the defeated Chinese as harshly as the British had done to them at the time of negotiating the treaties of Nanking and the Bogue following the Opium War, Hart wrote "if we fail, the Customs will, of course, disappear; the Japanese will put in their own men. I am sorry, but I don't see how to prevent such a catastrophe."<sup>89</sup> Actually, the Japanese were not interested in taking over the Customs Service, but wanted to use it as an instrument for the

Chinese payment of war indemnities. Besides, the Tokyo government, embarrassed by the fact that Li was shot and wounded by a Japanese fanatic, proceeded to moderate its final terms. In general, Hart was not displeased with the terms of the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki. Even so, the final provisions proved detrimental to the honour and very survival of China. In addition to recognizing the independence of Kórea, China had to cede Taiwan and the Pescadores, to pay an indemnity of 230 million taels and to extend commercial rights. With an annual revenue of only 89 million taels the Peking government had to negotiate loans with a western consortium to meet these payments. In essence this was the result of China's new and misguided imperialism, a policy which Hart had urged the Chinese government to adopt. If China had treated Korea as an independent nation state, then in 1895 they would not have lost Taiwan and the Pescadores and would not have gone into such debt. Moreover, Japan would have had no more rights in China and Korea than China had in Japan and Korea. After the war, Li, the architect of China's Korean policy, was compelled to retire in disgrace while Hart, more of a collaborator than a rival of the viceroy in terms of policy, continued steadfastly as the Inspector General until his retirement in 1911.

Being a foreigner in the service of the Chinese government, Hart was not held accountable as Li was for the war. In fact, his prestige and influence in China, ironically, reached its peak after Chinese humiliation.

### Conclusion

What the Chinese government needed most in the 1880s and early 1890s was a mobilization of every segment of its natural resources and manpower in order to strengthen its armed forces and to modernize industry,

agriculture, and political institutions, the object being to emulate Japan after the Meiji Restoration. They least needed direct hard-line policies toward Russia in the Sino-Russian border areas or Japan over Ryukyu and Korea. As dishonourable and disadvantageous as the terms of the 1881 Treaty of St. Petersburg had been to China, the Imperial Russian government would have imposed far harsher sanctions had the Chinese decided to fight over the Ili area and had lost the war, which at one time seemed possible.

Hart should have been acutely aware that China could ill afford a war with Japan over Korea. A Chinese defeat at the hands of the island nation, which had once been a tributary to the Middle Kingdom, would have made the Ch'ing Dynasty look to be in hopeless decline. More than anybody else, Hart should have advised Peking to leave Korea alone. He was, though, disinclined to extend such far-sighted, pragmatic, flexible, and sagacious advice to the Ch'ing leaders.

Instead, he advised a policy of tight and rigid control to the exclusion of all other treaty powers and quite contrary to the spirit and letter of Korea's international treaties. He urged a takeover of Korea's Customs Service, asked treaty powers not to make loans to Korea, and tried to incorporate the kingdom into a Chinese empire. The integration of customs into Hart's Peking office would have resulted in an increase in his authority and additional revenues. Li concurred with Hart's overall objective, but preferred *de facto* control rather than a *de jure* takeover lest other treaty powers would protest. Moreover, distrustful and jealous of Hart, Li wanted nothing in Korea that could add to Hart's power. Most significantly of all, the viceroy wished to secure whatever advantages China could obtain from Korea without assuming any corresponding responsibility there.

Both Hart and Li, then, wholeheartedly agreed that China should tighten its control of Korea.

China's new imperialistic policy of rigid control was best exemplified by Hart's takeover of the Korean Customs Service. Hart and his appointees carried out Chinese policy so successfully and effectively that Li and Yuan did not even bother with its continuing implementation. Apparently, Hart believed sincerely that by helping China have a tighter control over Korea he was promoting the interests not only of British policy but also of his own employer, the Chinese government.

As far as the question of the independence and the welfare of Korea was concerned, Hart subscribed staunchly to the Sinocentric view that the kingdom remained a vassal to China and cared only minimally about the aspirations of the Korean king and people. Notwithstanding his keen interest in Korea's affairs, Hart neither cared for Korean political aspirations nor advised Chinese leaders to promote the economic well-being of the peninsula. Instead, he did everything he possibly could to destroy the newly acquired semi-independent status. We may therefore conclude that Hart's total impact upon Korea, in sharp contrast with his positive legacy in China, was entirely negative from the vantage point of the Koreans. This resulted also from his personal character and standards of behaviour. As a man of paradoxes and double standards, he apparently believed there was nothing inconsistent about this double-edged approach: the Inspector General worked assiduously for the modernization of China while also campaigning against the progress of Korea. Korea had become more a sovereign and independent nation than a dependent state in the early 1880s. By way of analogy, the thesis that China's interference constituted a new imperialism can also stand on its own merits. In particular, if China's imperialism in Korea proved to be nothing but negative or detrimental to

China and Korea, then such a policy can hardly be defended. In other words, if the Chinese policy had somehow prevented the Sino-Japanese War, with its tragic results, or if China had defeated Japan, then we could say that Hart and Li had been prescient and men of discernment, at least from the standpoint of China. However, since China's imperialistic policy brought about nothing but disaster and humiliation, we have to conclude that Hart's advice was misdirected, myopic, and ultimately destructive.

To be certain, even if Hart had never left Belfast, China's policy toward Korea after 1882 would have been what it was—a new imperialism. Even if he had never served the Chinese government, the Sino-Japanese war would have erupted and the inadequately prepared and misplaced Chinese would have been defeated. Thus, the importance of Hart's influence should not be exaggerated or overstated. He merely advised and urged China's leaders to do to Korea what they would have done in any case.

By the same token, Hart could hardly be praised or excused for having failed to give the Chinese government the kind of advice that could have prevented them committing tragic errors. As a gifted administrator and "the most powerful Westerner" in China, he should have tried to provide prescient, fresh, innovative and internationally acceptable policy advice. If he had, the most probable outcome would be that we could now praise his wisdom and effort. But instead he suggested only short-term, convenient, and stop-gap measures. And for his misconceived and misdirected advice he can hardly escape censure. He should be held, ethically and intellectually, if not politically and legally, accountable.

As for Korea, China's elimination from the peninsula finally made the Korean kingdom fully sovereign and independent. However the Japanese, having achieved

Korea's independence through a bloody war, insisted they were entitled to special rights and privileges, something they might have felt less justified to do if China had treated Korea as fully independent to begin with. Confronted by the newly aggressive Japanese, Korean leaders again solicited protection from the Russians, who had been actively engaged in colonizing Manchuria and were more than agreeable to agitating the troubled waters of Korea. This led to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. After vanquishing Russia, Japan proceeded to annex Korea into its empire officially in 1910. Owing in part to the efforts of Li, Hart, and others, Korea missed a golden opportunity to become genuinely independent and modernize itself in a manner analogous not to Ch'ing but to Meiji supporters. After all, ever since the 1960s South Korean leaders have proved amenable to Japanese-type reforms to make their small nation into an industrial giant. One cannot help speculating whether Hart, if he were now to return from his grave and visit Peking and Seoul, would still say the Koreans would be better off under Chinese rule.

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**THREE PERSPECTIVES ON  
DEVELOPMENT  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE  
WELFARE SYSTEMS OF EAST ASIAN  
NICs**

JIN YOUNG MOON

**Introduction**

It is widely accepted that the industrialisation processes of Korea and Taiwan, two East Asian "Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs),<sup>1</sup> are central to understanding the general situation of Third World countries, not only because they have shown impressive economic development during the past three or four decades, but also because they indicate both the possibilities and limitations of Third World development. Compared with the detailed research on the industrialisation of these two, too little attention has been devoted to their welfare systems, which have been regarded by many western scholars as "part and parcel of the industrialisation process."<sup>2</sup> This is mainly due to the historical nature of the



study of social policy as an academic discipline. Welfare systems have been virtually left out of analyses, and academic studies are exclusively devoted to the adoption of western welfare systems in general and the British system in particular.<sup>3</sup>

However, it is noteworthy that, since the late 1970s, there has been a growing interest in the welfare systems of Third World countries. Some academics within the tradition of British social administration have attempted to account for their development.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, academic studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s paved the way towards opening a debate about such systems and considerably contributed to the development of this discipline. The studies commonly argue that, for such attempts to be fruitful, welfare systems should be researched within the wider context in which they have developed and been implemented. Seen in this light, it seems necessary to draw attention to the main approaches on Third World development.

In the first section of my paper, recent changes of approaches in the field of development studies, from Developmentalism to *Dependencia* and Statism,<sup>5</sup> will be explained using the Kuanian concept of paradigmatic change. I then attempt to identify the role of the state in East Asian NIC development. My third section looks for relationships between the states and the welfare enactments of Korea and Taiwan. My working conclusion is that the state has played a key role in the welfare state developments of both countries, and thus, although the Statist theory provides the most balanced view, none of the three approaches exactly dovetails with the welfare systems.

### Paradigmatic Changes in Development Studies

It is commonly argued amongst social scientists that the second half of the twentieth century widely witnessed a "chaos of paradigm," "crisis of paradigm" or a "paradigm lost." In fact, at least in social science, no single dominant theory has ever accounted for all the details of societal circumstances. However, there has been a period when most people believed that human reason could recognise and elucidate the laws of historical development. At least from their perspective, the world is simply explained by two different phenomena—recognised and unexplored phenomena (which will become recognised with the further development of human reason). For instance, great social scientists such as Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and more recently Parsons, persistently attempted, and eventually completed, grand theories through which the world could be universally understood. Each firmly believed that their individual theory was sufficiently developed to be applied to any particular situation. Indubitably such an age was the age of human reason.

It would be very reasonable to suggest that the "chaos of paradigm" has deepened and intensified in the late 20th century, although the methodologies of social science have developed along with the development of statistics and social research methods both in quality and quantity. Why? We may focus on the nature of the crisis itself. Is it merely a theoretical or paradigmatic crisis, not a crisis of the real world? Actually, whilst the real world moves according to its own law of motion or movement, scholars have from time to time attempted to articulate it into their own framework in the name of human reason. When the gap between real and interpreted is so huge that deviant cases or anomalies are frequently found, then the "crisis of paradigm" appears, when the old paradigm is likely to be replaced by a new paradigm. Essentially it is this process of change which Thomas Kuhn dealt with<sup>6</sup>. He argues that the

development of science can be regarded as the sequential change of paradigms. True, the paradigm, adopted individually or communally, has been held central in the development of science. Meanwhile, Kuhn defines a paradigm in a somewhat ambiguous way:<sup>7</sup>

These and many other works served to define the legitimate problems and methods of a research field for succeeding generations of practitioners. They were able to do so because they shared two essential characteristics. Their achievement was sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity. Simultaneously, it was sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve.

Thus;

Achievement that share these two characteristics I shall henceforth refer to as "Paradigms."

Hunt defines paradigm more succinctly:<sup>8</sup>

...that constellation of values, beliefs and perception of empirical reality, which, together with a body of theory based upon the foregoing, is used by a group of scientists, and by applying a distinctive methodology, to interpret the nature of some aspect of the universe we inhabit.

Upon these bases, four essential natures of such a paradigm can be derived. Firstly, a paradigm does not simply consist of a set of theories, but involves the belief, values and ideological preferences of specific research matters.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, legitimate research problems and methodologies are identified within it. Thirdly, the process of paradigm change is not piecemeal or evolutionary, but revolutionary. Lastly, paradigm legitimacy is closely related to the dynamics of competing academic schools.

Kuhn set up his ideas of paradigm on the historical basis of natural science, not social science. Thus various difficulties coincide if one attempts to apply the Kuhnian concept in social science, and Kuhn himself considered social science was not yet as fully developed as natural

science, regarding it as being pre-paradigmatic.<sup>10</sup> In fact, unlike natural sciences, no dominant paradigm or way of thinking has ever existed in social science and, consequently, it has been characterised as a compatibility of competing paradigms.<sup>11</sup> Social science has had no equivalent of the Newtonian revolution through which the world is universally recognised. However, this does not necessarily assume that paradigm change has no implications for social science disciplines. At least if social science were to be "guided by something much like a paradigm"<sup>12</sup>, it would be worth applying the concept of paradigm change. Undoubtedly, something much like a paradigm, however defined, is absolutely necessary in social science, because "the idea of working without one [paradigm] is not just impracticable but perhaps inconceivable."<sup>13</sup>

It is worth noting that some attempts have already been made to explain the shifting frameworks of development studies, which closely resemble Kuhnian paradigm change. Foster-Carter (1976)<sup>14</sup> argues "that Kuhn's concept of scientific development helps us to understand the changes that have taken place in the theory of development and underdevelopment."<sup>15</sup> He draws attention to the paradigm change from mainstream Western development theory to dependency theory (*Dependencia*). He discusses two representative scholars belonging to the two conflicting schools, Rostow and Frank and argues that the rise of neo-Marxism as a new paradigm is explained by the crisis or collapse of developmentalism, the old paradigm, a crisis which resulted from the overall failure of development strategies in nearly all Third World countries. He exemplifies the change in Frank's framework as a paradigm change in development studies. Frank, once a faithful follower of the Chicago School of Economics, transformed himself into a radical dependency theorist. In regard to this change, Foster-Carter argues:<sup>16</sup>

It is unlikely that Frank simply forgot all this [conventional economics], or went mad. A far more reasonable explanation is paradigm change.

However, Foster-Carter does not seem to fully appreciate the limitations of single case study as a sociological methodology. For such an approach to be fulfilled, he should have analysed the historical context of Third World countries, within which Frank's change occurred. Although Frank, without dispute, is the leading theorist in the circle of *Dependencia*<sup>17</sup>, his paradigm change cannot be researched apart from the historical context to which it belongs. In this regard, the work of Chilcote<sup>18</sup> seems to provide a broader viewpoint. Rather than comparing the personal historiography of representative scholars, he claims that the paradigm change in development studies resulted from the vigorous challenge of historicism, traced back to the works of Marx and Engels as historicists and to the orthodox social science paradigm of liberalism and positivism. Frank's paradigm change is a dramatic reflection of the intellectual movement of the 1960s as well as reflecting disappointment with the "promises of developmentalism" in developing countries.

In spite of the criticisms of his work, Foster-Carter gives us a valuable clue about the paradigm change:<sup>19</sup>

Presumably in the natural sciences the eventually complete victory of a rising paradigm renders communication with the old one unnecessary. But in the social sciences, at least in this particular instance, one would not expect the neo-Marxist paradigm to ever achieve such a dominant role. We therefore have the prospect of a prolonged period of coexistence within a single scientific community of two radically incompatible paradigms.

And he concludes:<sup>20</sup>

What happens in the developing world, as perceived via the respective paradigms, must affect their respective fortunes.

From the above quote, we can abstract two interrelated implications for development studies. First of all, it can be broadly assumed that a new paradigm will not totally replace the old one. And, at least in development studies, the process of paradigm change can be assumed to be basically evolutionary rather than revolutionary, gradual rather than sudden, since two apparently incompatible paradigms are likely to communicate with each other. Or at least, neither will totally ignore the other. Thus we can assume that there is a room for compromise. The first implication refers to the characteristic of paradigm change, but the second one is directly concerned with the process of change; the patterns of development in the Third World—the real world—have a decisive impact on the patterns of paradigm change in development studies. This means that paradigm change in social science can be viewed as the reflection of a dynamically changing world, unlike that used in natural science.

#### **Role of the state in East Asian NIC development**

As dependency theory (*Dependencia*) emerged from the crisis of mainstream Western development theory (Developmentalism), Statism developed as a further paradigm. Since the late 1970s, anomalies in dependency theory have been frequently seen in developing countries, and thus the legitimate problems and methods of a research field within *Dependencia* have been challenged. These deviant cases, which include the economic prosperity of Taiwan and Korea, threaten the basic proposition of dependency theory, that "the closer the economic relationship between metropolis (centre) and satellite (periphery) is, the less the economic development of the latter will be." Numerous working papers, articles and books show that the East Asian NICs represent a strong challenge

to the basic assumption that foreign economic penetration leads, firstly, to a hindrance of the economic sector and, secondly, to a widening of economic inequality across the classes.

Meanwhile, there is growing interest in the contrasting phenomena that East Asian NIC economic performance brought a paradigm change from *Dependencia* to Statism, whilst the remarkable 1970s economic development of Latin American NICs—Brazil and Mexico—delivered only a modification to dependency theory, the "dependent development" of Peter Evans.<sup>21</sup> Why is it that the former brought paradigm change, whilst the latter delivered simply a modification? The fact that the paradigm changed implies that the gap between the real world and interpretations through the old paradigm is so huge that the basic proposition and the legitimate research problem defined within the old paradigm is no longer pertinent. Seen in this light, the notion of "dependent development" might be appraised as paradigm change, not because it does not adhere to the basic principle of dependency theory, but because it leaves ample room for developing countries to achieve rapid economic growth. Evans explains the successful development of the Brazilian economy in the 1960s through the frame of a triple alliance of state, local capitalists and multinationals, and argues that the role of the state in promoting economic growth is far greater than the roles of the other two sectors.<sup>22</sup> "Dependency" and "development" are not necessarily contradictory terms. However, two papers published in the early 1980s, one dealing with Korea and the other with Taiwan, suggest we must have serious reservations about applying the frame of a triple alliance to East Asian NICs.<sup>23</sup> The role of the state in Korea and Taiwan has been far more influential than in Latin American NICs. Moreover, the concept of "dependent development" does not leapfrog the basic arguments of *Dependencia*, because it assumes that "dependent

development" is basically dependent on foreign capital, and thus the surplus value of economic growth is constantly exploited by foreign capital through multinational corporations. The economies of "dependent development" might achieve substantial growth in volume, but are hardly able to realize solid development.

Here it seems worth distinguishing the concept of development from growth. It has been popular to identify economic growth with economic development in development studies until very recently. This was mainly due to the fact that economic growth, for instance the increase in GNP, can be measured in quantity, whilst economic development is hard to measure by a universally-accepted yardstick. Moreover, even the definition of development varies widely according to different ideological preferences and academic backgrounds, mainly because of a highly normative implication. For research in development studies to be fruitful, it appears vital to distinguish solid development from mere growth in volume. If growth fails, the economies of unfair privileges, characterised by extremely concentrated wealth, persistent inequalities, and tremendous imbalance across sectors will mistakenly be identified with economic development. Without improving the quality of life, it is hard to assume that any economy is now on the way to development. We can approach this problem by asking to what extent, and under what condition, are development and growth different from each other. And in regard to this, a United Nations report defines development as "growth plus change."<sup>24</sup> Similarly, the Brandt Report states:<sup>25</sup>

Certainly development must mean improvement in living conditions, for which economic growth and industrialisation are essential. But if there is no attention to the quality of growth and to social change one cannot speak of development. It is now widely recognised that development involves a profound transformation of the entire economic and social structure.

Lesson and Nixson express a similar viewpoint:<sup>26</sup>

Here are implied two distinct meanings of the term 'economic development': (i) development equals growth plus structural change; (ii) development equals growth plus income redistribution and/or other measures to improve welfare.

Following the above, it can be further assumed that development should bring improvements in the "quality of life," whereas growth simply refers to an increase in GNP, and therefore economic growth achieved without improving general welfare does not lead to a paradigm change. However it would be too impetuous to assume that the economies of East Asian NICs, irrespective of whether they manifest higher growth rates or appear as developed countries, should demonstrate structural transformations which improve the general welfare of the society. There is a definite need for in-depth research into the distribution structure, political system and level of democratisation in order to assess whether their economic achievements can be appraised as solid development. Furthermore, a number of comparative research results suggest that, as far as the distribution structure is concerned, there are considerable variations amongst East Asian NICs. Atul Kohli, *et al*, in their study about inequality in the Third World,<sup>27</sup> found a sharp contrast between Korea and Taiwan in the initial phase of industrialisation. Whereas Korea was classified as one of the "Countries Showing Significant Rise in Inequality" in 1960-1970, Taiwan was grouped with the "Countries Showing Significant Drop in Inequality."<sup>28</sup> The average Gini coefficient of Korea during the first half of the 1980s was 0.363, whilst that of Taiwan was only 0.287. However the Gini coefficient of Korea was very near that of developed countries, though that of Taiwan has not improved much since the 1970s.<sup>29</sup> Although some variation has remained in the income distribution between these two economies, they have shared more common features of economic development for the last three or four decades. From poor

tradition-oriented agricultural countries, they manifested impressive economic growth. The total exports of the four East Asian NICs have recorded over double the total exports of all other developing countries since the mid-1980s, and their economic growth rates are the highest in the world.<sup>30</sup> The Taiwan economy achieved an average 9% economic growth rate from 1950-1985, while the Korean economy between 1962-1986 performed an average around 8.5%. Quite simply, they have maintained high growth rates, high investment rates and, probably most importantly, high dependency on the world market. It can be argued that they are moving towards the status of developed economies.<sup>31</sup> Attempts have been made to account for the cause and effect of such successful economic growth amongst East Asian NICs in comparison with what has happened in frustrated and still backward economies. These commonly draw attention to the distinct characteristics of East Asian societies such as the Confucian tradition, experiences of Japanese colonialism, relatively educated but low-waged labour forces, weak class struggles, strong and competent states, and so forth. Amongst these characteristics, the role of the state, without dispute, is central to account for the impressive economic growth, and thus the state has been brought back to central stage in social science in general, and in development studies in particular.<sup>32</sup>

It seems quite clear that neither modernisation nor dependency schools could provide adequate conceptual frameworks through which the economic development of East Asian NICs could be analysed. Foster Carter argues that:<sup>33</sup>

South Korea's success is a profound theoretical embarrassment to both neo-classical economists and dependency theorists.

Above all, the failure of dependency theory to account for the unique industrialisation of the region has increased the scepticism about the adequacy of Third World

development theory, and has accelerated the need for a new paradigm able to encompass the Third World as a whole. There have been various noteworthy attempts to escape the theoretical impasse of dependency theory. Some have actively embraced the academic achievements which have emerged from other disciplines, while some have abandoned the theoretical and conceptual strait-jacket, and others still have become more practical.<sup>34</sup> However, it can be said that these found ways to escape the impasse, but failed to find a way forward. Debates on the state provide a good starting point for seeking a new paradigm for development studies since the role and function of the state in developing societies, as it was defined in the early literature of *Dependencia*, was not viewed positively in relation to Third World development. Rather, the state was widely regarded as a mere bureaucratic apparatus controlled and dominated by the petty-bourgeois, "by a coalition of political parties [or a single party] that represent[s] the class interests of the comprador bourgeois, the feudal landlord class, and the metropolitan imperial bourgeois."<sup>35</sup> Because of the radical changes in the political situation of Third World countries, the concept of state has now somewhat changed. A concept of "relative autonomy" has been applied to the development experiences of individual countries, and a number of structural conditions which contribute to the autonomy of the state have been presented.<sup>36</sup> Now the state is held central in the debates on Third World development. Kohli argues:<sup>37</sup>

No coherent "third" alternative to the modernization and dependency approaches has emerged...Some analytical concerns have been voiced by scholars who are troubled by the tendency in both the modernization and the dependency approaches to reduce politics to socio-economic variables...They are attempting to highlight the significance of political variables...for patterns of political-economic change in developing countries.

In Pye's study of Asian countries, he argues that "the priority should be to find a theoretical lens that will ensure

both a vivid focus on the political domain and a long historical perspective."<sup>38</sup> However, it is too early to assume that the old paradigm will be replaced by the new Statism. Most scholars of development studies argue that the state-led development experiences of East Asian NICs are exceptional cases,<sup>39</sup> and "a proliferation of state activity undertaken in the name of development has not resulted in the anticipated improvements in socio-economic welfare"<sup>40</sup> in most developing countries. Hulme and Turner are quite right to argue that "the bureaucracies are often ill-equipped to perform these tasks [of developmental policy-making, planning, implementation and evaluation] effectively and efficiently."<sup>41</sup> Thus, "if development is to succeed and the state is to retain its principal role in it then the bureaucracy has to make dramatic improvements in managing development."<sup>42</sup>

Historically the East Asian NICs and Japan have been, to varying degrees, strongly influenced by Chinese culture. In fact, Hong Kong and Taiwan were peripheral regions of China until they were occupied by colonial forces, and Korea and Japan tried to assimilate the advanced Chinese culture, though they retained their own national identities. Meanwhile, up until the 18th century, China was one of the most civilized and prosperous nations in the world.<sup>43</sup> Of particular importance was China's unified hierarchic administration run by a well-educated Confucian bureaucracy.<sup>44</sup>

Thus it is mainly due to historical experience that the states of these societies have developed autonomy from both domestic classes and foreign capital, leading to independent development policies. In regard to this extraordinary endemic characteristic, Cal Clark argues:<sup>45</sup>

All the successful East Asian countries (Japan, the four little dragons, and the P.R.C.) were marked by strong states committed to developmentalist policies, and all shared a

Confucian culture that, among other things, included respect and veneration for political authorities.

Ironically Confucianism was blamed for the economic backwardness of Asian countries by such Western scholars as Max Weber,<sup>46</sup> who thought that the Protestant ethic was much superior, at least in respect to a country's industrialisation. Now the tradition of Confucianism is commonly seen as the key factor leading to rapid economic development in East Asia. Modern Confucianism is understood by many social scientists as the combination of advantageous terms from both worlds—"an amalgam of family or collectively-oriented values of the East and the pragmatic economic goal-oriented value of the West."<sup>47</sup> However this culturally oriented assumption of development is not sufficiently abstract to be universally applicable, though it provides a good starting point for building up a general interpretation. Kwōn argues:<sup>48</sup>

The new Confucian ethic covers a broader spectrum of economic growth in Asian countries, including Japan and Asian NICs...Perhaps what we need is a general socio-cultural theory of economic development that transcends ethnocentrism implicit in the 'Protestant ethic' and 'new Confucian ethic'.

The role of the state in the industrialisation process of the East Asian NICs was remarkable, and also quite different from that of other developing countries, whether they are "state capitalism,"<sup>49</sup> "entrepreneurial,"<sup>50</sup> "bureaucratic state capitalism,"<sup>51</sup> "bureaucratic-authoritarian industrialising regimes,"<sup>52</sup> or "neo-mercantile."<sup>53</sup> However, as is clearly shown above, it is questionable whether their experiences have some general applicability to other developing countries, do they show the replacement of a paradigm from *Dependencia* to Statism. What is urgently needed is to inquire into the general theoretical lens which explains Third World development as a whole, and furthermore directs the right way of development. As has been shown, development does not

have to be confined to economic growth. Rather, it should be understood as a progressive process of improvement in the quality of human life in a given society. In this regard, one way out of the theoretical impasse in which development studies are entrenched is to draw more attention to the role of the state in other societal sectors such as welfare systems. Actually, existing research is exclusively focused on the industrialisation process of East Asian NICs, and too little attention has been devoted to welfare systems. Chow notes:<sup>54</sup>

...attention has so far been focused on their industrialising experiences and little has been documented about their social security provision, which is often seen in the West as part and parcel of the industrialisation process.

#### State and Welfare: Political Crisis and Welfare Enactment of Korea and Taiwan

Academic attention has never been solely drawn to the welfare sector in the literature of development studies,<sup>55</sup> due in part to the fact that the literature relies on what are basically society-centred theories that tend to underestimate the role and function of the public sector. Within the context of Developmentalism, it is quite clear that welfare activities have a minimal or residual role and function in modern societies, while voluntary services have a key role in dealing with social problems. Welfare is mainly oriented towards psychological treatment or, at best, a minimum level of assistance for people in extreme poverty. However, when viewed against the socio-economic situation of mass poverty, unemployment and immense deprivation in developing countries, the concept of residualism has been gradually eroded.<sup>56</sup> Again, from the *Dependencia* perspective, the welfare systems of developing countries are left out of the analysis; relatively few writers have discussed the policy implications of welfare systems, mainly because



of a pessimistic premise on reform in Third World countries. Roxborough thus asserts that reform is hardly realised on account of the dependency situation:<sup>57</sup>

the dependency paradigm alerts us to the fact that much-needed reforms are impossible without a restructuring of the mode of articulation of the economy with the world economy.

The preoccupation with unequal relations between the centre and the periphery and, ultimately, with the socialist revolution, prevents many dependency writers from researching Third World welfare systems. Reforms through policy-making processes including welfare seem to be unthinkable in the dependency context. Now, research trends about Third World welfare systems tend accordingly to lean toward Statist theory. What is at issue is whether the state in dependent societies can adopt or expand welfare programmes with full-fledged autonomy both from domestic social forces and foreign capital.

The importance of the state in modern capitalist or socialist societies cannot be too strongly emphasized. Since the great panic at the end of 1920s, the role of the state has increased dramatically not only in traditional state businesses such as legal and institutional sectors, but also in the economic sphere which was largely left to the private sector until only a few decades ago. The modern capitalist state has directly or indirectly participated in production through the nationalisation of industries. Furthermore, the growing portion of public expenditure in the whole GNP has illustrated how great the role of the capitalist state in modern societies has become. For example, the total public expenditure as a percentage of GNP in 1890 when the welfare state was born in Britain was only 8.9%, but in 1930 it was 26.1% and in 1979—when the welfare state was at the height of its prosperity—51.8%.<sup>58</sup> At the heart of the rise of public expenditure was a considerable increase in social service expenditure which rose from 1.9% in 1890 to 27.6% in 1979.<sup>59</sup> Based on a widespread consensus concerning

social democracy, the Western capitalist states ambitiously launched welfare states and promised welfare "from the cradle to the grave." Mishra identifies the factors which gave legitimacy to this in those promising decades: an "affluent society with full employment," the "Keynes and Beveridge rationale for state intervention," "theories of industrial society," the "promise of a social science" and the "pursuit of socialism through welfare."<sup>60</sup>

There is a growing interest in variations in capitalist states, rather than a single dominant explanation applied to all. Especially, the state in the context of dependent capitalism is, at least in appearance, not in accordance with the basic features of the state in developed countries, despite variation. Duvall and Freeman state:<sup>61</sup>

There are, in the modern world system, importantly different types of capitalist societies. That is to say, the capitalist mode of production is expressed in *fundamentally* distinct forms; as a result, the basic character, the nature, the role of the state differ substantially across societies.

However, as they note, this does not have to imply the acceptance of a doctrine of complete social uniqueness, but rather that the constructive "sociological imagination"<sup>62</sup> within a historical perspective is absolutely necessary for debates about the role of the state in capitalist societies, precisely because it differs considerably between different societies. Actually the gap between rhetoric and reality would remain huge if states are studied separately from the historical complex to which they belong. However, in spite of considerable variations between societies, the following common feature shared by all capitalist states is at the heart of the concept of the state:<sup>63</sup>

...the core of the state apparatus comprises a distinct ensemble of institutions and organisations whose socially accepted function is to define and enforce collectively binding decisions on the members of a society in the name of their common interest or general will.



This allows us to make several generalisations about the nature of the state. Firstly, the state apparatus consists of an orchestra of organisations and institutions, which together makes a very unique and characteristic sound. The function of state apparatus is not, and will not simply be understood as the activities of state personnel, but as complicated processes of state intervention. Actually, as is argued by Therborn, "if the state is no more than the government elite, there would seem to be no need for any state theory."<sup>64</sup> Secondly, "to define and enforce collectively binding decisions on the members of a society" implies that only the state, not the civil society, is bound to decide what is to be done within a given political context. The ruling class in any society does not govern directly or explicitly, but just exercises an important affect on the decision-making process of the state. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the state acts, at least in appearance, "in the name of common interest or general will," which explains why legitimacy is so important for state activities. The modern state, however defined, should manifest itself as a neutral agent through which various interests in a society are incorporated.

If we think about the political context within which the welfare state developed, the following assumptions apply. Firstly, the main architect of the postwar welfare state is not a specific government body in charge of operating the system, nor bureaucrats, yet the state can be understood "as a bureaucratic apparatus and institutional legal order in its totality."<sup>65</sup> However, this does not mean that ordinary citizens or political parties have had little effect on the welfare state. Secondly, it is the state that decides the timing of the enactment and enforcement of specific welfare policies, and the contents of services such as "in cash" or "in kind," despite various interest groups being involved in the decision-making processes. The ultimate political responsibility of running the welfare system belongs to the

state, not to the people, nor to any political party. Thirdly, if the state, for whatever reason, has launched and maintained welfare programs at a vast cost,<sup>66</sup> it can be assumed that they have enjoyed broad political and societal support, and henceforth the welfare state has been fully legitimized.

The basic assumption of Statism is that the state plays a key role in economic development, social security and individual liberty.<sup>67</sup> So let us see how the enactment of welfare programs in Korea and Taiwan presents the state, especially when the regime is in great political crisis.

Figure 1<sup>68</sup> shows the relation between political crises and welfare enactment in Korea since the 1960s. It demonstrates that the state, however defined, decides the timing of enactment of welfare programs in an attempt to tranquillise domestic political crises.

Compared with this, the most serious crisis occurring in Taiwanese politics came from severed diplomatic relationships, not from domestic problems. In 1971, the Republic of China on Taiwan, one of the founders of the United Nations, was forced to withdraw. Since then, the number of countries recognizing the People's Republic of China has exceeded those recognizing the Republic of China. Furthermore, the United States, once the strongest supporter of the R.O.C. government, severed diplomatic relations in 1979, and officially recognised the P.R.C. as the *de jure* government in China. This deepened the political isolation of Taiwan, and brought about serious subsequent domestic crises. It is noteworthy that welfare enactments were actively made around two serious crises. Figure 2 demonstrates the strong correlation between political crisis and welfare enactment. The trend of welfare expenditure also shows momentary increases, from 12.7% of government expenditure in 1972 to 15.2% in 1982.

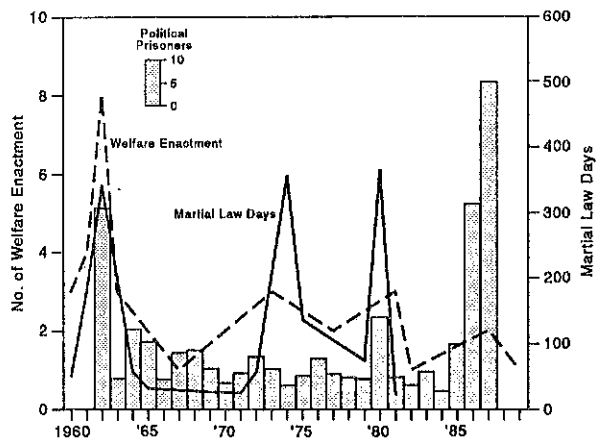
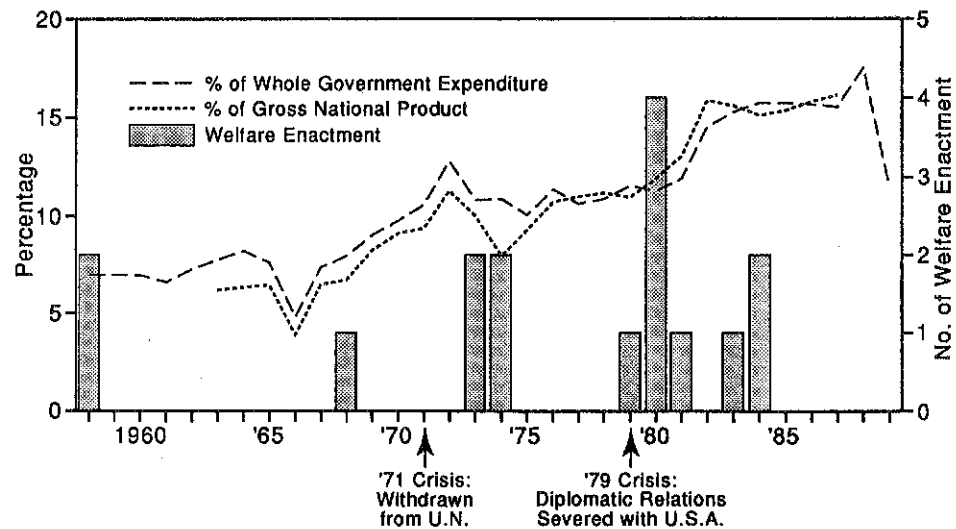


Fig. 1.



Source: Taiwan Statistical Data Book, CEPD, 1990  
Yearbook of Financial Statistics, MOF, 1988

Fig. 2.

The figures give a clue as to how, why and in what respects politics have influenced welfare state development in two societies. In conclusion, if we examine the political context within which welfare programmes were enacted in Korea and Taiwan, the following arguments can be proposed. Since it is the state which decides the timing of the enactment and enforcement of specific welfare policies, the ultimate political responsibility of running the welfare system belongs to the state. And, when the state has introduced welfare programs in the middle of political crisis, and has maintained them at vast costs, welfare programs are basically designed to secure political and social support from the population.

In this regard, then, existing accounts<sup>69</sup> about the development of Third World welfare systems are seriously challenged, and Statist theory, as an alternative conceptual framework, provides a more balanced view.

NOTES

1 According to the OECD, Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs) are defined as "fast growing of the level and share of industrial employment, an enlargement of export market shares in manufactures and a rapid relative reduction in the per capita income gap separating them from the advanced industrial countries." See, OECD, *The Impact of the NICs on Production and Trade in Manufactures* (OECD, Paris, 1979). Undoubtedly, it would be very hard to make a definite list of NICs because different indicators include different countries. However, the following countries are normally referred to as NICs: Brazil, Mexico, South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Spain. See, B. Crow and A. Thomas, *Third World Atlas* (Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1983), pp.48-9.

- 2 N. Chow, "Social Security Provision in Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea: A Comparative Analysis", a working paper presented to the Social Administration Association, 1985.
- 3 This "parochialism" or "ethnocentrism" has been severely criticised from the outset. For more details, refer to R. Pinker, *Social Theory and Social Policy* (Heinemann, London, 1971); R. Mishra, *Society and Social Policy* (Macmillan, London, 1981); P. Townsend, *Sociology and Social Policy* (Allen Lane, London, 1975).
- 4 Refer to the voluminous working papers, articles and books of J. Midgley, H. Jones, M. Hardiman and S. McPherson. Actually it is true that before they raised research questions about Third World welfare systems, working papers conducted by international organisations such as United Nations and World Bank can be evaluated as simple fact-finding surveys.
- 5 These three schools have been widely accepted as the mainstream theories of development studies. However, different scholars of opposing ideological and theoretical standpoints may replace them with new schools of thought. For example, Laite presents four mainstream frameworks in the sociology of development: developmentalism, dependency, modes of production and political economy in P. F. Lesson and M. M. Minogue (eds), *Perspectives on Development: Cross-disciplinary Theme in Development Studies* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1988).
- 6 T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970).
- 7 *Ibid*, p.10.
- 8 D. Hunt, *Economic Theories of Development: An analysis of competing paradigms* (Hemel Hempstead, 1989), p.2.
- 9 It is in this regard that paradigm change is brought about by either a logical experiment or by a judgement, belief or subjective choice. See M. Havey, *Explanation of Geography* (Edward Arnold, London, 1969) and R. Young and J. Petch, "The Methodological Limitations of Kuhn's Model of Science", *Discussion Papers in Geography* 8 (University of Salford, May 1978).
- 10 Aidan Foster-Carter, "From Rostow to Gunder Frank: Conflicting Paradigms in the Analysis of Underdevelopment," *World Development*, 4:3 (March 1976), p.170; T. Kuhn, *op. cit.* p.xi.

- 11 Voluminous criticisms commonly indicate a much more rigid interpretation of paradigms, as well as vagueness about the nature of the rules that the scientific community uses. See D. Hunt, *op. cit.* Ch. 1, and R. Young and J. Petch, *op. cit.* See also I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave (eds), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1970). Thus Kuhn, in the 1970 edition of his work, modifies his original view that mature sciences were dominated by a single school of thought. He recognises the possibility of compatibility between paradigms in mature sciences. However, it can be assumed that there remains huge differences in the possibility of compatibility between social science and natural science.
- 12 Kuhn, *Ibid*, p.170.
- 13 Kuhn, *Ibid*, p.169.
- 14 Foster-Carter claims that his paper is the first attempt to apply Kuhn's paradigm change to development studies. See *Ibid*, p.168.
- 15 *Ibid*. p.177.
- 16 *Ibid*. p.176.
- 17 It is widely accepted that André Gunder Frank is pioneer of the dependency theory. See, for example, D. Booth, "André Gunder Frank: an introduction and appreciation," in I. Oxaal, *et al* (eds), *Beyond the Sociology of Development: Economy and Society in Latin America and Africa* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1975) and D. Hulme and M. Turner, *Sociology and Development* (Harvest Wheatsheaf, London, 1990), particularly chapter 3. Amongst Frank's influential works, "The Development of Underdevelopment," *Monthly Review*, 18:4 (September 1966), is particularly important because his five hypotheses provided the basis for subsequent development of *Dependencia*.
- 18 See R. Chilcote, "A Question of Dependency," *Latin American Research Review*, 13:2 (1978), pp.55-68.
- 19 Foster-Carter, *op. cit.* p.176.
- 20 *Ibid*. p. 177.
- 21 P. Evans, *Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil* (Princeton University Press, Princeton) 1978.

- 22 P. Evans, *ibid.*
- 23 See H. Lim, *Dependent Development in the World System: The Case of South Korea, 1963-1979* (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Harvard University, 1982); T. Gold, *Dependent Development in Taiwan* (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Harvard University, 1981). See also S. Kim, *The State, Public Policy & NIC Development* (Dae Young Moonwhasa [Tae'yŏng munhwasal], Seoul, 1988), pp.12-19.
- 24 Mimeographed copy, *United Nations Development Decade: Proposals for action*, 1962. See also C. Cockburn, "The Role of Social Security in Development," *International Social Security Review*, No. 3/4 (1980), pp.337-358.
- 25 The Independent Commission on International Development Issues (the Brandt Report), *North-South: A Programme for Survival* (Pan Books, London, 1980), p.48.
- 26 Lesson and Nixon, "Development economics and the state," in Lesson and Minogue (eds), *Perspectives on Development: Cross-disciplinary themes in development* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1988).
- 27 A. Kohli, *et al.*, "Inequality in the Third World: An Assessment of Competing Explanations," *Comparative Political Studies*, 17/3 (Oct 1984).
- 28 *Ibid.* p.289.
- 29 As far as the distribution structure of Korea is concerned, Kuznet's hypothesis, which shows how inequality is deepened in the initial phase of industrialisation, and how at a certain level of industrialisation it is improved, could be applied. For details of the income distributions of Korea and Taiwan, refer to *Social Indicators in Korea* (National Bureau of Statistics, Economic Planning Bureau, Seoul, 1990); *Han'guk kwa Taemane ūi sanūp kujowa kyōngje sōnggwa (Industrial Structure and Economic Achievement of Korea and Taiwan)*, 2nd ed. (KIET, Seoul, 1989); *Taiwan Economic Statistics* (Overall Planning Department, CEPD, Taipei, 1990); *Statistical Abstract of Interior of the Republic of China* (Department of Statistics, Ministry of Interior, Taipei, 1990). The Gini coefficient of developed countries varies as follows: Australia (1973-4) 0.300, Austria (1974) 0.413, Canada (1977) 0.402, Britain (1977-8), 0.372, U.S.A (1978) 0.364. Source: *Social Indicators in Korea* (National Bureau of Statistics, Economic Planning Bureau, Seoul, 1990), pp.386-7.
- 30 Bruce Cumings, "The origins and development of the Northeast Asian political economy: industrial sectors, product

- cycles, and political consequences," *International Organisation*, 38/1 (Winter 1984), p.1.
- 31 What is more, their economic development has been more and more highly appraised compared with the frustrated economic situations of developing countries where the "promises of developmentalism" have never been realised. See, for example, C. Clark, *Taiwan's Development: Implications for Contending Political Economy Paradigms* (Greenwood Press, New York, 1989), p.18.
- 32 See T. Skocpol, *et al.* (eds), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985).
- 33 Aidan Foster-Carter, "The Myth of South Korea," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, (Aug 1989), pp.46-7.
- 34 D. Hulme and M. Turner, *op. cit.* pp.216-7. For more details, see D. Booth, "Marxism and development sociology: interpreting the impasse," *World Development*, 13/7 (1985); L. Sklair, "Transcending the impasse: metatheory, theory, and empirical research in the sociology of development," *World Development*, 16/6 (1988); P. Vandergeest and F. Buttel, "Marx, Weber, and development sociology: beyond the impasse," *World Development*, 16/6 (1988).
- 35 B. Berberroglu, "Toward a Theory of State Capitalist Development in the Third World," *International Review of Modern Sociology*, 9, p.20. Wallerstein argues that weak state in the periphery and strong state in the core enables the latter to enforce relations of unequal exchange over the former. See, I. Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World Economy* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1979).
- 36 According to Koo, three conditions in Third World countries contribute to the autonomy of the state: "the peripheral economies typically contain more than one mode of production;" "there is a historical condition that is related to a strong bureaucracy in those Third World countries that had colonial experiences;" "a relatively new pattern of dependent development in the periphery of the world capitalist economy has also strengthened the role of the states in peripheral (and semi-peripheral) nations." See H. Koo, "World System, Class, and State in Third World Development: Towards an Integrative Framework of Political Economy," *Sociological Perspectives*, 27/1 (Jan 1984), 43-4.
- 37 A. Kohli, *The State and Development in the Third World* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1986) p.17.

- 38 L. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1985), p.18.
- 39 Cline argues "it is seriously misleading to hold up the East Asian G-4 as a model for development because that model almost certainly cannot be generalised without provoking protectionist response..." See W. Cline, "Can the East Asian Model of Development Be Generalized?" *World Development*, 10/2 (1982), p.89.
- 40 D. Hulme and M. Turner, *op. cit.* p.220.
- 41 *Ibid*, p.220.
- 42 *Ibid*, p.220.
- 43 For instance, the Northern area of China in the 11th century produced 125,000 tons of iron per annum, which was far more than the iron output of Britain in the 18th century when it began to industrialise. Along with the most powerful iron-making capacities, the Ming dynasty had the strongest military force. Moreover, paper money was widely circulated in markets, and foreign trade was actively carried out with neighbouring countries such as Korea, Japan, South Asia and East Africa. See P. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (Unwin & Hyman, London, 1988), pp.4-9.
- 44 *Ibid*.
- 45 C. Clark, *op. cit.*, p.35.
- 46 See, for example, M. Weber, *The Religion of China* (George Allen & Unwin, London, 1951), chapter VI.
- 47 J. Kwōn, mimeographed copy.
- 48 *Ibid*.
- 49 J. Petras, "State Capitalism and the Third World," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 6/4 (1976); B. Berberoglu, "Toward a Theory of State Capitalist Development in the Third World," *International Review of Modern Sociology*, 9 (1979).
- 50 R. Duvall and J. Freeman, "The State and Dependent Capitalism," *International Studies Quarterly*, 25/1 (March 1981).
- 51 R. Tlemcani, *State and Revolution in Algeria* (Zed Books, London, 1986).

- 52 Cumings, *op. cit.*
- 53 S. Kim, *op. cit.*
- 54 N. Chow, *op. cit.*
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- 60 R. Mishra, *The Welfare State in Crisis: Social Thought and Social Change* (Wheatsheaf Books, Sussex, 1984), chapter 1. See also S. Ringen, *The Possibility of Politics: A Study in the Political Economy of the Welfare State* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1987), chapter 3.
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- 69 Mishra clearly summarizes the different approaches to welfare into five types: Welfare as Social Reform (Social Administration or Piecemeal Social Engineering), Welfare as Citizenship, Industrialisation and Social Welfare (Convergence Theory or Technological Determinism), Functionalist View, and Marxist Perspective. R. Mishra (1981), *op. cit.*

## THE EXCAVATION OF SONGGUNGNI SHELL MIDDENS ON ANMYŎN ISLAND, KOREA

DEOG-IM AN

### The Environment of the Island

Anmyŏn island lies just off the central west coast of the Korean peninsula, about 150km southwest from Seoul (Fig.1). It was originally a small peninsula attached to the mainland, allowing people and animals easy access to the area via a land route. In the 17th century, during the Chosŏn dynasty, it was artificially made into an island when a canal was cut at the top of the small peninsula to facilitate sea transport. The island remained cut off from the mainland until the construction of a bridge in 1970.

Currently, the island's total area is about 87.96 square km. It is 6km wide and 22km long. Geologically, the island is composed of mainly Pre-Cambrian quartzite and quartz schist. The topography is hilly, but 60% of the island is today less than 50m above sea level. The highest point is 97m high. The coastline is ria-type with a total length of

181.8km and, due to high tidal fluctuations, a broad mud flat has developed around the island. This has been and remains important to island fisheries, though in recent years much of the coastal area has become rice plantation thanks to reclamation work.

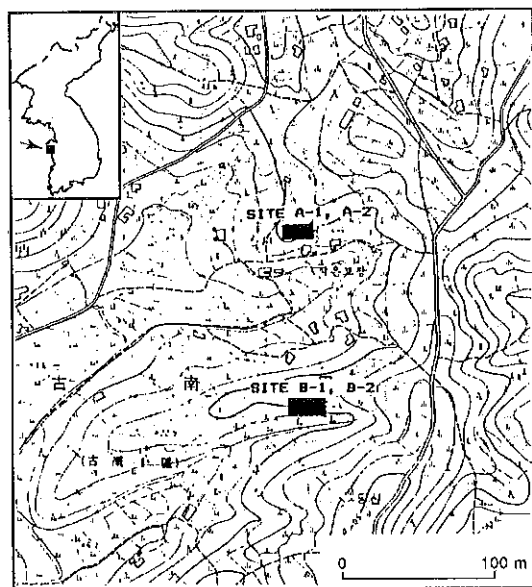


Fig. 1. Distribution of the Konam-ri shell midden sites.

### Excavation Campaigns in 1988 and 1989

In 1983, Hanyang University Museum surveyed the southern part of Anmyŏn as part of a project investigating prehistoric culture in the western coastal area of Korea. Amongst other settlements, they studied Songgungni, Changgongni, Nudongni and Shinyari; they discovered prehistoric and early historic sites including 13 shell middens (Kim 1983).

After this, the museum began a project to investigate the island's prehistoric culture. The project began in 1988 and has so far concentrated on shell middens at Songgungni in the southern part of the island. In 1988, two shell middens were excavated, one Neolithic (midden A-2) and one Bronze Age (midden A-1), both part of midden complex A (Kim and Shim 1990: Fig. 1). In 1989, two more Bronze Age middens were excavated (B-1 and B-2), located about 250m south from midden complex A (Kim and An 1990: Fig. 1).

The project aimed to obtain the following information: i) the cultural sequences of the middens; ii) a quantification of midden deposits and food resources in terms of reconstructing the subsistence economy, diet, population and duration of midden formation period; iii) the subsistence pattern—evidence of farming activities, the seasonal exploitation of food resources and so on; iv) the function of the middens and human activities associated with them; v) evidence of the past environment at the sites.

### Midden Complex B

Among the excavated middens, I will discuss middens B-1 and B-2.

The sites lie on a hill about 25m-27m above sea-level that extends westward. On this hill there are four shell middens in addition to B-1 and B-2. Together, the six constitute midden complex B. Middens B-1 and B-2 are located at the most easterly point among the cluster, about 1.5km from the present coastline. Before land reclamation, however, they would have been very close to the sea. Further, parts of middens B-1 and B-2 have been disturbed by farming activities, and one local farmer told us that the area around the sites had recently been made into fields by the removal of trees.

#### i) Excavation procedures

The sites were first dissected by a grid system of, basically, 3m by 3m squares separated at 1m baulk intervals to allow identification of stratigraphic profiles. Bulk and column samples of midden deposits were collected for analysis from the baulks and from some areas in the excavation squares. The purpose of collecting samples was to obtain data not only on the overall composition of midden deposits, but also on the extent to which the composition of deposits varied horizontally and vertically through time. During the excavation, dry sieving with a sieve of 3mm gauze was used to obtain small fragments of artefacts and remains of animals and plants which could be easily missed during the processes of trowelling.

#### ii) Midden B-1

The main area of the midden which remained had a virtually semi-oval outline estimated as about 13m by 7.5m (Fig.2). The thickness of deposits was varied but ran to a depth of 70cm.

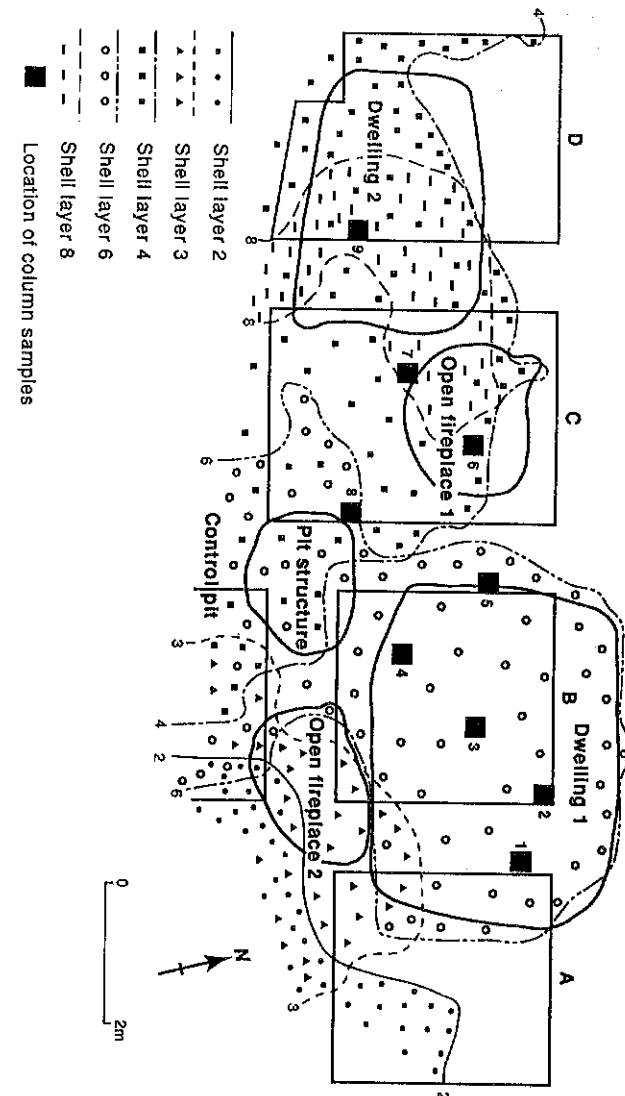


Fig.2. Plan of the excavation squares (A-D and control pit) of midden B-1 and structures (modified from Kim and An 1990:17).



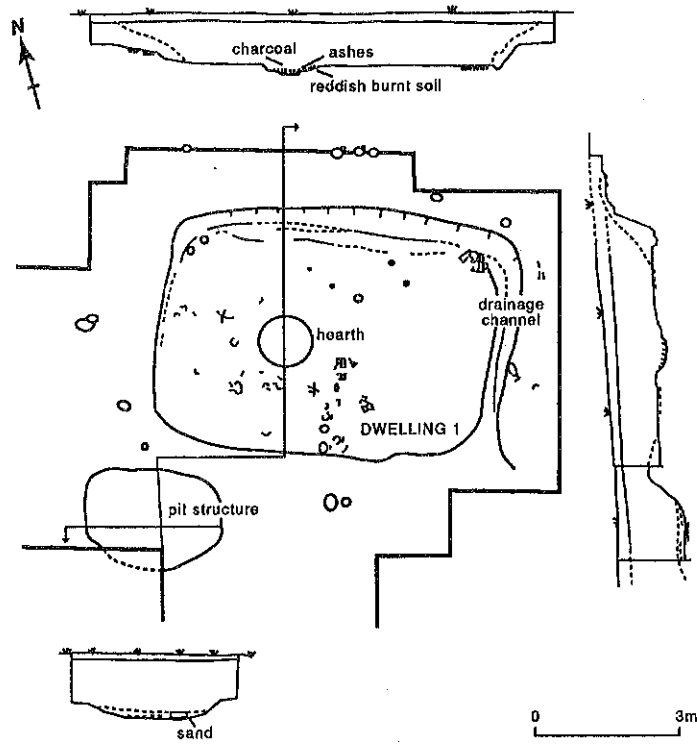


Fig.3. Plan of dwelling 1 and pit structure beneath midden B-1 (from Kim and An 1990:40).

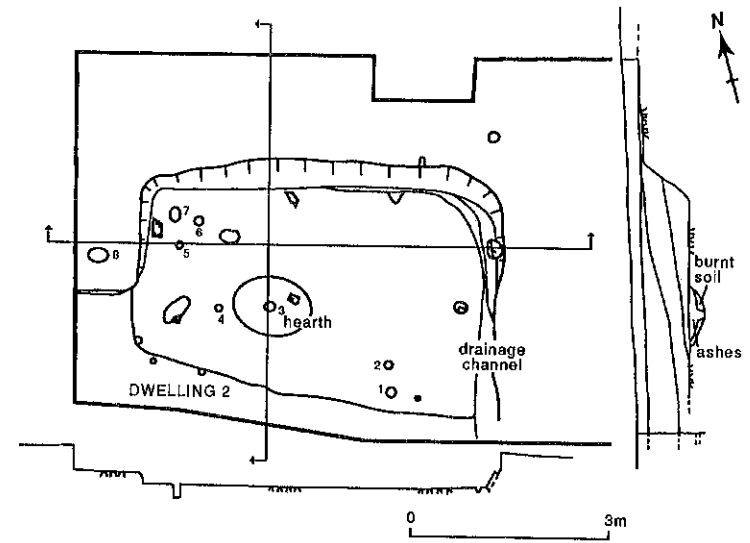


Fig.4. Plan of dwelling 2 beneath midden B-1 (from Kim and An 1990:45).

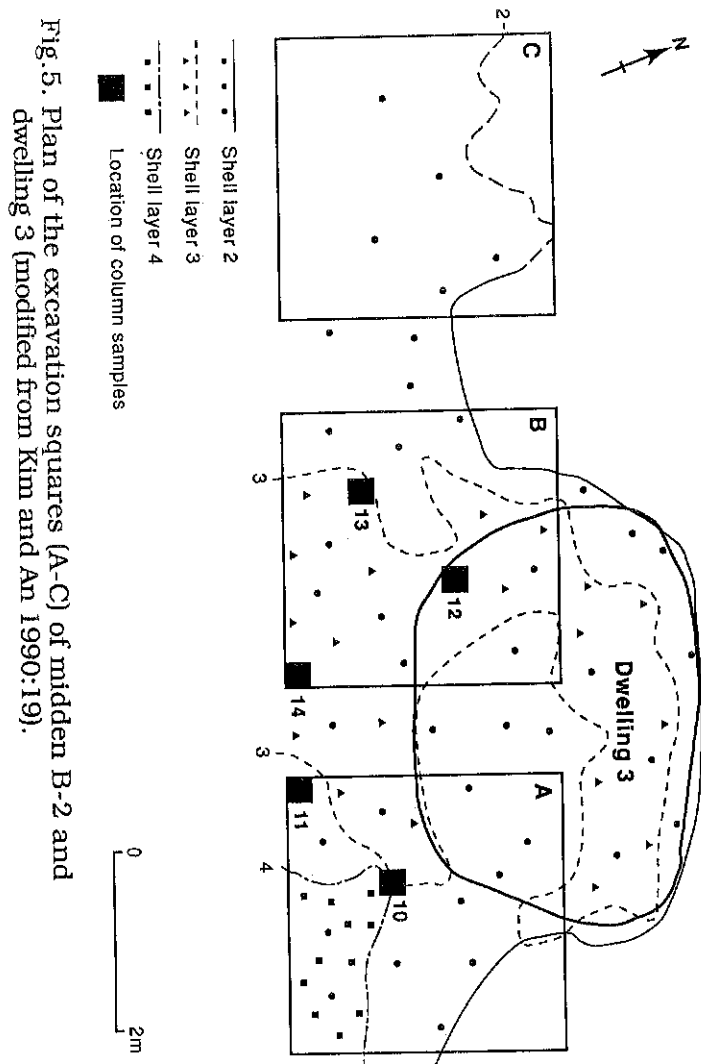


Fig. 5. Plan of the excavation squares (A-C) of midden B-2 and dwelling 3 (modified from Kim and An 1990:19).

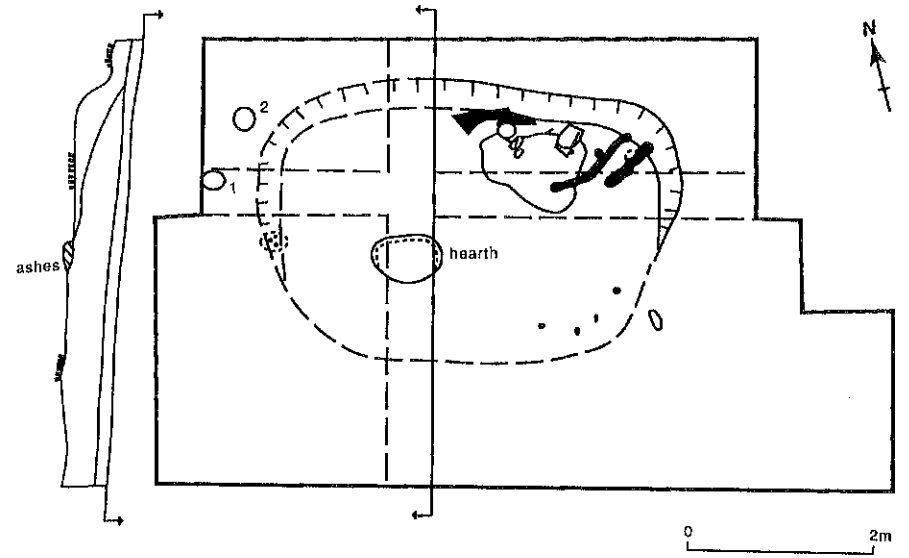


Fig. 6. Plan of dwelling 3 beneath midden B-2 (from Kim and An 1990:49).

Two pit dwelling sites were found beneath the midden (see Fig.2-4). Dwelling 1 was rectangular in plan and measured 4.7m by 3.1m (Fig.3). The depth of the pit from the land surface as it had been in pre-historic times was about 56cm at the north wall and 10cm at the south wall. The difference results from the sloping land surface. A single pit hearth measuring 70cm in diameter and 10cm in depth was found beside the centre of the floor filled with ashes and charcoal. The bottom of the hearth and the area around it were fire-hardened. Surrounding this there were also concentrations of broken pot sherds, arrowheads and deer antlers, indicating that this area may have been the center for activities such as food preparation, tool-making and so on. An L-shaped drainage channel on the floor was uncovered inside the dwelling along the east and north walls. This was filled with a matrix of ash, charcoal and soil, and measured about 10cm to 20cm in width and 3cm to 6cm in depth. Twenty holes of various sizes distributed irregularly were found in the floor and outside walls. Some discovered near the south wall, lying at right angles to the wall, might be related to an entrance structure. Judging from the amount of charcoal on the north wall and the floor, this dwelling may have been abandoned due to a fire.

Dwelling 2 was located about 4m west of dwelling 1 (Figs 2 and 4), dug out of the prehistoric land surface, sloping from north to southwest, and L-shaped in section. The depth of the pit from the surface was about 40cm in the north wall, but shallower towards the south wall, though the trace and depth of the south wall was not clear. This may have been because the south wall was built on the surface. The house was rectangular in plan, and measured about 3.5m by possibly 2.4m. An oval-shaped pit hearth was found in the centre of the floor, measuring 70cm by 80cm and with a depth of about 10cm. A hole 10cm in diameter and 7cm in depth was uncovered at the centre of this, and a fire-fractured stone was found east of this hole.

Several scattered holes were also discovered in the floor and the outside walls. One big hole, located about 45cm to the west of the hearth, 16cm by 34cm in size and 20cm in depth, may have been used as a storage pit. A similar drainage structure to that found at dwelling 1 was also uncovered along the north and east walls, measuring between 4cm and 10cm in width and between 2cm and 6cm in depth.

In addition, a pit structure was found about 60cm southwest of dwelling 1 (Figure 2). The pit was oval in shape and measured 190cm by 150cm. The depth was about 40cm at the north wall, but became shallower to the south. It ran along the southern limit of the prehistoric land surface due to sloping from north to south. It was filled from bottom to top with ash, charcoal and shells. The bottom was hardened by fire and red in colour. The function was not clear, but perhaps it was used for a fire associated with dwelling 1. In addition to this, two open fire-places were found, one in an area between dwelling 1 and 2, and the other in an area above the south wall of dwelling 1 (Figure 2).

### iii) Midden B-2

Midden B-2 was found on the lower slope about 20m west of midden B-1. The main area of the midden which remained was estimated to be about 13m by 5.6m, and almost semi-oval in outline (Figure 5). The thickness of deposits varied up to a depth of 70cm in the centre, but were thinner towards the outer limit.

One pit dwelling was found beneath this midden. It was almost rectangular, and was estimated to be about 4.1m by 2.8m in size (Figure 6). The dwelling penetrated the prehistoric land surface, tilting from north to south at a depth of about 65cm at the north wall, but becoming

shallower towards the south wall. There was no clear trace of the south wall, which again suggests this may have been built on the surface. An oval-shaped pit hearth was uncovered slightly to the south of the floor's centre which measured about 80cm by 50cm and approximately 10cm in depth. This was filled with ash. A lump of charred millet was also uncovered at the north-eastern corner and wood charcoal, possibly the remains of burnt post-holes or roofing materials, was found on the north wall. Judging from this and the heat-hardened floor, this dwelling may also have been abandoned due to a fire.

#### iv) Artefacts

Two kinds of pottery, plain and red-burnished, were recovered. The shape of the former can generally be divided into three main types: deep flower-pots (Figure 7.1-4), bowls (Figure 7.5-6), and jars (Figure 7.7). Some of the pottery shaped as flower-pots and jars had notched stripes on the rims (Figure 7.2-4). The red-burnished vessels were all broken (Figure 8), but it was possible to infer the shapes based on surviving rims and base sherds. These vessels can be divided into jar-shaped vessels with round or flat bases and bowl-shaped vessels with flat bases.

Various polished stone tools were found which may have had different functions such as hunting, farming, food processing, wood working and bone working. These tools included saddle querns (Figure 9.1), rubbing stones, arrowheads (Figure 9.2-5), adzes including grooved adzes (Figure 9.6, 9.7 and 9.11), chisels (Figure 9.8), daggers, a mace head (Figure 9.9), hammer stones, stone tools with central grooves on both flat sides (Figure 9.10), and spindle whorls.

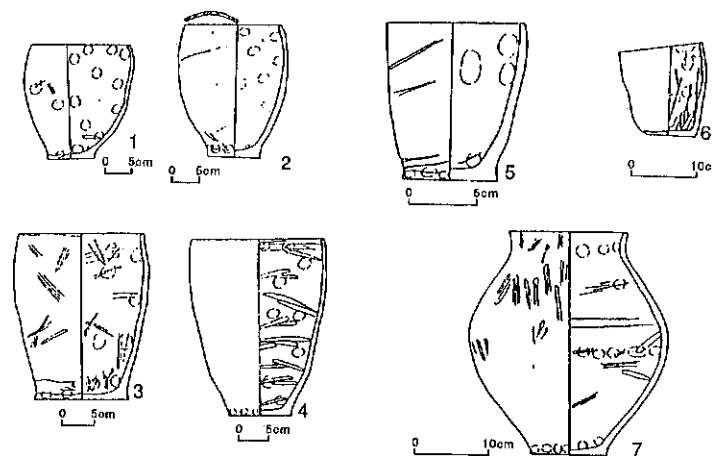


Fig. 7. Plain pottery from midden B-1 (5 and 7) and dwellings 1 (3 and 4) and 3 (1, 2 and 6) (from Kim and An 1990).

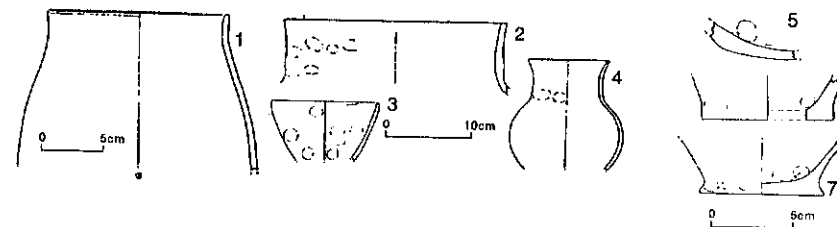


Fig. 8. Red-burnished pottery from middens B-1 (1, 3, 5-7) and B-2 (2, 4 and 9) (from Kim and An 1990).

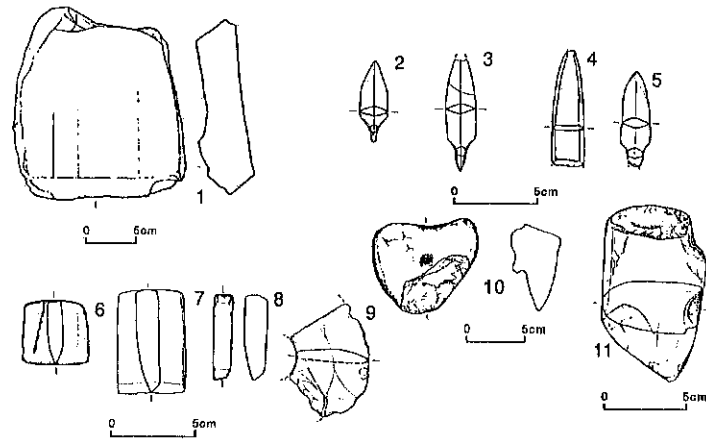


Fig.9. Stone tools from middens B-1 (2-9) and B-2 (10 and 11) and dwelling 2 (1) (from Kim and An 1990).

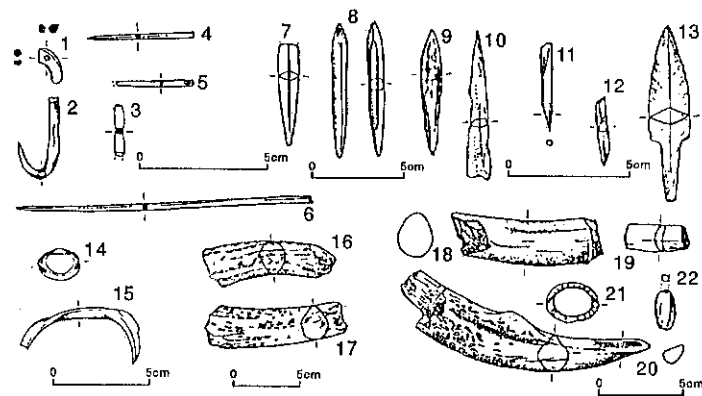


Fig.10. Jade, shell, bone, tusk and deer antler objects from middens B-1 (1-10 and 12) and B-2 (14 and 15) and dwellings 1 (11 and 13) and 3 (16 and 17) (from Kim and An 1990).

Among these tools, arrowheads were particularly abundant. Around 60 polished arrowheads were discovered, mostly with stems and diamond-shaped in cross section, though some were hexagonal. Schist was the most important material for arrowheads followed by slate; a few were made of phyllite and sandstone. A comma-shaped green jade ornament was found (Figure 10.1) which was almost rectangular in cross section and had a biconical hole perforated from both sides.

Deer antler objects such as spearhead-like points and arrowheads (Figure 10.7-9 and 10.13), and several worked antlers (Figure 10.16-20) were discovered. Two fish-hooks were recovered, one complete, one broken (Figure 10.2-3), made of wild boar tusk. Polished bone objects included points (Figure 10.10), drills (Figure 10.11-12) and needles (Figure 10.4-6). Some needles were made from deer antlers or the tail spines of rays. Five shell objects were recovered. Two were made of olive shells (*Oliva mustelina*, Figure 10.22), and the umbo area of the shells was perforated and ground. Two other were bead-like ornaments made of limpet (*Acmaea pallida*; Figure 10.21) and ark (*Tegillarca granosa*; Figure 10.23). The fifth was made of an ark shell (*Scapharca broughtonii*; Figure 10.14) and was broken, but it had once resembled a bracelet in shape.

#### v) Natural finds

The middens consisted of about 70% shells 30% soil. Oyster shells (*Crassostrea gigas*) were the most abundant among the shell species followed by Venus clams (*Tapes philippinarum*) and rock shells (*Rapana verosa* and *Thais clavigera*). Most uncovered shells come from species which mainly inhabit inner tidal zones, which indicates a heavy dependence on this zone for collection. As for plant remains, a charred and hulled japonica-type rice grain

(*Oryza sativa*), a charred peach seed, and a lump of charred millet were found, along with an imprint of japonica-type rice on the flat bottom of a pot sherd which suggested rice cultivation.

Animal remains of mammals, fish, birds, snakes, frogs, turtles and sea-urchins and crabs were all recovered. Among mammals, deer (*Cervus nippon*) and wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) were most common (Table I). The hunting season of these animals is now under study using the growth lines of teeth. Wild pigs were likely hunted during autumn according to this, for many of the mandibles show prestage of the first molar. Twenty fish species have been identified (Table II). Among these, sea bream is most common. Based on a study of their scales, they were likely caught in spring, around May. Among the six identified bird species (Table III), ducks are notable. They migrate into Korea in the late autumn and stay until the following spring, indicating the period during which they would have been caught.

TABLE I

## IDENTIFIED MAMMALS FROM MIDDENS B-1 AND B-2

| Species                              | B-1 | B-2 |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| <i>Sus scrofa</i>                    | +   | +   |
| <i>Cervus nippon</i>                 | +   | +   |
| Canidae                              | +   |     |
| <i>Canis familiaris</i>              |     | +   |
| <i>Nyctereutes procyonoides kor.</i> | +   |     |
| <i>Vulpes vulpes peculiosa</i>       | +   |     |
| Felidae                              | +   |     |
| <i>Felis bengalensis manchuria</i>   | +   |     |
| <i>Meles meles</i>                   |     | +   |
| <i>Rattus sp.</i>                    | +   | +   |

TABLE II

## IDENTIFIED FISH SPECIES FROM MIDDENS B-1 AND B-2

| Species                         | B-1 | B-2 |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|
| <i>Chrysophrys major</i>        | +   | +   |
| <i>Acanthopagrus schlegelii</i> | +   |     |
| <i>Argyrops bleekeri</i>        | +   |     |
| <i>Lateolabrax japonicus</i>    | +   | +   |
| Rajiformes                      | +   | +   |
| <i>Paralichthys olivaceus</i>   | +   | +   |
| <i>Holorhinus tobjei</i>        | +   | +   |
| Squalidae                       | +   |     |
| Traktidae                       | +   |     |
| Squatnidae                      | +   | +   |
| Tetraodontidae                  | +   | +   |
| <i>Fugu pardalis</i>            | +   |     |
| <i>Sphoeroides rubripes</i>     | +   |     |
| <i>Platycephalus indicus</i>    | +   |     |
| <i>Nibeac imbricata</i>         | +   |     |
| <i>Ilisha elongata</i>          | +   |     |
| <i>Argyrosomus argentatus</i>   | +   |     |
| <i>Astroconger myrtaster</i>    | +   |     |
| <i>Sardinia melanosticta</i>    | +   | +   |
| <i>Engraulis japonica</i>       | +   | +   |
| unidentified species            | +   | +   |

TABLE III

## IDENTIFIED BIRD SPECIES FROM MIDDENS B-1 AND B-2

| Species                        | B-1 | B-2 |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Anatidae                       | +   | +   |
| Corvidae                       | +   |     |
| Gaviidae                       | +   |     |
| <i>Milvus migrans lineatus</i> | +   |     |
| <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>     | +   | +   |
| <i>Sireptopelta orientalis</i> | +   |     |
| unidentified species           | +   |     |

### Discussion

I have sketched the second excavation campaign of the Songgungni shell midden on Anmyŏn Island. The excavation is significant in two main respects. Firstly, the middens can be dated to the Bronze Age in terms of artefact assemblages. Because few Bronze Age shell middens had previously been discovered in Korea, it had been thought that the people of the time had not depended on shell foods. There have been suggestions that middens were covered by a rise in sea level. Because there is no evidence of significant sea-level changes, and since many contemporaneous shell middens have now been discovered on Anmyŏn Island (four were excavated in 1988, 1989 and 1990), the assumptions are not acceptable. We can assume that Bronze Age middens may yet be found elsewhere. Secondly, the Songgungni middens have revealed a great number of animal bone artefacts which can help us understand the function of the middens themselves. Very few animal bones have been recovered from shell middens on the western coast of Korea compared to middens on the south coast, and so it has been argued that there may be functional differences or cultural differences relating to food preferences separating the two regions. The excavations at Songgungni makes it clear that this distinction may relate to a functional difference between middens. There were plenty of bones recovered at Songgungni, which suggests that the shell middens may be related to home-base middens rather than simple shell-fish processing middens. This interpretation can be supported by the various kinds of everyday stone tools, pot sherds and food remains recovered.

Finally, the similarity of artefacts found in middens and houses suggests there was no great time difference between the sites; just after the abandonment of the dwellings, the middens might have rapidly formed above

them. Judging from the similarity of artefacts in their composition and similarity of dwelling sites in their structure, these sites seem to parallel dwelling sites from Puyo, dated to about the 5th century B.C. (Kang *et al* 1979; Chi *et al* 1986; An *et al* 1987). Deep flower-pot shaped vessels, either with or without notched-stripe rim patterns have, however, not been discovered at Songgungni (where only one rim sherd was found). This remains as a problem for interpreting the relation between Songgungni and Puyo sites, and further study is required. It may, nonetheless, be possible to interpret the Songgungni sites as belonging to a marginal area of the central culture which retained earlier pottery traditions such as the deep flower-pot vessels, yet also adopted the later Songgungni type pottery. The Songgungni sites are, therefore, very important in understanding the process of development in the past cultures of the central-west part of Korea.

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## SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN A MEGALITHIC TOMB SOCIETY IN KOREA

BONG WON KANG

The focus of my paper is a reconstruction of the social structure of a megalithic tomb society in Korea's South Kyöngsang Province (Figure 1). I examine the archaeological record to track the sociopolitical level and attempt to determine whether tombs were associated with a complex social organization—a chiefdom—or egalitarianism.

My examination concentrates on three major themes: i) chronological problems relating to the Korean Bronze Age and megalithic tombs; ii) general aspects of Korean megalithic tomb cultures; iii) the social organization of megalithic tomb society. In order to address the third theme I have conducted mortuary analysis, primarily based on artefact assemblages of grave goods and physical labour expenditures for the construction of megalithic tombs.

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*Editorial Note:* The chronology of the Korean Bronze Age remains fluid and controversial. Korean scholars tend to date it to 900-400 B.C., but Riotto has recently argued there are two distinct periods, Bronze Age 1 (600-300 B.C.) and Bronze Age 2 (coinciding with the beginning of the Iron Age, 300-100 B.C.). See Maurizio Riotto, *The Bronze Age in Korea. Occasional Papers 1.* Kyoto: Italian School of East Asian Studies (1989).



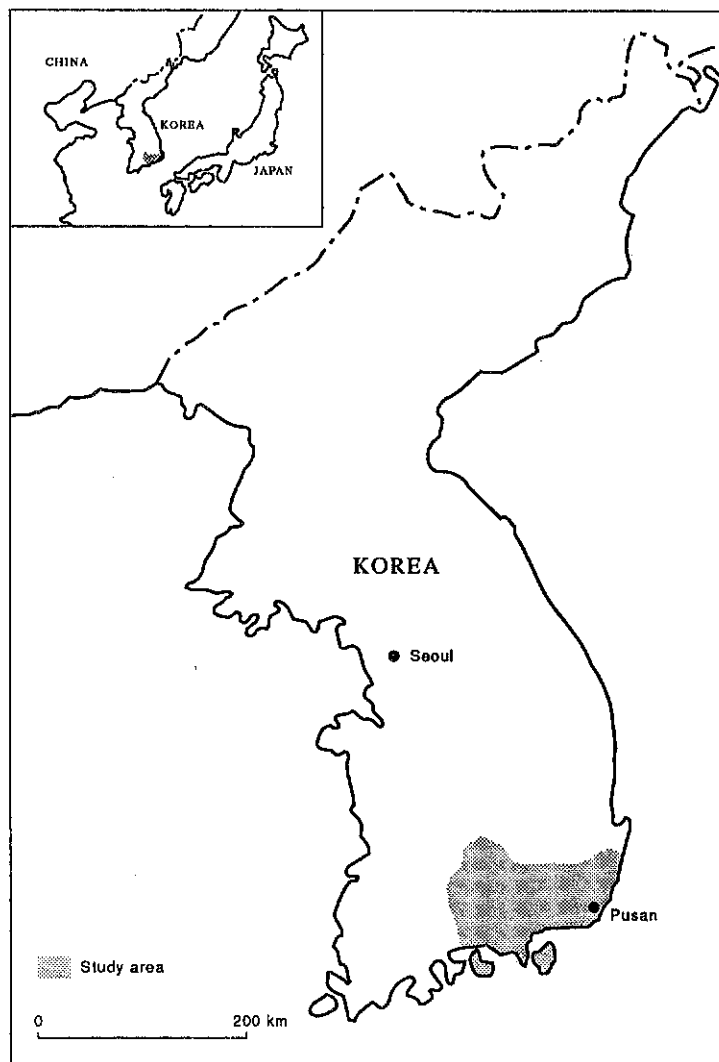


Fig. 1. The study area in the Korean Peninsula.

## II

Almost all Korean and Japanese archaeologists believe that megalithic tombs are one of the most important burial types found in the Bronze Age, although other types such as stone cists, pit burials, and jar coffins also occur. Statistical evidence relating the megalithic tomb society to the Bronze Age is, however, unconvincing. So far, less than 20 of the more than 1,000 excavated megalithic tombs in the entire Korean peninsula have produced *in situ* bronze artefacts. Thus, the question which must be addressed is straightforward: if no bronze is found as grave goods, or if no bronze artefacts are recovered in any contemporary habitation areas dating back to the period of the megalithic tomb society, how can the megalithic culture be considered part of the Bronze Age?

Korean megalithic tombs generally yield few artefacts. What is found is most commonly lithic materials, such as polished stone arrowheads, stone daggers, and crescent-shaped stone knives. Clearly, these do not support the assumption that the megalithic tomb society was associated with the Bronze Age. Fewer than ten radiocarbon dates associated with Korean megalithic tombs have so far been determined (Nelson 1982: 113; Ch'oe 1982: 92). To make matters worse, as can be seen in Table I, there is a wide range of fluctuation within the dates. It appears that C14 dates are not conclusive in the establishment of tomb chronology, although 3 out of 4 fall in the first millennium B.C.

Based on recalibrated radiocarbon dating, Yi has argued that the chronology of tombs must be earlier than previously thought (1978: 37). Similarly, based on artefact assemblages, Kim Chŏngbae argues that tomb construction dates go back before the first millennium B.C. (1973: 186-

198). This suggests that megalithic tombs were established earlier than the Bronze Age.

### III

Megalithic tombs are distributed evenly over the whole Korean peninsula except in the northeastern tip, that is, except in North Hamgyŏng province. The existence of the same tomb style has been confirmed in Manchuria, in the Shantung peninsula of China and in the northwest of the Japanese island of Kyushu (see Figure 2).

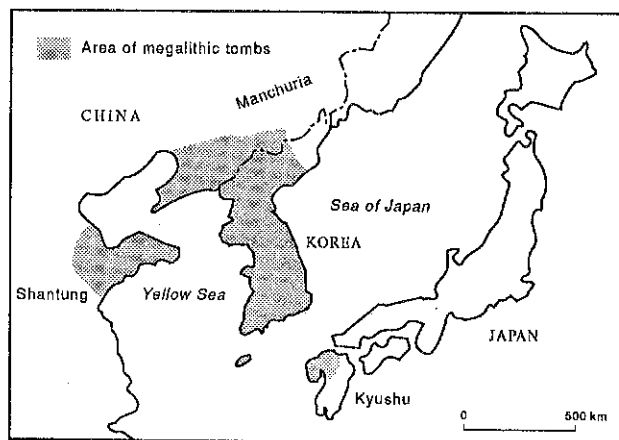


Fig.2. Distribution of megalithic tombs in Northeast Asia (after Joussaume 1988: 279).

**TABLE I**

**Carbon 14 dating of Korean megalithic tombs**

| Site                      | Features                        | Sample        | Date (BP) | Date (BC) | Lab.     |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Yangp'yŏng<br>Yangsuri    | Meg. tomb                       | charcoal      | 3900±200  |           | KAERI-95 |
| Yangp'yŏng<br>Sangjap'ori | Meg. tomb                       | charcoal      | 2170±60   | 290±120   | KAERI-91 |
| Jaech'on<br>Hwangsŏng     | Meg. tomb                       | human<br>bone | 2360±370  | 460±470   | GX-0555  |
| Paju<br>Oksŏngni          | Pit house<br>under<br>Meg. tomb | charcoal      | 2590±105  | 820±80    | GX-0544  |

Adopted from Nelson (1982: 113) and Choi (1983: 92)

Korean megalithic tombs are small (for examples, see Im *et al* 1987 and Cho 1979) when compared to European megalithic monuments. For instance, the mean length of capstones of recently excavated tombs is 1.71m, whereas that of cairns in Orkney, Scotland, is 24.37m. A few large megalithic tombs have been reported in the Korean peninsula (for example, one has a height of 4m, length 5.5m, width 4.5m, and weights of between 50 and 150 tons; Joussaume 1988: 278, 295; Kim Wŏnyong 1986: 95 and, as "Northern style," Lee Ki-baik 1986), but these are rare.

It has been suggested that European megalithic monuments functioned as more than just burial locations (Renfrew 1975: 199). Although Nelson (1982: 126) has suggested the possibility that the northern style of Korean megalithic tombs may have served as territorial markers rather than as burial monuments, most Korean and Japanese archaeologists agree that the basic function of the tombs was for burial.

Stone cists are not considered megalithic monuments. They have been regarded as a common burial type, dating to the same time period as the tombs. There may be a direct or indirect cultural relationship between these two different burial types, but there remain some chronological and contextual problems that will be explained later. For the sake of interpretation, I will introduce the basic characteristics of stone cists and their relationship with megalithic tombs. The most common form looks like a stone box. The funerary area is almost always underground and the small chamber tomb consists of stone slabs, of dry-stone or composite construction. The cist lies beneath a covering slab. Cists are very small; sometimes they are reminiscent of a secondary burial, although no cist containing human skeletal remains has been found (Chi 1984: 233).

The cists are evenly distributed throughout the Korean peninsula. Sometimes they exist at the same sites as megalithic tombs. Fewer cists have so far been investigated than megalithic tombs, for since almost all were constructed underground any remains are less visible on the surface than tombs. Some sampling biases are definitely related to the reported ratio of cists to tombs, so the total number of cists is probably greatly under-represented. The relationship between tombs and cists consequently needs clarification. Generally speaking, tombs are bigger than cists and may have required a larger labour force to build them. However, as I have noted, Korean megalithic tombs do not usually contain many grave goods, and those goods which have been recovered are in the main unimpressive artefacts such as broken pieces of pottery, polished stone daggers and projectile points. Rarely are jades discovered. Sometimes, stone artefacts such as polished stone daggers and arrowheads are associated with cists. More importantly, however, cists frequently yield exotic and elaborate grave goods such as bronze daggers, mirrors,

belts, and shield-shaped artefacts (J. B. Kim 1986: 209-223).

Some other questions should also be addressed. First, as megalithic tombs and stone cists have long been regarded as the predominant burial types in the Korean Bronze Age, their chronological relationship needs to be re-evaluated. Some claim that the cists predate the tombs. Because of their structural similarity, some have suggested that tombs developed out of the practice of building cists (eg, W. Y. Kim 1986: 96-97; Joussaume 1988: 279). According to Ch'oe (1982), both cists and tombs were contemporary burial forms in the Bronze Age. The tombs, however, appear to be earlier than cists, because of their artefact inventories (Choi 1983: 89-90, 98). Choi's inference seems intuitively more reasonable than explanations based on structural morphology, so the chronological span of megalithic tombs should extend back earlier than that of the cists.

The proposed relationship between the two types in terms of their respective socio-political context is also problematic. For instance, Choi states:

...the stone cists are greatly outnumbered by dolmens but yield artefacts which indicate much greater wealth and luxury. These artefacts include items such as bronze daggers, mirrors and shield-shaped artefacts, and thus indicate a highly-developed bronze casting technology as well as high social ranking in the individuals in whose grave they were placed ...We can note that *if stone cist builders were contemporary with dolmen builders, and if there were no conflicts between them, then apparently the stone cist builders were superior to the dolmen builders* in terms of prestige and technical advancement, and they may have assumed hereditary status as political or religious leaders [Choi 1983: 98-99; *my italics*].

Thus, when comparing the quality of bronze artefacts from cists with grave goods from tombs, it appears that the culture of the stone cist builders was more advanced than that of the megalithic tomb builders. Therefore, there is an

interpretive contradiction between the stone cist culture and the megalithic tomb culture in terms of the socio-political context. This may also mean that the tomb culture was not directly related to a ranked society.

If we are to prove that the tomb societies were organized at a chiefdom level, we must determine that the chronological order of tombs was earlier than that of cists. The two societies must be examined separately. If the two co-existed at the same time in Korea, I do not consider it possible to postulate that the tomb societies were chiefdoms.

#### IV

Sixteen out of 78 excavated tombs (20.5%) have produced one or more artefacts (Table II). If the broken sherds are excluded from the total inventories (since there is a possibility that natural and cultural transformations may have affected the intrusion of these sherds in the tombs), the number of artefacts deposited is much lower. In total, nine artefact types have been observed. No traded artefacts are reported. Although five jades were recovered from the Okpang 2 grave, it is unknown whether these were locally made or traded items. Unfortunately, no skeletal remains have been discovered, and so it is impossible to determine any association by sex or age. Differences in artefact quantity have been observed. Some individuals possessed a relatively large number of grave goods (Table III), yet these goods tend to be local not traded items. Milisauskas (1978) regards the polished stone artefacts as indicators of a ranked society:

Polished stone tools were probably valued as prestige items and functioned in the social and ideological systems of the culture rather than being mainly utilitarian woodworking tools... The polished stone tools that were deposited in graves required more time to manufacture than endscrapers

or other chipped-stone artefacts. [Milisauskas 1978: 114-115]

However, when stone artefacts are compared to bronze artefacts, there is a large qualitative difference. The processes of manufacturing bronze require techniques that are more sophisticated than those for stone.

**TABLE II**  
**Megalithic tomb site locations and grave goods**

| Site                            | Latitude | Longitude | No. of tombs excavated | No. with artefacts | Ref.                 |
|---------------------------------|----------|-----------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Pusan, Tongnae, Oryöndong       | 35°15'   | 129°07'   | 1                      | 0                  | Kim & Chöng 1973     |
| Ch'angwön, Chindong, Söngnaeri  | 35°07'   | 128°29'   | 1                      | 1                  | Pak 1958             |
| Chinyang, Taep'yöngni           | 35°13'   | 127°57'   | 14                     | 7                  | Cho 1979             |
| Koch'ang, Namha, Taeyari        | 35°38'   | 127°58'   | 4                      | 2                  | Im <i>et al</i> 1987 |
| Koch'ang, Namha, Murengni       | 35°39'   | 127°54'   | 33                     | 3                  | Im <i>et al</i> 1987 |
| Koch'ang, Namsang, Wölp'yöngni  | 35°37'   | 127°43'   | 3                      | 1                  | Im <i>et al</i> 1987 |
| Hapch'on, Taeb'yöng, Yokpyöngni | 35°32'   | 128°00'   | 16                     | 2                  | Im <i>et al</i> 1987 |
| Sanch'ong, Tansöng, Kangnuri    | 35°18'   | 127°58'   | 6                      | 0                  | Cho 1987             |
| Ch'angyöng, Changna, Usanni     | 35°27'   | 128°29'   | cluster                | 0                  | Kim & Yun 1967       |
| Changwön, Chinjon, Koganni      | 35°07'   | 128°55'   | cluster                | sherds             | Kim & Yun 1967       |

\*16 (20.5%) out of 78 tombs (excl. clusters) produced grave goods.

TABLE III

## Artefact inventories for Korean megalithic tombs

|                     | Pottery |   | Polished stone artefacts |    |   |   |   | Others |   | Total |
|---------------------|---------|---|--------------------------|----|---|---|---|--------|---|-------|
|                     | A       | B | C                        | D  | E | F | G | H      | I |       |
| Sôngnae#1 sherds    |         |   | 1                        |    |   |   |   |        |   | 1     |
| Okpang #2           |         | 1 | 1                        | 1  | 1 |   |   | 5      |   | 9     |
| Okpang #3           |         |   |                          |    |   | 1 |   |        |   | 1     |
| Okpang #7           |         |   |                          |    | 1 | 1 | 1 |        | 1 | 4     |
| Okpang #8           |         |   | 1                        |    | 1 |   |   |        |   | 2     |
| Okpang #9 sherds    |         |   |                          |    |   |   |   |        |   | 0     |
| Ohun #2             |         |   |                          |    | 1 |   |   |        |   | 1     |
| Ohun #5             |         |   |                          |    |   | 1 |   |        |   | 1     |
| Taeyari #1          |         |   | 1                        | 28 |   |   |   |        |   | 29    |
| Taeyari #2          |         |   | 1                        | 42 |   |   |   |        |   | 43    |
| Sanp'o #3           |         |   | 1                        | 1  |   |   |   |        |   | 2     |
| Sanp'o #8           |         |   | 1                        | 13 |   |   |   |        |   | 14    |
| Sanp'o #26          |         |   | 1                        | 1  |   |   |   |        |   | 2     |
| P'yôngch'on #2      |         |   | 1                        |    |   |   |   |        |   | 1     |
| Yôkp'yông #5 sherds |         |   | 1                        |    |   |   |   |        |   | 1     |
| Totals              |         | 1 | 10                       | 86 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 5      | 1 | 111   |

Key: A: plain  
B: decorated  
C: daggers  
D: arrowheads  
E: crescent knives  
F: chisels  
G: ground stone  
H: jade  
I: net sinkers

Although some distinctions in the quantity of grave goods has been noted, it remains difficult to argue that the tomb society was necessarily ranked. It is clear that "even in autonomous villages, chiefs may sometimes [have been] sufficiently honored or wealthy to be buried with sufficiently more and finer grave goods than anyone else" (Carneiro 1981: 53).

If the presence or absence of grave goods is a major criterion for determining whether or not a ranked society

existed, a number of speculative but important assumptions may be made. First, the tombs themselves were not necessarily reserved only for high status individuals (the chief and/or their family), but could also have been used by lower status individuals. Even if there was a ranked society associated with megalithic tombs, the tomb itself cannot be a symbol or direct indicator of the existence of a stratified society. Second, many Korean megalithic monuments have been reported, yet there are no descriptions of a standard "common people's" tomb style. Thus, it can be assumed that a sociopolitical hierarchy is not associated with tombs; rather tombs may have been a common burial type during the period.

## V

Expenditure of energy during the mortuary ritual has been regarded as a significant factor to identify the rank levels present in a society. A number of archaeologists (Binford 1971: 21; Peebles 1974; Tainter 1977: 332) agree that there is a strong positive correlation between the higher social status of a deceased individual and the disruption of normal community activities and greater amounts of corporate involvement in his or her funeral. According to Tainter, evidence of energy expenditure should consequently be reflected in burial facilities (the size and elaborateness of the internment) and grave goods. According to Peebles, the underlying assumption is that "persons who are treated differentially in life will be treated differentially in death" (1974: 68). Further, it has been argued that the amount of physical labour required to construct megalithic tombs is a good indicator of the existence of a hierarchical society. If this is true, a rough estimation of the volume and weight of the capstone in relation to labour expenditure might provide information in

regard to social positions and differentiation in the megalithic tomb society.

It has been suggested that 15 to 20 men are required to pull a 1 ton weight, so even a modest 3 ton to 6 ton stone would require approximately 80 to 100 men working co-operatively (Hawkins 1965: 65-68; Kim *et al* 1977, cited in Yi 1982: 41). It is possible that frozen ground or the use of logs could reduce the manpower required or that draft animals would have made the transportation of capstones much easier. But there is no evidence for the presence of draft animals, and there are some doubts that these experimental figures are valid. It is, nonetheless, certain that the construction of a megalithic tomb took a tremendous amount of labour. Based on the estimated number of work hours, Korean archaeologists and historians have claimed that the megalithic tomb society was hierarchical (Choi 1983, 1987a, 1987b; Yi 1984: 55; Yi 1982: 28-47; Lee 1986: 12-13; Yi 1990: 31-32). In the case we are considering, 43 capstone cases are available. It is not possible to precisely determine the capstone volume, but to determine approximate volumes, three dimensions (length, width, and thickness) are multiplied. The data is summarized in Table IV. A comparison of Korean and British Orkney cairns reveals that the Orkney carins are significantly larger and thicker than those of Korea (cf Fraser 1983: 354, 357). As I previously mentioned and as can be seen in Tables IV and V, Korean megalithic tombs are small in comparison to European monuments.

**TABLE IV****Capstone sizes**

| <u>Size of tomb</u>     | <u>Frequency</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 0.01-1.32m <sup>3</sup> | 27               | 62.8%             |
| 1.33-2.64               | 9                | 20.9%             |
| 2.65-3.96               | 5                | 11.6%             |
| 3.97-5.29               | 2                | 4.6%              |

Total number of cases: 43

Mean: 1.382m<sup>3</sup>      Min: 0.022m<sup>3</sup>      Max: 5.28m<sup>3</sup>  
 Standard deviation: 1.3314m<sup>3</sup>

Source: Im *et al* 1987

**TABLE V****Dimensions of capstones and graves**

|                     | <u>Capstones</u> |      |      |      | <u>Graves</u> |      |      |      | (Unit: meters) |
|---------------------|------------------|------|------|------|---------------|------|------|------|----------------|
|                     | mean             | s.d  | min  | max  | mean          | s.d  | min  | max  |                |
| length              | 1.71             | 0.65 | 0.5  | 3.2  | 1.13          | 0.54 | 0.30 | 2.60 |                |
| width               | 1.08             | 0.44 | 0.32 | 2.33 | 0.58          | 0.24 | 0.20 | 1.40 |                |
| depth/<br>thickness | 0.50             | 0.30 | 0.07 | 1.23 | 0.26          | 0.17 | 0.07 | 0.85 |                |

Source: Im *et al* 1987

Based on the great amount of energy expenditure required to construct British monuments, Colin Renfrew has asserted that societies of a chiefdom level of complexity had emerged by the late Neolithic era (Renfrew 1973). Other European archaeologists, however, disagree, claiming that even the largest monuments such as those in Wessex may not be related to a ranked society (Bradley 1984). As Tainter

(1977: 332) points out, though, the evaluation of energy expenditure does not provide an absolute criterion for all problems of mortuary analysis, although it gives an objective measurement that can be used to make inferences about social differentiation in prehistoric societies. O'Shea also noted that "at best, levels of energy expenditure inform us as to the minimum level of ranking differentiation operating in a given society, and any further claim for the measure cannot be accepted" (1984: 18).

In Korea, some megalithic tombs do indicate a large labour investment. Overall, though, the small scale indicates that this is not the case. Furthermore, it is clear that we cannot exclude the possibility that the construction of tombs represents co-operative volunteer work, either within a village or between local groups, without any recourse to a centralized authority (cf Joussaume 1988: 298; Pearson 1976-1978: 88). Thus, the suggestion that increased labour expenditure correlates with ranked societies cannot be justified.

## VI

Based on Service's socio-evolutionary model, some Korean scholars (Choi 1983; Yi 1982; Yi 1990: 31-32) have concluded that the megalithic tomb society was hierarchal. This conclusion is based primarily on the assumption that the construction of tombs implies the power to draft workers to erect the structures, the presence of specialized craftsman, sufficient supplies of food to support workers, and a relatively efficient bureaucracy to administer the entire operation. These features are, of course, representative of a chiefdom, as Choi accepts (1983: 94-95).

Some polished stone daggers and arrowheads found in Korean tombs do show great skill and represent a major

time investment on the part of their makers, but even so they do not support the theory because they are still not technologically comparable to bronze artefacts. The opposite is true in the case of stone cists, which would seem more supportive of a ranked society. The seeming contradiction between artefact assemblages in tombs and cists has not yet been resolved. Yet it is clear that there is a critical difference (cf Choi 1983: 89).

Overall, the megalithic tomb society in the southern portion of the Korean peninsula lacks the characteristics of a chiefdom. In the first place, there is an absence of features associated with permanent leadership. There is no significant use of luxurious grave goods, no evidence of internal or external trade, and little to reflect institutionalized politics and periodic ceremonies. Based on the available evidence, we can say that the tomb society was essentially egalitarian in nature.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

KEITH HOWARD

**Aidan Foster-Carter, *Korea's Coming Unification: Another East Asian Superpower?*** The Economist Intelligence Unit, London, 1992. iv + 117 pages. ISBN 0 85058 625 9.

A paperback priced at £155? Clearly not a volume many academics are likely to buy, and I suppose part of the fun in reading the text is working out just who the audience may be. I don't mean to question the author's intent, for Foster-Carter has been following Korean affairs for over twenty years. First, with Third World interests and a Marxist approach, he felt a political and philosophical attraction to the North. But that is now moderated, and the North is here lambasted for its "utterly mendacious" and "ludicrous hagiography," and the "bloated megalomaniac" of its ageing leader, Kim Il Sung. Indeed from a position which once decried accepting financial support or invitations from the South, he now effectively discards the very viability of the North. Witness his predictions:

- Korea will be unified;
- certainly by 2000; probably by 1995; possibly sooner;
- the occasion will be the demise of Kimilsungism, however arrived at, and the unviability in the 1990s of North Korea on any other basis;
- hopes for a gradual transition, to ease both the cost and risk, are in vain; there will at some point be a system collapse in North Korea, as in East Germany;
- predicting the precise timing or manner of the collapse is impossible, but whatever the date or the means the outcome will be the same;
- as in Germany, reunified Korea will thus essentially mean the absorption of one system by and into the other (page 96).

Foster-Carter can be, and indeed has been, labelled a "collapsist." This he elsewhere readily accepts, pointing to Kim Il Sung's own writings: "If productivity is not developed rapidly to lay the material and technological foundation commensurate with the socialist system... socialism, like a building with an unsolid foundation, can[not] maintain its existence long" (eg, see "The gradualist pipe-dream: prospects and pathways for Korean unification," prepared for the workshop "Security and the Korean Peninsula in the 1990s" at the Australian National University, Canberra, March 1992). His approach has been backed up by considerable theory, developed through a

series of papers that culminate in an application of Habermas' views on the collapse of capitalism to demonstrate the inevitable demise of the North. This is, though, a somewhat less than welcome approach to many, witness Foster-Carter's presentations in Seoul in 1991 and in London (at the CBI in July 1992, and at the City of London Polytechnic in October 1992). Indeed, his is an unenviable position: consider the overt—and heavily promoted—South Korean efforts towards a peaceful and gradual unification or the abundance of European social scientists who still see something fair and just in Kim's autocratic and totalitarian "utopia."

Yet, Foster-Carter is convincing. His writing style is enviable, and the book is a model of clarity. Arguments are broken down into short sound-bites backed up by single paragraph explanations, with boxes accompanying the text to outline, for example, the comments of defectors, the joint venture law, plans for special economic zones, and achievements in key sectors of the economy. This fits the tradition of *The Economist* and presumably works well for those who must be the anticipated audience—jet-setting businessmen.

But the layout does not befit an academic text and, indeed, one basic criticism would be that Foster-Carter uses only Western theory and parallels with, say, Germany (Romania is, surprisingly, understated despite so many surface similarities such as Ceausescu's monolithic structure). "Once Kim has gone, the rest follows with a certain inevitability" (page 116), reflects less local knowledge or East Asian philosophy than the imposition of Western ideas. Ultimately, Foster-Carter may be proved correct, and Western models may triumph, but is there nothing unique in Korea, or anything in the group-oriented East Asia which departs from our Rousseau-led individualistic West? There is controversy about the role Confucianism has played in South Korean economic development, and it is often overlooked that Kim Il Sung meets all the criteria for a Confucian leader; nonetheless, and despite the fact that Foster-Carter basically discards any discussion on the subject, most writers would agree that the Confucian mind-set has some relevance.

Foster-Carter should not ignore Korean perspectives, yet he makes little use of Korean materials except those available in English translation. The result is a number of glib and simplistic statements. Consequently, general points about Korea and its past are occasionally suspect. Consider page 5: is it really true, given countless invasions and centuries of Chinese suzerainty, that "Koreans share a single ethnicity," with "only a few thousand socially invisible Chinese," and a cultural identity stretching back "at least 2,000 years"? What about *han'gŭl*, the Korean alphabet: who says it is the "world's most scientific orthography"; was all Korean written in Chinese characters before 1440 (as indicated here), and to what extent was the indigenous alphabet used in the 400 years after its invention? Again, should we discard the northern tribal state of Parhae, as Foster-Carter does but as the North would prefer us not to do, to state that political unity was established by 668AD under Unified Shilla?

The view of North Korea is generally well balanced. Kim Il Sung is recorded as a minor guerilla leader who returned to P'yŏngyang in 1945 "reportedly" (for which, read "actually") in Soviet uniform. Kim played the "nationalist card," balancing Soviet and Chinese interests, stressing unity through *yuisasang* to end the plague of factionalism and *juche* [*chuch'e*] self-reliance as a "pseudo-philosophy...the stance of a shrimp sticking a finger or two up to whales everywhere" (page 13). *Juche*, though not noted here, also cemented Kim's power and provided a final catalyst for the destruction of all opposition. A couple of minor points: Foster-Carter reports that little has been accomplished in the way of land reclamation, but fails to mention the massive Namp'o dam downstream from P'yŏngyang (page 16); he implies that continuing South-North exchanges of rice will result from increasing Southern stockpiles, but fails

to note government comments that they will or may in future refuse to buy excess rice from farmers (page 25).

Later, the argument that society in the North will eventually withdraw support for the regime is justified not by evidence from workers and everyday people but through rumours of unrest and the comments of the odd defector or government minister. This may be inevitable given the difficulty of speaking to anybody on the street or in the countryside, but it is surely unreliable, not least given the vested interests of those we can hear. The testimony of, say, the defecting diplomat Ko Yong Hwan (pages 25-7), offers little that is remarkable: his comments on Kim Jong Il, the son and chosen heir, report extravagance and irrational behaviour; he describes how "economic difficulties have made the people very unhappy," and—remember he defected to Seoul—regards the development of a nuclear bomb as "only a year or two away." He would say all that, wouldn't he.

A chapter on South Korean development manages well to impose a Western perspective on more local material. Syngman Rhee is seen in a basically benevolent light (this conforms to current South Korean historiography, but I believe that Foster-Carter over-emphasizes land reform). Human Rights issues surrounding the rule of Pak Jung Hee (Park Chung Hee or Pak Chŏnghŭi, but where does this spelling come from?) are sidestepped in favour of a discussion of a goal (to beat the North) accomplished through an industrialization strategy made possible by *étatisme* (in respect to this last, see Foster-Carter's article in volume 3 of *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies*). Attempts to reign in the conglomerates provides a prelude to a useful consideration of contemporary economic issues: wage increases, inflationary pressures, skill levels, high savings, macroeconomic management and so on. More minor points: "South Korean students have had a heady sense of their political self-importance" ever since 1960, should be backdated to at least 1919, while the "several hundred" massacred in Kwangju in 1980 must, in light of the 1989-90 National Assembly hearings on Chun Doo Hwan's Fifth Republic, admit the local estimates of more than 2,000 (see page 30).

Foster-Carter's last chapter, "The United Republic of Korea," will probably prove his most important, though tentative, contribution to debate. Figures from Jardine Fleming in Hong Kong and the (South) Korea Development Institute are marshalled to demonstrate that the cost of unification, while huge, may be containable. The figures themselves assume the North will survive for longer than the author can accept, and are consequently taken to be on the conservative side. But, even so, the conclusion is that Seoul can absorb the North, providing it has access to international borrowing and can encourage foreign direct investment beyond what its own *chaebŏl* conglomerates can support. It has a pretty good track record in these departments. Unified Korea will eventually emerge, behind Japan, as the second economic power in the region. Assuming that it is able to do so, Foster-Carter raises the hope that it will prove a counterweight to Japan and, with its location and concentrated population, will be able to influence development in China and the neighbouring border regions. To balance this rather broad and at times speculative canvas, a local and more detailed analysis is offered that projects how the North will fare: there will be winners in mining, tourism, and light industry, but there will also be losers in agriculture, chemical industries, and in the general job market.

Overall, then, Foster-Carter presents an account which differs markedly from Korean perspectives both North and South. Rooted firmly in Western social and political theories, he still projects a successful unification process, though only by admitting first that the process will reflect the unique Korean situation and second that it will continue patterns of development which have already proved so successful in the

South. If he is correct, we in the West should be happy: the need for foreign investment surely means a new market for businessmen, while the power of a unified Korea should ensure future expansions in academic studies on Korea.

**H. J. Yasamee and K. A. Hamilton, eds, *Documents on British Policy Overseas, Series II, Volume IV: Korea 1950-1951*. HMSO, London, 1991. liii + 460 pages, with 12 microfiches. ISBN 0 11 591695 4.**

The Korean war, as Gavin McCormack and others have succinctly noted, was where the Cold War turned hot. To Sir A. Gascoigne, writing from Tokyo in 1950, Korea injected "a bit of the real stuff" after four years of rhetoric. The current volume provides a useful and reliable source of information on the conflict, yet it is a volume completely different from the standard works of Bruce Cumings and others because of its narrow scope. The focus is clear from the title, with emphasis on "documents" and "British policy," and the volume continues a worthwhile and highly respected series. The volume is impressive, with a 30 page introduction preceding 145 documents and appendices giving two reports from the Chiefs of Staff dated 7 June 1950 and 7 June 1951. There are ample footnotes and a 26 page index confined to main subjects and people which refers to documents rather than page numbers. Twelve sheets of microfiches provide additional documents. It is not clear, however, how exhaustive the volume is: to what extent has the editorial focus determined the choice of documents?

The focus insists that Korea itself be subjugated beneath post-1945 strategies to counter communist expansion and retain the Atlantic Alliance:

The implications...of the Korean conflict spread far beyond Korea... The Korean war gave impetus to plans not only for strengthening the Atlantic Alliance and creating one in the Pacific, but also for giving the United Nations a revised security role (page v).

It is almost as if the country at the centre of the conflict, then an undeveloped and crippled adjunct to the Asian mainland, had no existence except as a gameboard. That may come as a sad realization to many Korean nationalists.

Britain was concerned to support the United Nations primarily to ensure that appeals for help closer to home would not go unheard. In Europe, the emergence of Soviet satellite states was felt to presage a communist move westwards. This made Britain particularly keen to curry favour with the Americans. Again, the break-up of Empire left oil supplies and other British interests in the Middle East, Malaya and Hong Kong vulnerable, and there was broad recognition, no doubt strengthened by continuing rationing at home, that British forces would on their own prove inadequate to counter insurgencies.

Britain recognized that the United Nations' decision to intervene in Korea did little more than bow to American pressure. This then, rather than Korea itself, provided the main impetus for involvement. Concessions from America were sought and to some extent achieved, for example with a Presidential assurance that Britain would be consulted before the use of atomic weapons. Against this, the "special" Anglo-American relationship was strained over a number of issues. Initially, America refused to consider Commonwealth initiatives (led by India and at times supported by Canada) to determine which government should represent China at the UN. Next, indications from July 1950 onwards that America wanted to push north of the 38th parallel (see document 11) were countered only when Ernest Bevin, then British Foreign Secretary, asked for and received an assurance that American troops would not push forwards. This was given in early October, but on 7 October troops crossed the parallel. The British view recognized that Chinese intervention, or the need to defend the northern part of the Korean peninsula, would inevitably weaken commitments elsewhere in Asia—hence British appeals to "leave behind the minimum commitment for the minimum time" (document 50, but see also 52, 55, 57 and 60). Warnings that the Chinese might be serious about intervening were curiously discounted (53, 60) even when they came from British diplomats (56, 58, 59, 64). Concern appears to have followed MacArthur's threat to bomb Beijing if Chinese forces intervened (62). MacArthur, after all, was to the British neither reliable nor trustworthy. The first American request for British troops was rejected as "militarily unsound," and Donald Acheson wondered (in document 90) "whether any government has any control over General MacArthur, a point on which he desired to express no view." MacArthur's dismissal on 11 April 1951 was greeted warmly because Britain feared all-out war with China, yet the dismissal failed to resolve the impasse of a conflict stalemated at the 38th parallel (134, 140, 141, 144, 145). As P. Dixon, advising from the Foreign Office, put it:

We are in a jam in Korea... We can neither get out nor get on. We can only get out, that is liquidate the Korean affair and get out honourably and without further fighting, if China negotiates. We can only get on, that is conquer and hold the whole of Korea up to the Yalu, if we attack Chinese bases, supply centres and communications in China... We do not want to do this because war with China might bring in the Russians and develop into a general war (document 142).

The British government initially accepted as a given fact that the Soviets were behind the invasion of South Korea in June 1950. They found support for this view in the fact that the Soviets had completed training North Korean forces and now found themselves excluded from the Japanese peace treaty, a treaty which complicated the prospects for a communist-led Korean unification (see documents 3 and 79). South Korea was seen as a "sitting rabbit" for invasion (document 12), and parallels were drawn with Czechoslovakia, which had gradually been drawn into the Soviet orbit after 1945 (15, 19). The Russians were to remain a major concern, and even though Britain recognized them as "coldly realistic people [who] will realize that they have on this occasion to accept a set-back and will keep out of the Korean mess," they were always considered unpredictable, intent on discrediting the UN, and on "isolating and defeating one state after another. After Korea would have come Formosa, then Indo China, then Thailand, then Malaya" (document 12).

This is global politics, a fight between superpowers. As such it may well prove a disappointment to scholars concerned with Korea. Curiously, considering the scale of British involvement, scant background material appears to have been prepared on North and South Korea and, indeed, this is confined to just two documents (6 and 12).

Again, only cursory attention is given to post-war development (documents 50, 55 and 57).

Rarely do the documents suggest a civil war between two halves of a peninsula unjustly and nonchalantly divided by the American State Department. Indeed, although Malik, while president of the UN Security Council, sought to allow the North Korean case to be heard, his arguments were perfunctorily discounted:

Malik has had some success in making out that the world is faced with a dispute within the meaning of the Charter and that the Korean conflict is merely a civil war in which nobody should interfere... But in fact there is not a dispute but an aggression, and the North Koreans have not only flouted the resolutions of the Security Council, but are attacking United Nations forces which are in South Korea with the authority of the Security Council to repel the aggression (Bevin, in document 33).

Kim Il-sung is never mentioned (except by the contemporary editors), presumably—but here we must be careful—because Russia was always seen behind the North. Bevin writes, "omit references to 'the masters of the North Korean Puppet State' or similar phrases which may give the impression that we are openly accusing the Soviet Union of instigating the aggression" (page 95). Syngman Rhee fares a little better, but is often mentioned for the endemic corruption of his regime, a regime of "black reaction, brutality and extreme incompetence" (document 23). We hear the French doubt that Koreans respect or accept Rhee's government while the British, in contrast to Canada, would not accept Rhee's claim to be the elected ruler of both North and South (documents 51 and 55). Bevin, on 27 October 1950, admits he is concerned about Rhee's actions, and questions whether Rhee's appointment of governors and other officials to precede to the North once the war is won is anything other than usurping the UN role (document 68).

The question of atrocities begins with North Korea but shifts once first hand information becomes available to the Southern regime. Document 28 reports American concerns for the fate of its captured servicemen, concerns which were confused because North Korea recognized only the 1949 revisions of the 1929 Geneva Conventions. Later, a UN document mentioned in the calendar to document 50 provides evidence of North Korean atrocities. A footnote to Bevin's 27 October telegram mentions Southern atrocities reported in *The Times* and the *Daily Worker* which had led to debates in parliament. In a telegram from Washington, Dean Rusk (who had earlier been largely responsible for the arbitrary division at the 38th parallel) recognized the problem, emphasized the military command was trying to influence the situation, but prophesied "we shall have more trouble on this score" (page 188). The calendar to document 94 notes that reports on South Korean ill-treatment of prisoners are being withheld, but adds British forces witnessed mass executions of prisoners, including women, on 15 and 17 December 1950.

In total, this is an extremely useful addition to the available sources on the Korean war. It provides an adjunct to the more readily available American documents and counter-balances Russian sources and the more local Korean accounts. Yet it must remain, primarily, a statement of international policy. And this policy, much to the shame of the British and reminiscent of the Anglo-Japanese agreement in the first decade of the 1900s, had little to do with supporting Korea. Korea was, in the words of the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, "not in itself of any strategic importance," so its fate was sealed by more global concerns.

## PAPERS OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR KOREAN STUDIES

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