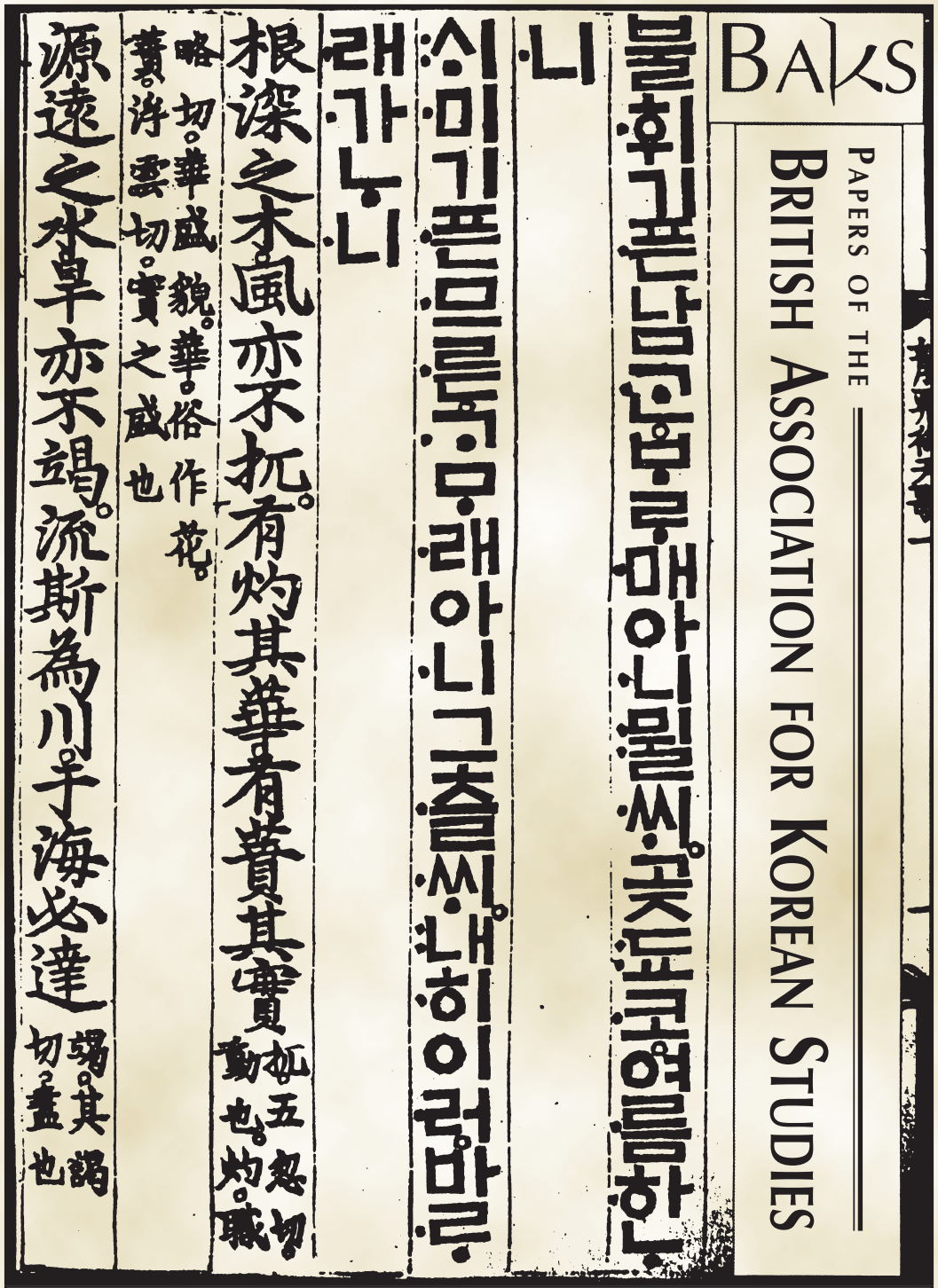

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Editor: KEITH PRATT

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EDITOR'S NOTE

With this volume, the *Papers* series breaks new ground. For the first time a single volume is devoted to a specific theme, that of oral history. It includes two talks given at the 2010 workshop commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Korean War, seven from the 2011 symposium on Korea from the 1950s to 1980s, a talk given at the Korean Cultural Centre in 2010, and a selection of memoirs.

Credit for the idea of oral history as a theme, both for this volume and the 2011 symposium, must go to John Bowler and Michael Hickey, the immediacy of whose presentations at Asia House in 2010 gripped an enthusiastic audience, and to the late Richard Rutt, who features prominently in the following pages. A year or two ago Richard told me he had started writing his memoirs, and when asked, he agreed to contribute to the next forthcoming edition of *BAKS Papers* by giving an interview to Dr Grace Koh (SOAS) about his years as a country priest in Korea. He already felt unable to travel to London in 2011 to speak personally at the Symposium, and sadly he died before the interview could take place. But it turned out that he had virtually completed a draft of his memoirs, and the Trustees of his estate kindly agreed to make portions relating to 1950s Korea available to us for publication. I am deeply indebted to Peter Rutt for his invaluable contributions which have made this possible, and for finding the photographs which accompany Richard's typically observant and sensitive text.

Contributors to this volume include two soldiers (Hickey, Bowler), two diplomats (Pike, Morris), two journalists (Owen-Davies, Horsley), two missionaries (Rutt, Grayson), and three academics (Grayson, Howard, Pratt). All of them kindly undertook to supply copies of their speaking notes for publication, and on reading them I have been struck by the unplanned but considerable extent to which their original presentations agreed with and complemented each other. In order to try and evoke the sense of the meetings I have tried to intervene as little as possible when editing their own written submissions. I hope that the sense of the vernacular shines through to good effect. I have, however, standardised the spelling of names of the principal characters who bestride the history of the decades under scrutiny, and of principal place names.

Once again, the Council of the British Association for Korean Studies is happy to thank those who have sponsored and assisted its annual conferences and the

consequent publication of its *Papers* series. They are Ambassador Choo Kyu Ho, the Embassy of the ROK, the Korean Cultural Centre in London, the Academy of Korean Studies, Asia House, Barclays Bank and the Standard Chartered Bank.

Keith Pratt
Durham

KOREA IN THE 1950s: WAR AND PEACE
(A) WAR

MEMORIES OF THE KOREAN WAR*

MICHAEL HICKEY

After I have spoken you will get an exceptionally realistic account, from John Bowler, of what the Korean War was like at the sharp end. As an infantryman he saw at very close range the violence that only the infantry know, for it falls to them to take part in close combat.

I was not an infantryman; I had been commissioned in December 1949 from Sandhurst into the Royal Army Service Corps, the forbear of today's Royal Logistic Corps. The RASC was responsible for a wide range of tasks; the constant supply of rations, fuel, ammunition and much else to the entire army. It also provided crews for landing craft, the load despatchers for supply-dropping aircraft of the RAF, and ambulance units; and when I underwent my commissioning course at the RASC depot in the summer of 1950 it still ran horse and mule transport units. At the end of that most enjoyable experience I was familiar with the rudiments of equitation. I have never sat in a saddle since – horses and I didn't empathise. But I could get a harbour launch up and down the south coast, drive quite competently almost every vehicle operated by the army, carry out simple maintenance and repairs to a lot of these, including a spot of welding; and I could slaughter and butcher an ox (just in case I went off on one of the British army's traditional expeditions to deepest Africa).

At the end of that course we were vaguely aware that something was happening at the limits of the Far East. A country called Korea had been invaded by Communists; some of us reached for our atlases to find out where on earth Korea was. To those who hoped for distant postings the Emergency in Malaya seemed far more relevant and I for one was dismayed when sent to a unit mobilising on Salisbury Plain that had been earmarked for the Korean war theatre; it was not even a glamorous unit – I found that I was in command of a platoon of ambulances. My dreams of martial glory evaporated,

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* A talk given on 20 November 2010 at Asia House to the BAKS Symposium entitled *Reflections on War and Peace: Sixty Years after the Korean War.*

Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies, vol. 14 (2012), pp. 1–6.

for I knew that some of my friends from Sandhurst were headed for Korea in the infantry. My soldiers arrived within days, mostly cursing their fortune – and even more Clement Attlee's Labour government: nearly all of them were reservists who deeply resented being dragged back in uniform after years of war service. On average they were ten years older than me and clearly regarded me with grave suspicion as a total beginner; how right they were. Some were clearly unfit for active service and we quickly sent them home; others had hair-raising welfare problems, for the likes of which my Sandhurst training had not prepared me. At this time the British Army was 400,000 strong but 18-year old conscripts could not be sent for combat in the Far East. In 1950 they served for only 18 months; but in 1951 this was raised to two years and this gave time for them to reach their 19th birthday once they had undergone basic training and then been sent off on the four-to-five week sea voyage to Korea.

I do not know why our unit had been equipped with elderly Austin ambulances, incapable of use away from metalled roads and lacking 4-wheel drive; they were collected by me and my men from a huge ordnance depot near Nottingham and it took two days to get them back to Bulford on Salisbury Plain where the unit was kitting itself up for war. Our clothing was a collection of remnants from earlier campaigns; I received a splendid sealskin hat bearing the date 1918 – it had been destined to go to North Russia in the ill-fated campaign against the emerging Red Army. We had boots hurriedly made in 1939 for another aborted expedition to help the Finns against the Russians; these boots were disgracefully ill-suited for Korea and were quickly abandoned as we obtained by unofficial means any American cold weather clothing, sleeping bags, footwear and tents that we could beg, borrow or steal. Our possession of copious amounts of NAAFI alcohol enabled us to use whisky and beer as currency in dealing with the Americans, who had been forbidden by Bible-belt American women's temperance organisations from taking liquor off to the wars.

We sailed from Southampton on 15 October 1950 on the troopship 'Empire Fowey', formerly the Nazi 'Strength through Joy' cruise liner 'Potsdam', now run by the P & O line. It was the first time I had ever been abroad and the novelty was great. Now free of food-rationed Britain we were fed like kings. The troops down below on their accommodation decks were lavishly fed in a huge cafeteria and had bunks to sleep in, unlike the older troopships in which the other ranks' accommodation was a disgrace. During the long voyage we tried to keep fit with physical training, running round the upper decks; there were many lectures and talks as we tried to teach the men something about the country towards which we were sailing. As I knew nothing about Korea I was reduced to playing them classical gramophone records and teaching the elements of music; this they rather seemed to like. We shared the ship with the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars in which several of my Sandhurst friends were serving; most of them were lost in the near-disastrous battle north of Seoul on New Year's day

1951 when the Royal Ulster Rifles were almost overrun and the reconnaissance troop of the Hussars lost.

Our first sight of Korea, on a freezing morning in November, was not encouraging. Pusan was a desperately neglected city; filthy, crowded with unhappy refugees and evil smelling – totally unrecognisable as the dynamic seaport and industrial city that it now is. We sorted ourselves out on the dockside. It was clear our ambulances would have to be sent across to Japan whilst 4-wheel drive trucks were obtained from some ordnance depot. To my fury I was appointed in command of the detachment to be sent immediately to Japan whilst the rest of the unit piled into a run-down train heading north. At this point the United Nations forces, following MacArthur's bold amphibious landings at Inch'ŏn in September, had driven so far north that they were approaching the Chinese and Russian frontiers and it looked as if the whole war was running out of control. Little did we know that the Chinese had already decided to intervene. As the campaign in Korea went into crisis mode I was having a wonderful time in Kure, the Commonwealth base across the water where the Australian Army Service Corps had made me and my men most welcome; some were soon playing rugby league for the local team and others learned the mysteries of Aussie Rules, a game better described as Foot and Mouth. I played hockey for the Australian team and so, as sportsmen, we ticked all the right boxes with our hosts.

My Japanese tour came to an end when one of my colleagues in Korea fell sick and I was flown over to take over his platoon, now equipped with elderly Bedford 3-tonners, and attached to the 27th Commonwealth Brigade. I was dropped off an Australian Dakota at Taegu airfield, a bleak and unfriendly place; I noted a DC6 transport plane overturned off the runway; a jeep picked me up for the 50-mile journey to our company HQ at Wŏnju. On the way we passed the litter of the earlier fighting – T-34 tanks, Russian lorries, broken bridges, ruined villages in which a few unhappy people were trying to exist. It occurred to me that this was a land that had been harshly repressed for 40 years and whose economy had been stolen by the Japanese. Apart from the roads between Inch'ŏn and Seoul and down to Suwŏn, and upwards from Pusan to Taegu, none was surfaced; consequently much of the British army's transport was useless on the dirt roads. Within days of arrival in Korea I had to take my unit of strangers into a battle as the Commonwealth brigade advanced north towards the Han River. At this time, around the battered town of Chipyŏng, a combined French and American garrison was holding out against large numbers of enemy. The defenders' resolution inflicted one of the first reverses on the hitherto unstoppable Chinese. Our brigade was very much an ad-hoc affair; two battalions of British infantry – the Middlesex and Argylls – an Australian battalion, a regiment of New Zealand field artillery, a superb Indian army Field Ambulance – all parachute-trained and proud of their red berets, then our British-New Zealand-Canadian transport and supply unit. Until now the brigade had relied on the Americans for its

logistic support and whilst the US Quartermaster Corps and Engineers excelled, their transport units frequently let the infantry down, especially in the recent 'bug-out' season. So our arrival, a versatile unit assuring the fighting units of reliable transport in the forward area and guaranteed supplies of rations, ammunition and fuel, and capable if necessary of fighting as infantry in dire emergency, was warmly welcomed in the brigade.

On the 19th of February I was able to describe my first week at the front in a letter home:

> My new command consists of 30-odd lorries, a small armoured car and 57 men … During this last week I have seen, and to a small extent taken part in, my first battle. On Tuesday and Wednesday I had half a platoon of trucks out north of Yŏju, taking the three infantry battalions up to the Han Valley. Having lifted them into their defensive positions we left them digging in. I withdrew my vehicles back to wagon lines alongside Brigade HQ; from there we had a grandstand view of what happened as the Chinese attacked during the night. The Middlesex battalion, having dug in about two miles north, were attacked at dawn by waves of Manchurian infantry, who managed to get into one of the rifle company positions and overran two platoons. But the old 'Diehards' stuck to their guns and when the smoke of battle lifted, nearly 70 of their attackers lay dead. The New Zealand gunners were tremendous – only recently arrived (their troopship hit a reef and sank en route) – they are almost all inexperienced volunteers, equipped like us with worn-out World War 2 weaponry. Also the US Air Force performed a spectacular attack on the enemy as they massed after dawn for further attacks on Thursday afternoon, scattering them over and over again. I could see all this clearly in my binoculars as the enemy hopped around on the hillsides [under] a hail of rockets, cannon-fire and the dreadful napalm – a sort of petroleum jelly igniting on impact to form gigantic fireballs … Our troops are in wonderful heart as they know we have air supremacy and that alone is a marvellous morale-raiser. The American troops of our Division look on with frank admiration and the personnel of the first rate American heavy mortar battery attached to our brigade make a point of stressing their pride in serving as part of the 'British Royal Commonwealth Brigade'. We all feed very well on American rations, which are mostly dropped from the air as the roads are execrably bad and some of the pontoon bridges have been washed away in the early spring floods … At the moment I'm living in the outbuildings of a dilapidated farm. My most treasured piece of furniture is a tremendous neo-Edwardian barber's or dentist's chair, with elaborate upholstery – brass studs and all the trappings! … It seems rather odd that people are sitting listening to concerts in the Albert Hall, as I have done so many times, and looking at the paintings in the same galleries that have given me so much pleasure … I must turn in now as my batman is preparing our shared nightcap, a hot grog of army rum and hot tinned milk; the rum looted by him in the great bug-out before Christmas when I was still in the fleshpots of Kure.

For the next two months we slowly advanced back onto the general line of the 38th parallel. It was time for the Argylls and the Middlesex to leave and their relief

battalions, the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the King's Shropshire Light Infantry to join our brigade, which was placed in reserve near the town of Kapyŏng. In the midst of the handover, the Chinese launched their great spring offensive. Thirty miles westward our 29th brigade just managed to hold on north of Seoul despite the loss of most of the Glosters. Our own brigade held out through the resolution of the Canadian and Australian battalions and the matchless support of the New Zealand gunners. How we managed to cope as a transport and supplies unit is still almost beyond me – not only were we working frantically to get the outgoing battalions to Inch'ŏn but picking their reliefs off the dockside and carrying them up to where they might be needed to fight 'from cold' as it were on arrival at the front; at the same time the guns had an insatiable appetite for ammunition and this had to come from as far south as Suwŏn. We all took turns as drivers – my commanding officer who had never driven anything bigger than a Morris Minor was carrying 7 tons of ammunition on his 3-tonner and I went without sleep for 100 hours and was hallucinating at the wheel. The main problem in this phase of the war was that some of the newly raised ROK units had still to acquire the experience now evident in the ROK Marines and the Capital Division. The 6th Division was still untried and raw when the full weight of the Chinese thrust hit them, and the Commonwealth brigade, still in the middle of rotating two of its battalions, was nearly overwhelmed as well when the 6th ROK division retired through us in some disorder. More dangerously, its ranks had been penetrated by Chinese infantry and it was impossible to distinguish friend from foe in the dark. It was clear that unless we acted quickly our reserve stocks of fuel, ammunition and rations, stacked in the Kapyŏng valley near brigade HQ, were at risk and we diverted most of our trucks to rescue them. By grossly overloading our ancient Bedford lorries we succeeded, apart from an impressive stack of fresh bread from the admirable American field bakery. I had this soaked in petrol and threw a match on the pile: immediately the valley was filled with the smell of burnt toast and this must have puzzled the Chinese when they arrived briefly on the scene before the Australians drove them back.

After the excitement of the Chinese offensive and its repulse the war became more static. We moved west to join the newly formed 1st Commonwealth Division on the line of the Imjin. The vicious cold of the winter gave way to the spring – in Korea such a time of beauty, then to the hot and humid summer, which led to outbreaks of hitherto unknown diseases. Our reservists went back home, glad to be released; but they had been marvellous soldiers from whom I learned so much. Their successors were mainly young conscripts, now obliged to serve two years, but they were keen to learn and by now I felt I had taken on some of the skills of my reservists.

As the summer wore on the Chinese withdrew to the north to gather strength for their next campaign and the Commonwealth Division sent out patrols across the Imjin to search for them. On one such occasion we had carried a platoon of the Shropshires

about four miles north of the river where they got down and continued on foot. Still athirst for martial glory I decided to join them, leaving my trucks under a reliable sergeant. I borrowed one of my soldiers' rifles and 100 rounds of ammunition. A sensible choice, for the platoon was spotted and ambushed when five miles further across the river; an exciting afternoon followed in which I was glad that I had been well trained as a marksman in my recruit days. By the time I regained safety I had expended all my 100 rounds and had satisfied several queries of the sort that haunt young men: how would I behave under fire? And how would I feel when pulling the trigger on a human target?

In the autumn our unit, having completed a full winter at the front, was moved down to Pusan in support of the huge logistic base now flourishing there. Already the town and dock area had changed radically from the ghastly shambles of the previous year. The energy of the Korean people as they set about the great task of rebuilding their nation was evident. I was able to see a great deal of the base areas and was amazed at the American effort; a large hospital was catering for the dreadful casualties caused by napalm, and here Chinese and North Korean prisoners were treated by some of the world's leading plastic surgeons; I spent a fascinating if horrifying day as their guest as they showed me the new techniques they were using – including the reconstruction of complete faces which had been burnt away. I was also able to go to the prison island of Koje off the south coast where over 100,000 North Korean and Chinese prisoners were held under what I thought was a dangerously slack discipline. Sure enough, only weeks later there was a huge mutiny, the prison commandant was captured and held hostage by the prisoners and British Commonwealth troops were called in to help restore order. This they did without bloodshed, and within days, unarmed British soldiers were playing football and organising sports with the former enemy. But by this time I was enjoying a spell of leave in Japan and soon after that I was on a troop ship bound for home.

MEMORIES OF THE KOREAN WAR*

JOHN BOWLER MC

I am honoured to be invited to talk to you about the Korean War and what it was like. I will tell you of my own experiences. I was there in the infantry for just under a year, 1951/2, following on after Colonel Hickey.

Sir Max Hastings, the well-known historian and journalist, described the war as a 'platoon commander's war'. That is what I was, a platoon commander. A platoon comprised 30–35 men. Sir Max Hastings was correct: there were few major tactical movements such as the Inch'ŏn landing. Most of the fighting was between relatively small groups of men who fought for isolated hills, or parts of hills or, as in my case, No Man's Land. Groups of ten to two hundred or so. There were two large armies growling at each other, but the great onslaughts and offensives with thousands of men had, as it turned out, finished although we always remained alert and expected them.

My battalion – the 1st Battalion of the Welch Regiment, a 300-year-old infantry regiment – travelled to Korea on a fine troopship, the same ship that Colonel Hickey had travelled on 12 months earlier. On one occasion, whilst we were resting from training on board, my men, who were 80 per cent National Servicemen (that means conscripted, not volunteers) said 'Why are we going to war, why are we fighting on the other side of the world, Mr Bowler, sir?' I remember saying there were a number of reasons:

> to stop the spread of Communism;
> to help a small independent nation cruelly invaded by a big force backed by a bullying nation, i.e. Russia;
> for the honour of the Regiment and the embodiment of that in its mascot, a goat;
> because if you don't, Sergeant White (our Platoon Sergeant, a fine, feared soldier) will sort you out – a serious threat;
> and finally, if you don't fight, the Chinese will kill you.

Most of the men were aged 18–20 with older NCOs. I was 19. We were posted to

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* A talk given on 20 November 2010 at Asia House to the BAKS Symposium entitled *Reflections on War and Peace: Sixty Years after the Korean War.*

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Korea for one year and arrived in what was then the dilapidated shanty-town harbour of Pusan (look at it today!) on 16 November 1951, to be greeted by two large Negro military marching bands. Fortunately, as the weather was turning cold, we were then kitted out with very fine British Arctic war clothing, seven layers of it. Two days later we moved up by train to Ŭijongbu through the damaged landscape and I well remember seeing the elderly patriarchs in their tall black hats with their long beards and the ancient graves on the hillsides.

We relieved what was left of the Gloucester Battalion that had been in the great Imjin battle, and then moved into the area known as the 'Hook', which overlooks the Samichon Valley some 110 kms north of Seoul and is the invasion route to Seoul. As we moved into the trenches it began snowing.

The trenches had been occupied by South Korean troops and were very clean and in excellent condition. Each platoon had its own hill. We had to cook our own food which was delivered by truck two or three times a week so we had to build ovens and a kitchen; we inspected the barbed wire (which was very good), the minefields in front of us (which were questionable); worked out our own routine for reveille, inspection, weapon cleaning, sleeping, sentries, cooking etc.

The company commander called the platoon commanders together daily for briefing. He was on a smaller hill 600 yards away. The line was now static. The dramatic mobility of the first 18 months had ceased, and it was very reminiscent of the First World War in Europe, with two large armies snarling at each other across the main battlefield which became No Man's Land. The commanding officer of the Welch decided we would be so active in No Man's Land that the Chinese would not be able to build up their forces in the open area in front of us and attack us. This policy appeared to work.

A word about the weather. It was a continual battle that had to be won. We had to beat the weather first. Those three years were the coldest three years in the last century. It was worst in January and February. Battalion HQ in the valley recorded –22º and –25ºC. It was worse on the hilltop with the north wind from Siberia, probably –25º to –30º. Often bright, clear nights with a strong moon and bitter north wind. Spring and autumn were pleasant and summer hot and wet. I remember it raining for seven days and seven nights, stopping only for four hours. It was the only thing other than heavy snowfalls that stopped both sides fighting.

So we set about patrolling. My platoon did some 15 patrols of all kinds, reconnaissance, fighting, ambush, etc. We met the Chinese on eight of these. As well as heavy patrolling the battalion put out five listening posts every night in front of our lines with six or seven men.

A word about the countryside. It was very different to the UK. Everywhere there were hills, gullies, ridges, knolls, entrances, hiding places, blasted trees from previous

battles, abandoned paddy fields. There were no civilians, no birds. It was beautiful but barren in the cold.

The extreme cold brought problems. We needed to be permanently on our guard against surprise attacks, so at night half the front line troops were on guard at any time. Two hours on, two hours off was the system. We slept with boots on, never off. We never got into our sleeping bags, always slept on top with our rifles close by or with us to stop them freezing. Those sleeping had to be able to be in action in 90 seconds.

Our excellent parkas (large overcoats) had large wired hoods as protection against the wind but we never put them up as it would interfere with our hearing. We always shaved in the morning. I inspected the men and the weapons, and we fired all the machine guns to make sure they were working perfectly. I went seven weeks without a bath. We used the now banned DDT powder to keep the lice and fleas at bay, which it did. We put it inside our shirts and jumped about. In January we were told we would have no supplies for six weeks. We would be cut off as the poor roads were becoming impassable. Nobody would visit us unless we were in serious trouble. We had an extra-large delivery of ammunition, extra petrol for cooking and bunker heating, extra water and six weeks of packaged American C rations – which introduced us to Lima Beans, clam chowder self-heating soup, American cigarettes and other delights.

Now to the fighting. Let me tell you about the Chinese. They were excellent at camouflage and tunnelling. Their lines were roughly one and a half miles away. Suddenly one day we found they had tunnelled right through the hill facing us and they produced a large artillery gun which began shelling our lines. It was probably on railway lines as it disappeared as soon as our guns replied. The Chinese were experienced, quick thinking, silent movers when they wanted to be but were often noisy, talkative, lacking discipline, cruel, brave, willing to die, and able to handle hardship. We had the weaponry and planes and were very determined: they had the numbers.

Our platoon's first patrol was on 24th November, just over a week after landing, and fortunately we made no contact. Three days later it was more interesting. It was a daylight patrol, on a delightful autumn day, consisting of one officer and nine soldiers. We went to a small hill in No Man's Land one mile or so away. It was at the end of a long ridge that started in the valley. When we got to the hill I left the patrol on the ridge and went to the top with my wireless operator to check it out. The sun was shining. Had there been birds they would have been singing. No sign of any enemy! There was a bunker at the top. It contained a Chinaman. He was looking north towards his lines a mile away. He had his quilted ear flaps down. We pulled back. The hill came alive. The patrol was being attacked; we were too. The Chinese had let us walk through the centre of them! They had been hidden in shell holes, scrapes, remains of old trenches and were astonishingly well camouflaged. I and

my wireless operator ran north towards the Chinese lines, down the hill and called down an artillery barrage. We escaped, rejoined the patrol and retired. We had one wounded.

Three days later on 30th November, with 11 men, we were sent to Hill 169 (the number is the height in metres, a good naming system) to spend the night there and see if the Chinese came. They did, there was a fire fight and they went away. We had two slightly wounded. In the morning, on looking around I found six frozen dead Chinese on the Chinese side of the hill, all about 6 ft. I don't think we had killed them. We took their papers. I was told they were Mongolians.

Ten days after that we went back to Hill 169 shortly after dusk. This time not one plus eleven but the whole company, four officers and some 90 men. The Chinese came, at first a few and then in numbers, and a battle ensued. We withdrew at 3 a.m. with eight wounded, two badly. The hill was surrounded and we had to fight our way out. This intensity of patrol activity refers only to one platoon. There were 12 platoons in the battalion doing the same thing.

Probably the most interesting patrol was a night fighting patrol in May involving the whole platoon. It was a warm night with a strong moon. The platoon crossed No Man's Land – about two miles wide – and then penetrated the Chinese lines for half a mile or so, bypassing many enemy positions on parallel ridges. We then raided a strongly fortified location to prove the Chinese were nowhere safe from the Welch. My orders were simple, "Wake them up, give them a bloody nose". After the raid we withdrew rapidly, under attack from behind and from the ridges on both sides of us. Suddenly some five miles of the Chinese front line in front of us came alive, shooting at shadows, firing light flares for illumination. I was surprised for they were jittery and scared. The next night the place we had raided opened fire on one of their own returning patrols, killing some sixteen. The following day a Chinese officer appeared on our wire and asked to surrender. He was a captain and had been in charge of the place we had raided. He was a substantial prize. We had three wounded.

In my platoon 10 per cent of my men were killed, some 35 per cent wounded, many twice. They were often patched up at the fine hospital in Kure and then sent back to the front line. We killed many Chinese and never lost any ground.

KOREA IN THE 1950s: WAR AND PEACE
(B) PEACE

MEMOIRS OF KOREA IN THE MID-1950s

RICHARD RUTT

After wartime experience at Bletchley Park, where he learned Japanese, Richard Rutt went up to Cambridge to read Modern Languages. He then took Holy Orders in the Church of England and offered himself as a missionary. In 1954, when he was 29, it was decided that he should go to Korea. He was assigned to Anjung village in Kyŏnggi Province. Though he had been a curate in Cambridge from 1951, it was his first experience of undertaking pastoral work on his own.

Once I began telling people I was going to Korea, I realised how little known Korea was in Britain, even immediately after three years of [the] Korean War in which British soldiers had fought and died. Few English people had any idea where Korea was. Great-Aunt Jenny of Handscomb End Farm even asked what part of Africa was Korea in; but she left school in the 1870s. Yet the English in general thought that anyone going to Korea must be either a hero or a madman. War correspondents had given vivid accounts of bitter cold, but said nothing of monsoon rains and torrid summers, still less of golden autumns, and spring air that was like champagne. Some [people] were noticeably disquieted on being introduced. One churchwoman asked me what I should be doing after Cambridge and was very puzzled when she heard the word 'Korea'. She said, 'Surely you're not going to be a missionary!' but felt relieved when in my fumbling reply I mentioned the bishop. 'Oh, the bishop has asked you. I see.' I was respectable, after all.

At that time the whole of the China coast was befogged by war and threats of war, with all eyes on Taiwan. We were in Hong Kong for a fortnight before the troopship *Asturias* came along. Five days later we were unloaded at Kure, which was then the depot in Japan for British forces still left behind by the Korean War. We were at once transferred to a grubby little coaster called *Esang*, doing taxi-service between Kure and Pusan. The crew seemed to consist of three, headed, as was usual for such ships, by a taciturn Scot. [Fr] John [Whelan] and I were up before dawn to catch our first sight of the Land of Morning Calm: the same soft blue line of hills as must have

Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies, vol. 14 (2012), pp. 11–27.

greeted the French priests who came here to be martyred in the 19th century. They knew they would never see home again, and were prepared for isolation, misery, torture and death. In 1954 these things still felt not far away.

There was more waiting. We disembarked in the wasteland that had been Pusan harbour before a catastrophic conflagration that spring. The whole area was now carpeted with tiny temporary hovels built of rubbish, none taller than a man. The autumn sunshine was the only cheer in our welcome. Bishop Arthur Chadwell had found an army jeep to drive us to our little red brick house in the city. As we rode through the pathetic refuges, a cardboard flap was lifted and out of the dirty hut behind it stepped a Korean gentleman in spotless traditional white coat and formal black horsehair hat, moving with the typical bombastic stride of the Korean gentleman. A Korean might have murmured that the lotus-flower rises out of mud …

The train to Seoul was an American train and full. We slept fully dressed between khaki blankets, not entirely free from tobacco smoke. The great terminus station at Seoul stood isolated among the bomb sites. The main street outside it was a fairly well swept track among the piles of rubble. When Bishop Chadwell promised to get a bull-cart, I wondered why he should not say 'bullock cart'; but he had not. All the carts in the street were drawn by bulls. I discovered later that they covered Manchuria and much of north China too, stocky but handsome little animals of bright chestnut colour, sometimes shading into black. They were used for all kinds of agricultural work and haulage but [were] useless for dairy purposes, and were finally eaten (with a conviction that the flesh of cows was tenderer). The bulls were never cut, because they were normally docile. Today the breed is artificially conserved, for mechanisation has removed all cattle from the farms.

In fact Bishop Arthur hired two carts drawn by ferocious-looking men with huge beards and we all walked through the thronged but weirdly quiet streets, past the magnificent Great South Gate … Everything was caked in dust. Most buildings were flattened or at least severely damaged. Invading armies had passed this way twice during the last five years, and the glorious polychrome of the gate was for the time being covered in dust and ashes like everything else. The Bishop's house was a pretty though Spartan place in the garden of the half-built cathedral of pale grey granite.

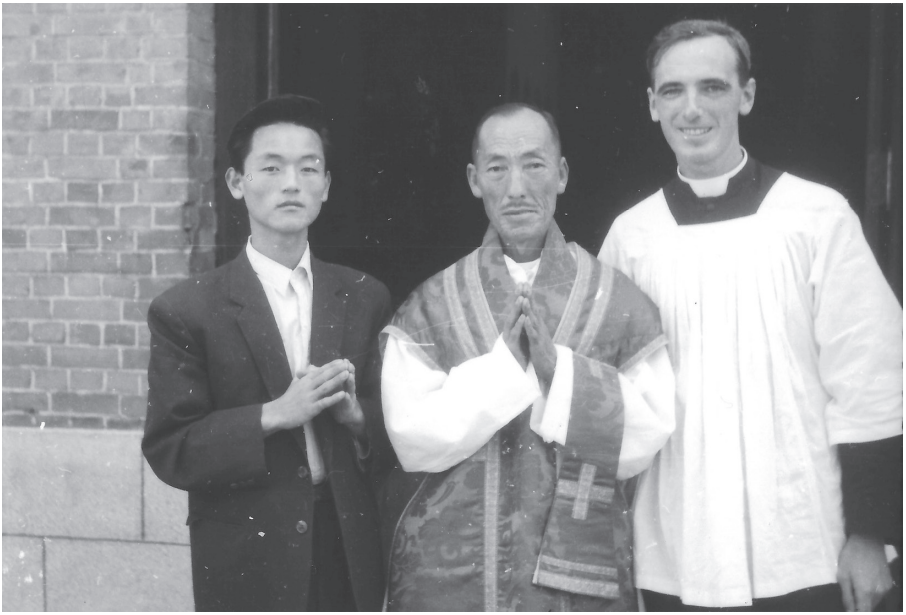
We expected to live here for the next two years, studying the Korean language. Everyone agreed that it was very difficult to learn. It was virtually impossible to learn it outside Korea, except at one or two places in the United States of America. Yet it was by no means a minority language. By 1992 only 12 languages were spoken by a larger number. It was traditionally taught by senior missionaries and native pundits. In 1954, however, there were enough new missionaries arriving from the USA to encourage the American Methodist Charles Sauer to open a language school. It worked five afternoons a week in the old Methodist high school. Sauer's method made good sense in terms of Korean language structure, though it depended heavily

Parish priest, c.1957

on the experience and imagination of the teachers. Many of these Koreans had no particular flair for teaching, let alone teaching adults. Some of them found it hard to understand why the title of 'Teacher' did not automatically elicit an attitude of Confucian self-abasement in all the students, who were thought of as 'disciples', bound to venerate all instructors. We saw some tense situations, as we did with American women who were linguistically more gifted than their husbands in the last non-feminist generations.

Anjung

The older generations believed that a man should always write in Chinese. That meant real Chinese: the peculiarity of Chinese written by Koreans lay in the way they read it aloud, which was based on the pronunciation of the words at the time they adopted it for use in Korea, and unintelligible to any Chinese. Missionaries generally paid little attention to Chinese. Thus they could rarely read a newspaper and were excluded from a large part of Korean culture – yet no one could claim that not reading Chinese seriously impeded their evangelistic work. I had some half-remembered Chinese script from my days with Japanese in the Navy. I therefore



Richard with Elijah Yi Yŏngjik (centre)

enjoyed my encounters with the Chinese script wherever I met it, but I had trouble in finding a grammar book.

When I arrived in Anjung village, I was delighted to discover that my senior catechist was a traditional teacher of Chinese: Yi Yŏngjik, Elijah. His advice on Chinese grammar was simple: 'It dawns on you as you go along.' He was right. One might call the process 'natural language-learning', since it is the way a child learns its mother-tongue. Rummaging in the bookshops, however, I discovered three pocket-sized booklets called *Chungdŭng hanmun tokpon (Chasupsŏ)* 'Middle School Standard Literary Chinese Textbook – for private study'. I intended to use it during my frequent country bus journeys, [but] for a foreigner to be seen reading a book with that title would have been an unfailing invitation for fellow passengers to start conversations of exhausting length about eccentric behaviour. So I stuck the three little books together and retitled them *Hwamun-gam* 'Mirror of Flowering Literature'. No one in a country bus would thrust themselves on a man of any age or race who read things like that, especially in a rackety country bus. I have never seen another copy. I became very fond of the little book, and cherish it still. It ranks in my affections on a shelf by I Ho's little textbook on *sijo*. It might be described as an almost bookless way of language learning …

I took up *sijo* simply to find out what it was. Koreans were more likely to know

one or two by heart than they were to say what it was or how to write it. No westerner I met had ever heard of such a thing. *Sijo* lyrics are written in Korean language and script. Again I had good fortune in discovering a pocket-sized book. Those immediately post-war books were little more than apologies for printing, but this little paper-covered volume with its smoke-ripened pages has a place on my shelves for ever: *Kogŭ myŏng sijo chŏnghae* 'Famous Sijo, Ancient and Modern Explained', by I Hou and Yun Kyehyŏn (1954). It was intended to help students prepare for middle, high and university education. I Hou was a distinguished poet himself. The following three *sijo* are in the form I gave them during the first winter at Anjung. They illustrate typical moods and content.

Pallid moon and pear blossom,
Midnight and the Milky Way –
Even the cuckoo
Tells my heart the news of spring.
This feeling is like a sickness:
It prevents me from sleeping.

The morning is cold and frosty,
Yet yellow chrysanthemums
Overflow their golden bowl!
And bring spring to the Jade Hall.
Do not dream of peach and plum blossoms
But consider the King's will.

I gave my coat to the boy
In the wine shop and pawned it.
Now I look up at the sky,
I address the moon, and say:
'Well and now, what about Li Po
What would he do in my case?'

No one knows how many *sijo* exist. Most of them are anonymous, even those that are traditionally attributed to famous personages. A large number of them are written by women, chiefly professional singers, for this form of verse is lyric in the strictest sense: it was written to be sung to formal melodies. These three examples hold typical thoughts and feelings. Beauty goes hand in hand with sorrow; life centres on rustic simplicity or politics and palaces; aesthetic ideas derive from China; singing goes with wine; everyone reveres the name of Li Po, in whom wine and song are eternally united. The English on first meeting *sijo* often want to compare it with the Japanese *haiku*; but this would be a great mistake. The two forms are fundamentally different. The *sijo* is at least three times longer, and its very soul is of another order. Peter Lee once said, 'The soul of *haiku* is wit, the soul of *sijo* is sensibility.' What is not said in

the *sijo* has a function similar to that of the white spaces in Chinese brush-painting. Like a perfect poem of the Tang period, the implied question, the adumbrated shadow, the hoped-for promise, the lingering doubt or pleasure, the suppressed excitement – such are what makes *sijo* live.

I became very conscious that few westerners who were interested in the subject had my good fortune in being able to study Chinese literature in the way that Koreans used to learn it. I made copious notes on all I could remember after a ten-mile walk that had also been an extended seminar with Elijah on literary Chinese. I noticed also that in such articles as began to come my way there was a distinct tendency to underrate the ability of Koreans in Chinese poetry, and I doubted whether any one else was likely to record how 'the grammar dawned'. At the same time I realised that the English gentleman's delight in crossword puzzles had its Korean counterpart. My village friends were constantly writing poetry, not the vaguely reflective writing that passes for writing poetry in Britain today, but a real craft demanding great skill and practice …

Then there was another aspect of Korean poetry that nearly all Koreans knew about, but no westerner: Kim Sakkat, 'Straw Hat Kim' (1807–63) … It was easy to see why he was not widely known. The greater part of the work attributed to him depended for its effect on playing with words, especially on puns in which one sense was expressed in Korean and another when the same text was read as literary Chinese. Here is a very ordinary example of Tang-style regulated verse in literary Chinese:

> The heavens are wide; you will never embrace them;
> The flowers fall and no butterfly comes.
> The chrysanthemum blooms in the cold sand
> Its bare stalk's shadows lie half over the earth.
> A passing scholar at the riverside arbour
> Falls drunk and asleep beneath the pine-trees.
> The moving moon changes the mountain shadows,
> A merchant returns, but only for gain.

The same verse, read in the same way, but understood as vernacular Korean, means:

> There are spiders' webs on the ceiling,
> The smell of bran burning on the stove.
> Here's a bowl of noodles
> And half a dish of soy sauce.
> Here are cakes,
> Jujubes and a peach.
> Get away, filthy hound. How that privy stinks!

Much of Kim Sakkat is so trivial or disgusting it does not merit much attention.

Much of it, I suspect, is folk humour from the village school: yet one cannot know how much humour there is in Korea if one has no idea of the verses of Kim Sakkat.

I was much interested in literary technique, because very little had been written about it in English. Such accounts as I could find tended to be discouraging. I came across an essay that claimed that no Korean ever expected to write top class poetry and criticism was unknown. Nothing could be easier to find than that there had been hundreds of competent poets and a very few good ones. Literary criticism makes poor reading in Korea, not least because the traditional form for criticism is the anecdote, of which there are vast numbers. I selected fifty examples. To modern Europeans, the form of some of the stories is desperately understated, but others are astringent. The first of this group begins:

> On a donkey's back I drowse gently in spring,
> Passing through the green hills in a dream.
> When I come to I find the rain has stopped
> And the brooks are babbling a new song.

I have no idea who wrote this quatrain, but it has been highly praised. I disapprove, because if the brooks were babbling after the rain, the rains must have been heavy, and not at all the weather for dreaming on a donkey.

Most missionaries made little effort to learn Chinese. I have been hugely grateful for the amount of Chinese script I was able to learn; but I must stress my limitations. I can read little contemporary Chinese, for as one Chinese visitor said – over-stressing his point – Korean newspaper headlines are in the Chinese that Confucius himself would have written.

Language-learning needs to be backed by some instruction on how to communicate, though this was rarely given. During my second summer in Korea I went with the famous Carl Miller, adviser to the Bank of Korea, and his young friend called Kim Yŏng'yŏp (an unusual name, though with the usual prayer implied, for it means 'unending flash of lightning') for a five-day car journey in the Great White Mountains of central and eastern Korea, a journey that seems in memory to have consisted of a series of exercises in how to get Carl's bulky white saloon car across rivers at points where the bridge had not been repaired since the last retreating army crossed it. We had maps, but our map-reading often had to be checked by local residents. We would draw the car up by a group of men chatting at the roadside and Carl, whose Korean was fluent, would ask, 'Is this such-and-such a village?' He rarely received an answer; but if Yŏng'yŏp asked the question, the answer was prompt. This was not due to any fault in Carl's pronunciation: we discovered that when we noticed that Yŏng'yŏp never opened the question directly, but instinctively began with a piece of conversational ballast, such as 'Good morning. What a lovely day!' He received a grunt in reply which served to indicate that a connection had been established

Richard visiting a Buddhist temple

and messages were now being received. Unexpected and unfamiliar communications need this sort of 'call-sign'. Expressing the question too soon gave the hearer no chance to tune in to an unfamiliar voice and unforeseen subject matter. By inserting the familiar and neutral 'call-sign' before asking the question, Carl and I too could nearly always get prompt answers.

A similar situation about the hazards of initiating conversation was more complicated. Early in my first spring in Seoul, I visited a department store. There were but two in the city, depressing places with broken and shabby furnishing and almost nothing to sell. On one woebegone glass counter I observed bars of toilet soap neatly stacked in two piles, apparently identical, but one pile marked with a very much higher price than the other. Practising Korea for all I was worth, I asked the salesgirl why the two products, apparently the same, had such different prices. She immediately signalled to her supervisor and said (in Korean), 'I have a foreigner here. Please come and help.' The supervisor replied, 'I know; but he is talking Korean.' The salesgirl looked back at me, made a visible effort of aural memory and said, 'This pile is the genuine American article and the other is a Korean imitation.' People often cannot understand what they do not expect to hear.

I was glad to learn this lesson so soon after arriving in Korea – but I soon realised that I constantly use these 'call-signs' when speaking English in England, and I expect their use is part of all today's language teaching.

Anjung was an unprepossessing village, a sprawling mass of greyish-thatched clay tiled houses draped over a hill among the paddies on the west coast, perhaps ten miles from the county town of P'yŏngt'aek. The sea was four or five miles in the other direction, but there was no landing on the north side of the gulf: the fishermen and the ferries boarded the southern side. Less than a century ago there had been nothing here but a wine shop at a country crossroads where the road from P'yŏngt'aek resolved itself into the web of tracks to the hamlets. The Japanese authorities had built a little police station, a post office, a tiny bank (which dealt in rice and fertilisers as well as in money) and a huge wooden primary school. The Anglican mission had recently added the church of the Holy Spirit, which looked very much like the houses, but bigger.

Arrived on St Luke's day, at the end of harvest I was ready to explore, but simply could not escape alone. Someone would see me wandering away from the built-up area, and before I realised it one or two adults or a bevy of children would appear at my side, quite prepared to follow however far I might go. I found this very tiresome. Conversation tended to be a grilling about England. Was England really always in a thick fog? Are all Englishmen gentlemen? None of them found anything of interest in the Korean countryside. And I found it fatiguing, because my Korean lacked resources and I soon got tired of the effort.

One day, at last, I escaped. I got out of sight without my escape being noticed, and followed a path I had taken when visiting the sick with the catechist. It was early summer and the rice had just been transplanted. I enjoyed my walk and the abundant birdsong in the thin pine woods. No one had forewarned me that this was shockingly bad etiquette as well as a bold risk to take. Manners demand not only that some people should be taken care of, but also that these same well submit to being taken care of; and it must always be remembered that drinking is not mere imbibition – it has its orders and its proportions. As soon as I had entered one of the houses and been installed cross-legged over the warmest part of the hypocaust, a huge silvery kettle full of milky rice-beer was brought in with bowls of stoneware and stainless steel. When I declined a second bowlful, I realised I had done wrong. My behaviour was impossible and no one knew what to do. Somebody whispered to me that a guest cannot drink less than three bowls-full. I had then to wait while a chicken was caught, killed and cooked. And of course, I could not leave the village without visiting three houses.

When I eventually set off for Anjung, I was by no means sure I would get there. Apart from anything else, the paddies were full of water and the baulks between them were less than a foot wide. I think I was actually walking in my sleep at times; but as I slumped through the door the sun was going down and I slept until sunrise. I had learned my moral lessons very well. No Korean would find anything blameworthy, except that I had gone out alone. I grew very fond of both the landscape and the people.

Mudung-San

It was raining steadily. The men and women working in the fields were wet and cold, some of them in olive-coloured oilskins, some of them in the ancient rain cape made of straw, just getting soaked; but they did not look unhappy. The rain [did] not [seem] so much to fall as to permeate the world of bright green paddies and blue mountains floating in inexpressible mist. This was the warm rain that Koreans call 'sweet rain', a rain long desired.

Farther up the valley, among the woods and rocks, there was no longer any landscape to see. The thick trees merged into the mist that hid the sky. Bamboo, gingko, maple, paulownias, and the lovely lime-green stems of the phoenix trees showed that this was no uncared-for forest. The smell of rain, the tumbling roaring sound of the streams, raindrops pattering on the umbrella, mist in the lungs, were all one in the luminous cloud through which I walked. Picking my way through several streams, I found the water warm but urgent. Finally crossing some stepping stones in a torrent, I walked along a narrow path, among the dripping shrubs to the cottage I was seeking.

One of the commonest drawings on fans that year was inscribed 'A Friend Comes to the Mountains in Summer'. I was not yet a friend, but the conventional picture was coming alive. Inside the little house a rubicund old gentleman in the very lightest of summer clothing was sitting by the window, with paper and water-dishes and writing-brushes ranged all about him painting a landscape in the old oriental style. Behind him, on a lower level, squatted a youth in denims, busily copying one of his master's works – and doing it very well.

The one or two pieces of very old furniture included a tiny reading desk with a drawer, fully twelve inches wide, just the size for bearing one book. A single piece of calligraphy hung on the wall. A stuffed pheasant stood on a fantastic little carved table and there were a few pieces of blue-white porcelain, all evidently in use. And teacups. There was a frieze of tightly packed calligraphy. One section of the room was inscribed with the complete text of the Confucian *Daxue* 'Great Learning', and the other with the Daoist *Daodejing*. The paper on which the old gentleman was painting was kept still and flat by two small bars of dark jade. The pupil's papers were weighted with smooth pebbles from the stream. They both occasionally shifted their paperweights as they moved the paper in the course of painting. Birds were singing outside the window, and the host moved the paper shutters so that from where I sat I could better enjoy a view of the rain on the bamboos.

The pupil fetched water from the spring and boiled it up in an iron kettle, then made … tea in a pot with a bamboo handle. It was good tea. Nowadays the 'tea ceremony', which is quite unlike the Japanese one, is offered at various times as a simple sacrifice, but without real tea. When brides offered tea the symbolism was

clear. Tea possesses all the 'Five Tastes': sour, bitter, peppery, sweet and salt, and signified that the bride would stick with her new family through good and ill of all kinds. The tea plant is almost impossible to transplant, because of the shape of its delicate roots, which made tea a symbol of stability.

[The old man was a tea-grower.] We drank tea steadily, in cheap modern cups. We talked of tea. I mentioned the 'Ode to Tea' by Liu Dong of Tang, and the pupil was bidden to fetch the Korean *Komun-jinbo*, a favourite Korean anthology of Chinese literature, so that we could enjoy the ode accurately. It describes the effect of tea-drinking. One bowl moistens the lips, another banishes loneliness; a third reaches the vitals with ineffable fragrance and a fourth produces a light sweat that improves health and induces peace of mind. A fifth purifies the marrow and a sixth puts man in touch with the eternal. The seventh is more than a man would dare drink, or a clean wind will take him up and bear him away to the realm of bliss. As we talked we certainly drank at least seven cups of tea, but the poet specified bowls, which would have been bigger.

The pupil had two hard yellow plums beside his brushes, the fruit of the plum-blossom tree. He had them there for their fragrance. The old painter began talking of their medicinal value: treated with salt they become 'frosted plums' and are useful for a variety of troubles from mastitis to a loose stomach. Soon some plums were brought in little glass dishes. They had been cut up and marinated in sugar. They had a sharp, slightly citrous flavour, and were served as a fitting accompaniment for green tea. When lunch appeared [my host] apologised that the food was simple mountain weeds, the fare of Korean poets. The plum blossom fruit was there again, but its colour was now carmine and the taste bitter and salty. The beefsteak plant was there, and several other herbs, with delicious rice.

After lunch tea was made again, but this time it was from a tiny old tin and served in even smaller cups: the precious pluckings of the year's first buds. It is as different from the ordinary run of good green tea as a good Chablis is from *blanc ordinaire*. It is easier to appreciate the lyricism of Liu Dong when drinking such a fragrant infusion. It has all the frugality of perfect taste, none of the vulgarity of the jasmine petals that are used to camouflage the poorer teas.

Soon guests arrived, most of them kowtowing deeply, because our host was seventy-five years old. Some were on business about the little agricultural school that he ran for a few boys just across the stream. Others had come to collect fans he had painted for them. The pupil was deputed to put seals on the pictures. The boy chose them with care out of a cardboard box which had once held a watch, and pressed them with infinite reverence on the proper places near the inscriptions on the paintings. The artist added Chinese poems to his paintings. On a drawing of bamboo in rain he wrote:

> Whispering bamboo in July gives rise to thoughts of autumn;
> But this is no sound of breezes; this is the sound of rain.

All was modest, even poor; but gracious: old age concerned for vigorous youth, in a corner of Korea where men can still sit still.

On the way home I sat down at a wine-shack where a very young taxi driver and two of his friends were warming up milky rice beer after bathing in a hill stream. They were in holiday mood in spite of the rain, and delighted to talk with a foreigner. As we walked towards the town, they chatted and joked without pause until one of them thought to ask my age. The answer was lower than expected, and after a momentary pause the taxi-driver said, 'Hi! Lower the language, boys!' They were using grammar too polite for my age. His friendliness was as heart-warming as the welcome I had received from the old painter. He may not have appreciated the finer points of painting on fans, he may have preferred rice-beer to tea; but the same courtesy was in his bones.

The Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch

During my first few months in Anjung, poetry was not the only aspect of Korean culture with which I began to grapple. One detail of history that constantly forced itself upon one was a popular symbol of the national spirit, the ancient Korean Flower Boys of Silla. Oddly enough, Arthur Waley had mentioned them not only in his translation of the *Book of Songs*, but also when writing about some Romanian folk dancers at the London International Folk Dance Festival of 1935. This unexpected reference was as irresistible as the current significance of *hwarang* in Korea was important.

Waley obviously thought this mysterious institution was religious, but 20th-century Koreans thought it was military. Korea was still smarting from its experience under Japanese colonial rule and was often tempted to find in Korean history nobler things than the Japanese, who were militaristic above all else, had boasted about from their history. *Hwarang*, literally 'flower youth' or 'flowery youth' or 'flower of youth' or 'flower youths', clearly had educational and ethical, perhaps also religious purposes. Yet the emphasis regularly claimed in films and inspirational speeches to the young was heavily militaristic. Furthermore, in the 1950s *hwarang* was still a word for the old-fashioned wandering troupes of folk-dancers and acrobats, some of whom I had met and talked to in the village. When I discovered that the total written historical evidence on the subject barely filled half a dozen pages of Chinese, I set about a serious study, and gave the Royal Asiatic Society a paper that was printed in the *Transactions* for 1961. My conclusions were disappointing. We know almost

nothing reliable about what the *hwarang* were or did. There is no evidence they were a militaristic organisation.

The Royal Asiatic Society was founded in London in 1823, to study the culture, history and languages of India. Similar societies were established for Britons in other Asian countries, notably Japan, Siam, Hong Kong and North China. They used the name Royal Asiatic Society, but appear to have [had] little further connection with the London body. The Royal Asiatic Society Korea [*sic*] Branch was founded in 1910 by a group of missionaries and other foreigners in Seoul. The majority of its members have always been American, and it soon became an important element in the life of foreign residents in Seoul. During the Japanese colonial period (1910–45), as the only body [in] the Japanese Empire dedicated wholly to Korean studies, it had a praiseworthy place in the history of Korean studies. … This 'Korea Branch' ceased to exist during World War Two and again during the Korean conflict of 1950, but was revived when the diplomatic missions returned to Seoul after the truce at Panmunjŏm in 1953.

Only three members of the Society's Council had returned to Seoul by the end of 1954: Professor Paek Nakchŏn (George Paik); the American Presbyterian missionary Horace G. Underwood; and the American cultural representative, Marcus W. Scherbacher. The records declare that these three asked Dougald Malcolm, Chargé d'Affaires at the British Legation, to restart the Branch. Dougald was a connoisseur of ceramics whose father had first visited Peking by walking there from India, and it was in fact Dougald's enthusiasm that spurred the three councillors into action. The Society was formally re-launched in the British Legation on the very cold evening of 23 February 1956. It was Dougald's enthusiasm that fuelled the occasion.

A programme of monthly lectures was soon set up, and other less grave events were developed. This amalgam of evening visits to distinguished Korean restaurants, weekend journeys to famous scenery, visits to exhibitions and historic sites and the like was dreamed up and carried out by Carl Ferris Miller. Nobody knew exactly what Carl did in Korea. He was a 33-year-old American bachelor who was always described as 'an adviser to the Bank of Korea'. He had winning ways and a wide knowledge of Korean matters. I got to know him during my second summer. At the beginning of June 1956 he invited me to join him and a Korean student named Kim Yŏng'yŏp in a four-day drive through the Great White Mountains of central Korea to the east coast province of Kangwŏn, staying in inns and hotels that had not yet recovered from the war. Starting at Hoengju and P'yŏngch'ang, we found our way through the heavily wooded mountains to the provincial capital at Kangnŭng. We saw the famous 'miles of crimson roses blooming on the waterline of ten leagues of white sand', and heard the roaring propaganda of the communists blared through the loudspeakers in the empty darkness of a rural curfew. The monsoon was merciful that year …

Spontaneity and informality were the hallmarks of Carl's RAS 'tourism' programme, at times with comic effect, as when the local press in one mountain area, believing – as many do – that all a translator needs is a bi-lingual dictionary and a dash of courage, published a picture of an RAS group in extremely informal clothing with an inscription saying 'Welcome to the British Royal Family'. Or there was the time when Carl promised we should be going through a corkscrew tunnel that bored through 360 degrees in the core of the mountain, five or six miles south-west of Wŏnju on the T'aebaek Line. When he announced that we were about to enter [it], someone remarked that passengers inside the tunnel would have no impression of the corkscrew. Carl stopped the train at once and invited those interested to step out on to the rocks and wild flowers. It was evening and chilly, the sun had touched the high horizon and people were sipping aperitifs. We slithered down the mountain while the train gave a melancholy hoot and disappeared into the tunnel. Clutching cocktail glasses and tugging at our cardigans, we tottered further down the mountainside and found the other entrance to the tunnel. The driver sounded his mournful hoot before he reappeared on the surface, apparently moving on a course diametrically opposite to that on which he had gone into the mountain. We clambered aboard the train again and resumed our supper.

But Korean railway travel also had a darker side. There was for instance the strange hazard of country children lobbing small rocks at passing trains. The trains normally travelled very slowly, children could get close to the track – indeed often endangered themselves, despite those melancholy sirens that saluted every level crossing and every bend. The sudden explosion of the big window by one's elbow was a seriously disturbing experience for any passenger, often causing injury and sometimes death. I recall an afternoon when I was depressed and bored by the all-day crawl from Pusan to Seoul. As the train crawled slowly round a bend, my eyes met those of an emaciated boy aged ten or so, just as he hove a six-inch rock, apparently straight at me. The window was shattered. I was unhurt. The train crew did their best with the alarmed passengers, the dust and the rock. No one was hurt, but there was a strong sense of death's nearness, and the carriage had not settled down again before we reached Seoul an hour or two later. For the staff the whole incident was routine.

School Teaching

When I returned from furlough in spring 1959, the bishop told me to stay in Seoul and build a students' centre near the National University main campus. Until the building was finished I could do my priestly work better by helping out there as needed and do what I could to understand the city better. I was open to invitations and by no means reluctant when the gentle and genial Mr An Hosam invited me to teach English in his high school. There was great demand for English teaching and many missionaries

did it, I believe to good effect, though it was not notably fruitful as a means of mass evangelism.

Educated Koreans had much the same sense of loyalty to their high school as Oxford or Cambridge graduates then had to their colleges, though Korea had no traditional grey stone for the education of [its] elite. The buildings of all Seoul high schools were barracks of red brick. All were day schools. Country boys who attended them had to arrange their own lodgings. Girls' high schools were separate.

Mr An was headmaster of Hwimun School. Its dusty, shabby brickwork belied its pride. It was one of the oldest schools in the land, having been founded by Min Yŏnghwi, a member of the Queen's own clan, as one of the first couple of modern schools founded after American Protestant missionaries had introduced the idea at the end of the 19th century. It had always been proudly Korean, and was governed by a Korean head throughout the Japanese colonial period. The name Hwimun, 'Brilliant Letters', had been given by King Kojong after a character in the personal name of the founder. By a bizarre coincidence I had celebrated an Anglican Mass there within a month of my arrival in the city within a month of my arrival in Korea in 1954, because the British soldiers remaining in the city after the 1953 truce were still camped in the school buildings, of which one was temporarily called 'St Christopher's Church'. Hence I was familiar with the school's setting in the former royal park-and-palace lands at the north of the city, with their fine views of the surrounding mountains.

When I stepped for the first time on to the teacher's dais, to face a class of some eighty 16-to-18-year-olds and teach them English conversation, I should have been daunted, had not Mr An made it clear he did not expect them to learn much beyond becoming accustomed to the sound of an English voice saying something of interest to them. It was, of course, up to me to discover what the subject matter ought to be. I did this weekly during term time for the next four to five years.

An early subject for discussion – for we naturally paid attention to school life – was nicknames. I was pleased to learn that in Korea, as in England, nicknames were sublimely unoriginal: Lanky, Porky, Swot and the like, with an occasional film star's name to mock a boy who thought himself handsome, or a foreign name (because what is foreign is usually ridiculous), or even the mild bullying of 'Miss Kim' for the slight of build or mild of disposition. Some surnames carried automatic nicknames, as in English Clark becomes Nobby, Martin becomes Pincher, and Miller turns into Dusty. So in Korean Kim was called Tokkaebi (goblin), Pak was Pagaji (a gourd for dipping into water), Ch'oe got Twaeji (Piggy) and Chŏng got Tang-nagwi ('Donkey') because the Chinese character includes two strokes like long ears; Yi was Salkwaengi ('wildcat') because the Chinese character was pronounced Yi, and An was Mudang ('witch'), because the Chinese character contained elements for 'lid' and 'woman', and the witch was the only woman who ever wore a hat. These nicknames were, however, never used as forms of address.

Slang was necessary for mentioning one's family, which would otherwise be embarrassing. Father was usually 'the Foreign Minister' and Mother 'the Home Minister', formalising the normal conversational usage whereby a man referred to his wife as *ansaram* ('the one indoors'), and a woman referred to her husband as *pakkan-yangban* ('the outside master'). At one point it was common to use for one's parents the prefixes for distinguishing the sex of animals: *sut-* for males and *amh-* for females, as in *suttalk* and *amt'alk* for 'cock' and 'hen', though boys disliked girls using such language.

Classroom conversation had its own cant. The approach of a teacher was signalled by 'He's on the wing' (*nalla wa*), while *saeja* ('Let's leak out') was an invitation to truancy or strategic withdrawal. 'Get out of the way!' or 'Break it up!' was expressed by *kkŭja* ('Extinguish yourselves!'), which may have had something to do with extinguishing *kkot* 'flowers' (cigarettes) which were otherwise known as *ch'il sench'i* ('seven centimetres'). They were much 'sucked' by *kultugi* ('chimneys') using *changjak* 'firewood' to 'light up'. The money needed to buy these things was called *bai*, in denominations of *bai*, *kohakpai* and *sembai* (100, 500 and 1,000 hwan in bastard Japanese). The boys rather touchingly believed that the practice was unsuspected and that they were already addicted to tobacco for life. (It is extraordinary how the generations fail to instruct one another in such matters.)

Boys are naturally cynical and well supplied with synonyms for untruthfulness. The semi-English word *show-hada* was perhaps less common than *konggal* 'blackmail', even when there was no question of any threat. Cheating in examinations was called *k'anning* (the English word 'cunning'), but if insults were exchanged too freely someone was liable to 'steam' *kim naeda*. Silly puns gave great satisfaction. The Korean for coffee was *k'ŏp'i*, but it was customarily called *k'op'i* with a long round *o* vowel, and extensions of that joke could show more revolting aspects of the adolescent mind.

Nothing, of course, was more fascinating to them than the opposite sex, commonly known as *kkaltchi* (adapted from English 'girls'). Several Seoul schools were so built that communication with a girls' school was possible by flashing a mirror from a classroom window. Of the vocabulary connected with this and kindred games, the pleasantest was *abek*, from the French *avec*, meaning 'walking as a pair'.

And where in the world are young males not interested in their clothes? The peacock complex is deeply rooted. There came a time, usually towards the end of a high school career, when having a well battered cap was a point of honour. As for the hair, before the military government in 1960 turned all schoolboys back into miniature monks (as the Japanese military government had done) by compelling them to have their heads shaved, there had been fashions in boys' hairstyles. A huge bag once had its day. So also with shoes. When I first went to Hwimun in 1959, if a boy had *wok'ŏs* (English 'walkers' for low shoes), the winkle-picker shape was preferred.

A few years earlier a hump over the big toes was in vogue; but those were the days when trousers were cut wide at the bottom. *Nap'al paji*, 'trumpet trousers', they were called. And they survived in the provinces for a season or two after metropolitan fashion had switched to drainpipes, known as *mambo* (Korean slang for 'trendy') trousers. Trumpet trousers were frowned upon by authority, because they smacked of wild living, but they could still be seen on polite and well-behaved boys in Suwŏn as late as 1960, two seasons after they were unwearable in Seoul. The peaked cap, called *ttukkong* ('lid') was worn with the front pinched at the top, in Nazi style; but in 1962 the peak was exaggeratedly large – again with the more extravagant examples to be seen later in the provinces.

For the height of sophistication a group of 1960s boys would repair to a slightly raffish tea-room, each of them sitting with both elbows on the table, nonchalantly waving a large bun on the prongs of a small fork. This was a dashing pose for furtively watching waitresses. The shabby black uniform with its tunic buttoned to the throat gained just enough smartness from the slip of white plastic in the neck and the white name-tag on the left chest. Leisure clothes could be worn only at home.

KOREA IN THE LATE 1950s, A PERSONAL VIEW*

MICHAEL PIKE

When Personnel Department of the then Foreign Office asked me to call in early April 1957 I had no idea of where they intended my first posting to be. "Korea" they said, "the Embassy in Seoul, as our first language student." My mind spun for a long moment. Could I cope? What kind of country was it? Where could I begin to make sense of such a completely new and unexpected chapter in my life? Who were the London experts on this distant land?

Answers were more difficult to find than questions. The truth was that – Britain's involvement in the recently ended Korean War apart – our connections with the so-called 'Hermit Kingdom' had been tenuous for many years. Since the Japanese occupation of the country in 1910, Korea had been perceived from London as a relatively unimportant province within the wider Japanese Empire. Personal contact had been largely confined to a small group of mainly Protestant missionaries. There were few direct economic links between Britain and Korea and specialists tended to view the peninsula through Japanese binoculars. Even after the partition of Korea into Soviet and American spheres of influence in 1945 it remained, to adapt Neville Chamberlain, speaking of 1938 Czechoslovakia, 'a far away country of which we know little'.

Predictably, I began my voyage of discovery into this new and fascinating world at the School of Oriental and African Studies where the late and much missed Dr Bill Skillend presided over a small Department of Korean Studies. I passed the summer term of 1957 as a member of a small group of fellow students from all over Europe who were also beginning to get to grips with a complex, and for us, exotic language. Bill's own knowledge of Korean had been painfully acquired, largely at second-hand, and he was the first to admit that his command of spoken Korean was far from colloquial. But he had a firm grasp of grammar and syntax and a deep determination to instil this in the minds of his students. So we left SOAS with a solid foundation for further study. By August 1957 I had also managed to find the one reasonably

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scholarly and up-to-date book then available in English on Korea's recent history, Cornelius Osgood's *The Koreans and their Culture*. This proved to be an excellent guide to this still traditional Asian society which was now beginning to move at lightning speed into the modern world.

Leaving Southampton on the Peninsular and Oriental's liner *Canton* in late September 1957, I arrived in Seoul via Singapore and Yokohama almost seven weeks later to find a bijou Embassy tucked away in a pleasant cul-de-sac behind the Anglican Cathedral in the very centre of the city. Tall trees surrounded two very respectable late Victorian houses in reddish brick, recently supplemented by a modest modern Chancery building. It was only a short walk to the then epicentre of Seoul night-life, the imposing, if ugly, Bando Hotel, reputedly owned by President Syngman Rhee's German-born wife. Not far from the Bando the former Japanese Governor's domed seat of power loomed over a city still only beginning to recover from the painful wounds of war. The streets hummed with rebuilt US jeeps and broken-down buses, while on their pavements legless veterans and recently orphaned children begged or stole to survive. A short distance from the centre, the presence of the US Eighth Army/United Nations Command Headquarters within the vast ex-Japanese Yongsan compound reminded Koreans that a terrible conflict had only just ended. Memories of war were indeed still strong and fear of a recurrence widespread. Military expenditure took up 70% of the national budget and even distant Britain still maintained a twelve-man contribution to the United Nations Honour Guard, symbolising the international community's continued determination to defend the Republic (the last British infantry battalion had left only in the spring of 1957).

A large and active American Embassy seemed to know everyone and everything about the country which was almost entirely dependent on American military strength and economic assistance for its survival. Yet despite this overwhelming presence, gratitude for American help during and after the War remained widespread and hope for a democratic future was largely invested in the idea of a continuing US/Korean partnership. The Japanese, once everywhere, had completely vanished and it was commonly asserted that if a Japanese dared to walk the streets of Seoul in a kimono she would rapidly be met with a barrage of stones.

Outside Seoul, Korea's mountainous countryside stretched away into the distance, the hills almost completely denuded of trees, the valleys full of verdant rice fields, nourished on human night soil. Korean traditional dress was still everywhere, cottages invariably thatched, with *ondol* (hot air-heated) floors. Paved roads – even between Seoul and Pusan – were a vision yet to come and petrol stations non-existent. Milk was almost unknown in rural areas and western food a rarity outside the big cities. In some villages only thirty miles from the capital the inhabitants seemed scarcely to know that they were residents of an entity known as 'Korea'; in regions where American or other foreign troops had not been in action during the Korean

War, or Christian missionaries had failed to penetrate, many people had never seen a foreigner.

But for a young (26-year-old) language student this was a warm and welcoming land, particularly since I came from a country – home of the mythical *Yunguk sinsa* ('English Gentleman') – which, unlike Japan, had been only a distant, and apparently largely benevolent, colonial power. I spent four hours every day with my language teacher, a student only a few years younger than myself, as I fought to get to grips with spoken and written Korean. In the absence of any kind of language school, and with a severe shortage of suitable English/Korean teaching materials, this was no easy task, but I persisted and as the months passed began to cross the language divide into another mental world within which I marvelled at the logic of *hangŭl*, the basic Korean alphabet which underpinned this highly sophisticated tongue. Meanwhile, I found time to make friends with Koreans of all kinds, particularly within the worlds of journalism and academe. Some are my good friends still.

Whenever I had the chance I fled happily from overcrowded, noisy Seoul into the hinterland, and I recall days in one of the Embassy's Land Rovers on the dirt roads around Ch'unch'ŏn or along the almost empty beaches of the east coast. I frequently travelled with an Australian colleague who shared my fascination with everything we saw and felt. We found accommodation at traditional inns (*yŏgwan*) in small towns or managed to impose ourselves uninvited on the hospitality of an Irish or American missionary priest. Starved of foreign visitors in a distant rural parish these splendid men never failed to make us welcome. These were golden days, my strongest memory being that of the apple orchards around Taegu when trees laden with bright red fruit stood proud beneath the seemingly eternal high blue skies of the Korean autumn. "Et in Arcadia …"

And politics? Since the 1945 partition along the 38th Parallel the southern half of the peninsula had been dominated by President Rhee, a veteran of the independence struggle against Japan who had spent many years in the United States lobbying for Korean freedom. There could be no doubt of his patriotism or of his devotion to the cause to which he had given his life. But by 1957 many, perhaps most, educated Koreans, and Americans with an interest in Korean affairs, believed that he had been in power too long. Yet he was not easy to dislodge, given his control of the armed forces, National Assembly and the huge security machine. While liberal newspapers such as the redoubtable *Tonga Ilbo* waged verbal war against the ageing President and his stooges in government there was no clear sign of early change. Attempts to break the deadlock by the opposition Democratic and the small Progressive party, indirectly backed by Korea's influential Christian churches and by an increasingly irritated US administration, proved largely futile for most of 1958.

The beginning of the end for Rhee was, however, signalled by the notorious P'ohang (Yongil B) by-election in late September, 1958, where, after the close of

polling and in the presence of US and British observers, the Korean police were clearly seen stuffing ballot boxes with fresh voting papers endorsing the official candidate. (I vividly recollect my American colleague, a First Secretary in the US Embassy and later Ambassador to India, jumping up and down in frustration while shouting "*Hanguk Minchuchui … Hanguk Minchuchui*" ("Korean Democracy") at the top of his voice as he witnessed this depressing scene.) The political mood again worsened in December when a new National Security Law was passed during uproarious meetings of the National Assembly. This draconian Act enabled Rhee to do almost anything he wished in order to deal with his perceived enemies, who by now included not only the opposition political parties but also the bulk of an increasingly influential educated middle class. Perhaps most important of all, the US administration had by then completely lost faith in Rhee's ability to govern with any degree of legitimacy. By the time I left Korea in mid-July 1959, at the end of my first tour of duty – to be followed by another between 1962 and 1964 – the writing was clearly on the wall and it was no surprise to observers of the Korean political scene when Rhee was finally thrown out in late April 1960, in the face of massive popular unrest and widespread student rioting, initially in Masan. He left the country in an aircraft provided by the US CIA on 26 April to return to his original place of exile, Hawai'i, where he died on 19 July 1965.

After a brief and chaotic period of democratic rule under the leadership of the well-intentioned but politically inexperienced Catholic ex-Ambassador in Washington, Dr Chang Myŏn, Korea at last succumbed to the fate which awaited it as increasingly angry army officers, many of them Japanese-trained, saw the country descending into virtual anarchy. It was time for discipline and order and most Koreans were by then disinclined to persist with a regime which provided neither. In any event the leader of the military coup on 16 May, 1961, General Park Chŏnghŭi (Park Chung Hee), and his chief enforcer Kim Ch'ŏngpil, Director of the fearsome Korean Central Intelligence Agency, were determined to crush any nonsense about the need to return to discredited 'democracy'.

So by the time I returned to Seoul, now newly married, in November 1962, this time as Second Secretary (Political), the capital seemed to be a dead city, its nights curtailed by curfew, its newspapers muted, its parliamentarians almost silent, its universities controlled by the ubiquitous Korean CIA. Much of the pleasure of life had gone for me and, much more important, for the majority of Koreans. Meanwhile the United States, while evidently unhappy about this new state of affairs, was not prepared to do anything positive to try to shift the military from power. Years of rapid economic expansion and breakneck modernisation followed, with an average growth rate of eight per cent in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The country was transformed as the Park regime continued to carry through its vast programme of export-led industrialisation. But at least until recent years there has always been little

gratitude in Korean politics, and Park Chung Hee's ultimate reward for his efforts to strengthen his country proved only to be his own assassination at the hands of a military colleague. But that is another story.

KOREA IN THE 1960s AND BEYOND

FROM WORKCAMPER TO MISSIONARY: A VIEW OF KOREA FROM 1965 TO 1987*

JAMES H. GRAYSON

From a very early age, probably from about six years, I had a fascination with East Asia, which meant, of course, China. However, in the Cold War era of the 1950s and 1960s it was very difficult to find any accurate information about contemporary China, and impossible as an American citizen to travel there. Nonetheless, I read voraciously about China and East Asia in general, about its history and its culture. As an undergraduate at Rutgers University, I studied anthropology because of my interest in non-Western cultures. In the summer of 1965, before my final year as an undergraduate, I was offered the chance to go on a one-month workcamp project in the Tohoku region of northern Japan, sponsored by the American Friends (Quaker) Service Committee. It wasn't China, but I leapt at the chance to experience something of East Asia. Then, the AFSC said, 'Oh, and we are going to send you to Korea in August on a workcamp project there after the workcamp in Japan finishes'. Well, I didn't know anything about Korea, but it seemed a good opportunity to experience even more of East Asia. It is casual experiences such as these which can have long-term effects on our interests, indeed on the course of one's life. And so it was for me. As fascinated as I was by what I had seen, what I had done, and what I had experienced in Japan, it was Korea which grabbed my interest.

Korea: First Impressions

If Japan in 1965 was the image of a dynamic, modern nation with deep traditional cultural roots, the impression of Korea in the same year was of an economically backward nation struggling to survive. In Japan, we had been whisked along from place to place on the *Shinkansen*, the world's first high-speed train. In Korea our trip

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by express train from Pusan to Seoul at the end of our workcamp took eight hours, a journey which now takes two and a half hours. That journey to Seoul has been for me like a time capsule of sights which marks the beginning stage of the rapid economic and industrial development which was to take place immediately afterwards. From the window of our train I could see *Kukto* [National Highway] 1. Of course, there was no motorway then – but the road was not paved either. And, there were no bridges over rivers in many cases. On the highway, there were no cars – only jeeps and lorries. Black jeeps were private vehicles, and white jeeps were government vehicles. Looking out from the window, one could see hills and mountains everywhere – but they were naked because there were no trees. Finally, the great train slowed, and began to snake its way into Seoul Station – and then a gang of beggar boys boarded the train to beg from the passengers before they alighted.

Who could guess that within ten years this impoverished nation would have the beginnings of an extensive motorway network, the beginnings of what would become one of the world's three major steel manufacturers, and see the establishment of major conglomerates which would come to dominate the world's markets? Who indeed, looking at the ubiquitous poverty of the mid-1960s, could predict that South Korea was a nation starting its dash to become a prosperous, very modern nation? No one, I am sure. There was no real precedent for such rapid development.

Yet, the roots of that rapid development were already there to see in 1965. First of all, we workcampers – who were mostly Koreans and Japanese – knew that only a month ago there had been major student demonstrations against the ROK/Japan Normalisation Treaty which had been signed in July. This treaty opened up Korean access to Japanese capital investment. And yet it was resented by many. One of the purposes of the workcamp was to have Korean and Japanese students living and working side by side – reflecting Quaker interests in peace and international understanding. The fishing village where we worked, Kwangam-ni (now scooped up into the great industrial city of Ch'angwŏn), was the site of an ROK Government experiment to develop oyster culture farming to provide an income for coastal villages. Two things struck me about the villagers and village life. The first was the great work ethic – people worked very hard. The other was their ability to enjoy life. After we workcampers had our 'goodbye' ceremony on a hill behind the village, we returned to the village to find that the central area around the pier had been cleared of boats and a huge tent had been erected by the villagers. Inside were floor-level tables groaning with food and drink. We ate, and we sang, and we danced until the wee hours of the morning – and the Vice-Governor of the province was there!

There is another element in the people's makeup – nationalism. On the 15th of August, we workcampers all walked over to the township school to celebrate Liberation Day – the day of Japan's defeat, the re-establishment of Korean independence. The feelings on that day were palpable. Government planning, nationalism, determination,

and an ability to find ways to enjoy oneself, these are some of the qualities which enabled the Republic of Korea to leap forward from abject poverty into the ranks of the world's leading nations.

1967 – A Brief Return

In the summer of this year, while I was a post-graduate student in anthropology at Columbia University, I participated in a Fulbright Commission study programme on Chinese culture and society based on Taiwan. On the return trip home, I took the opportunity to return to Korea and to visit some friends from two years before. This visit gave me a chance to look around Seoul more carefully and to pay my first visit to Kyŏngju. Within the elapsed two years, Korea had begun to change visibly. Taiwan seemed to be more prosperous, but Korea had clearly begun to move. Everywhere one looked along the main East-West road Chongno in central Seoul there was construction. Five- and six-storey buildings were going up, covered in bamboo scaffolding, and finished off with exterior tiles. There were cars on the road, although the ubiquitous black and white jeeps were still very much in evidence. A new tram system had just been put in, using modern equipment which I had seen plying the streets of Kyōto in Japan a few weeks before. Beggars were still visible but so were many people going about their work. The trains to Kyŏngju were shabby by Japanese standards, but frequent and well used. People travelled and went to enjoy the sights of places such as the ancient capital of Silla. In 1967 Korea was not a wealthy country, but the economic state of the nation had begun to improve in many different and subtle ways.

1971–1987 – Neither Workcamper nor Visitor

By 1968, I had changed my programme of studies and pursued a course of theological training, and in 1970 was ordained as a deacon in the United Methodist Church (USA). In the following year, I applied and was accepted to be an educational missionary to work with the Korean Methodist Church (KMC). For the next five years, before my first furlough, I studied Korean language at Yonsei University for two years, followed by an appointment to teach anthropology at Kyŏngbuk National University in Taegu. In the early 1970s, traditional Korean patterns of life had not yet changed significantly. Korean home life was still predominantly floor sitting with the main room of a house serving multiple purposes as a dining room, lounge, and as a 'bed' room for senior members of the family. Being a bachelor in those days, I had the great opportunity of spending my two years of language training living in the home of a family who attended one of the two principal Methodist churches in central Seoul,

Chonggyo Methodist Church. I effectively became a member of the family, and the sons became my brothers, strong ties which remain to this day. I had a small room to myself which contained a floor-height desk, my *ibul* (duvet) and *yo* (mattress), and a 'largish' bookcase. I cherished these things and relished the opportunity to be part of Korean life in this way.

It was from this family (rather than Yonsei!) that I not only learned how to speak Korean but also learned the intricacies of the Korean social system. The hierarchies within the family and the way in which people negotiated them were plain to see. The father may have sat at the pinnacle, but it was a lonely position because it was the mother who made the decisions, and to whom all the children, male and female, deferred or sought advice. Between the siblings, age was the key discriminating factor. Older siblings had more authority and could advise or cajole the younger ones. I was in a peculiar position because although I was in the family, I wasn't of it: I was foreign, and I was a minister. I was regarded by the children as a *hyŏng* (elder brother) but because I was foreign and a minister I was exempt to a certain degree from the requirements of the system. But I still had to learn how to appropriately negotiate my way through this subtle system of human relations.

In the 1970s, there were very few foreigners of any sort in Korea, principally three categories – US military, US Peace Corps volunteers, and missionaries, also primarily Americans. Of these groups, the latter two actually lived in Korean society, and only the missionaries lived in Korea for a significant part of their working lives. In a culture where a person becomes a part of a web of social relations from his or her birth, long-term residents like missionaries don't have any 'social space' in the way that a born-Korean would. One way in which Koreans gave foreigners like missionaries 'social space' was to create a Korean name for them. The then minister at Chonggyo Methodist Church did this for me within my first year in Korea, a name by which I am usually known to Koreans today.

Names like mine were carefully created so that they wouldn't seem odd, and, like an 'authentic' Korean name, would carry a significant meaning, one which the creator hoped the recipient would live up to. The Revd. Pak Yongik gave me the name 'Kim Chŏnghyŏn' [金正玄]. I was given the surname Kim because I was living with members of the Kimhae Kim clan, but also because the character 'kim' or 'kŭm' means 'gold'. Mr Pak referenced this to the passage in verse 10 of the 23rd chapter of the Book of Job which reads, 'when he [God] has tested me, I shall be as purest gold' (New International Version). The remaining two characters represent a harmonisation of Confucian and Christian thought. 'Chŏng' stands for 'righteousness', a key value in both Confucianism and Christianity. 'Hyŏn' is a deeper, more philosophical character. Although it literally means 'black', it refers to the black void of the sky at night, and thence to 'Heaven' in its deepest philosophical and theological sense.

Thus, my personal name means 'Heaven's righteousness', in one way a burden but in another, a reminder of one's purpose in life.

Names and their meaning are very important in Korean life. They create social space, social ties, enabling one to travel through the web of social relations and to be part of it. Bestowing names is one of the highest honours one can have, and as such is usually the role of the grandfather. Twice, I have been asked by friends who call me *hyŏng* to name their children. When I see these grown children today, we have a special bond. When I first went to the city of Taegu to work, an elder in the church I attended was the head of nursing at Tongsan Hospital, one of the principal hospitals in the city. She was a formidable personage in many ways, but because she was also a Kimhae Kim and because the 'chŏng' character in her name – which was also the same 'chŏng' in my name – was the marker for her generation (called *tollim-cha*), we had a special bond. I was not simply a young missionary needing looking after, I was in terms of fictive kinship a distant cousin or younger brother. She helped me get settled into life in Taegu, creating social space which would never have been there otherwise. At the beginning of each semester, a few students would come up after the first class and ask me which Kim clan I belonged to. The Kimhae Kims were always pleased, and the members of the other Kim clans disappointed. Everyone knew it was a fictive relationship, but it was a serious matter nonetheless.

Just how different the situation was with Japan, I learned some years later, in the mid-1980s, when I was teaching at the Methodist Theological Seminary in Seoul. A visiting Methodist missionary colleague from Japan came to my office door and was astounded to see my Korean name emblazoned on it. 'Why', he asked, 'do you use a name like that when everyone can speak and read English?' He went on to say that no missionary in Japan had a Japanese-style name. He felt that I was being patronising to my Korean colleagues. I had to explain to him that although every member of staff of the seminary had a Ph.D. from a North American or European university, I was known by my Korean name because it gave me social space in a country where I would not have social space. Latterly, I wondered if what he was saying meant that in Japan people were less willing or able to accommodate long-term foreign residents into their society than Koreans did.

Deference or recognising the proper degree or type of relationship between individual people is a prominent feature of Korean life, and these distinctions are indicated in the use of language. People would be addressed by their title or role to which would be added a marker for respect, *nim*. Thus, I would be addressed by students as *sŏnsaeng-nim* [respected teacher] or by church members as *moksa-nim* [respected pastor]. These forms of address varied according to context. In my early years in Taegu, I both taught at Kyŏngbuk National University and advised the local branch of the Student Christian Movement. One of my students was also a member of the SCM and in class always addressed me as *sŏnsaeng-nim* and outside of class

as *moksa-nim* indicating that his relationship to me at that point was different. Modifying your indication of role relationship could become quite complicated. The brother of a friend of mine (who called me *hyŏng*, 'elder brother') was together with me and this friend. In conversation, the young man at one point said *hyŏng-nim!*, and his elder brother responded. The younger man then said, 'No, not you *hyŏng*, *hyŏng-nim*', gesturing towards me. In other words, because his relationship to me was mediated through his own elder brother, and because I was the eldest of the three people, he had to indicate that there was a difference in social status. This was a point which even his own brother hadn't spotted.

Behaviour was another way in which respect was shown. Bowing was one way that the young had of showing respect, but there were other ways. In the 1970s, young men were not to be seen smoking in front of their elders or people older than them. One day, on my way to class, I had gotten off the bus by the main gate of Kyŏngbuk National. From the main gate, the road slopes a long way down hill providing a clear view for a considerable distance. As I entered the campus, I saw two of my students who were walking up the hill and at a distance of several hundred feet away from me. I saw them. They saw me. They were smoking! Instantly, they both bowed deeply and simultaneously and forcefully threw away their cigarettes! I had never seen such spontaneous and instantaneous choreography before. But, it was important that they did not offend against etiquette even at a considerable distance when it might be supposed that I couldn't actually see if they were smoking.

The house in which 'my family' in Seoul lived was located across the street from the west gate of the Kyŏngbok Palace, the central royal residence. Although not an old building, it had all the features of a traditional home which I came to love. When I completed language studies and went to work in Taegu, I convinced the Methodist Mission that they should purchase a Korean-style house for me. This was located within a 15 minutes' walk of the centre of the city. The house was a typical four-room *ondol* [heated] floor house with a small garden. The heating system burned *yŏnt'an* [coal briquettes] which had the potential to cause death by carbon monoxide poisoning if there was a crack in the floor. The floors themselves were concrete slabs covered first by door paper and then overlaid with heavy waxed paper which was varnished. The heat from the flues gave a warm yellowish orange colour to the floors. I loved to write to my parents that I had repapered the floors! During the 'Oil Shock' years of the mid-1970s, missionary colleagues' homes (being cavernous Western-style buildings) were cold, but not so cold as the home of a Japanese friend in Kyōto which only had a *tatami* mat floor with a space heater – turned off at night! The *ondol* system must rank as one of the most sensible and efficient systems for heating a home.

The centrepiece of the house was the great beam in the ceiling of the wooden floor room [*maru*] where people would sit out on a summer's evening and chat. This beam, called *taedŭlpo*, was the beauty point of the house and contained precise information

about the year, month, day and hour when it had been raised, and was given in the traditional lunar calendar system. The house faced south and from the *maru* of my house one had a splendid view of Ap'-san ['the mountain in front'] – properly called Taedŏk-san – which dominated the city's vistas. The shape of the house was like an 'L' or the Korean letter ㄱ with one *ondol* room and the kitchen on one leg, and the main room, *maru*, and a two further *ondol* rooms on the longer leg. This style of house was the standard size and shape of middle-class Korean housing in the Taegu region and was being built at least until the mid-1970s. Sadly, most of these houses have now been torn down to make way for enormous tower blocks of flats.

Before the ubiquity of high quality flats, homes did not have rooms for bathing. You bathed by going to a *mogyok-t'ang*, which is similar to the Japanese *furo*, but more complicated. Whereas the *furo* provides individual space with ranks of taps and shower heads to wash thoroughly and a hot plunge pool in which to soak, the Korean *mogyok-t'ang* has the same spaces for washing, but is also provided (usually) with three pools of water – cold, tepid, and hot – and a sauna. Sometimes a fourth very hot pool (*yŏl-t'ang*) is provided. I used to go at 6 a.m. to the neighbourhood bathhouse in Seoul and got to know the *undong-hanŭn harabŏji* ['exercising grandfathers'], older men who got up at the crack of dawn to go hill-walking and then took a bath afterwards. From this experience, I learned that the *mogyok-t'ang* was not simply a place to bathe, but that it was also a place for socialising. When I settled in Taegu, I found that early on a Sunday morning the elders of my church would be in my 'local' and therefore I could discuss any necessary church business soaking in the hot pool! In the 1970s, Taegu claimed to have the largest *mogyok-t'ang* in Korea, the *Tŏksan-t'ang*. This bathhouse had a cold pool so large that you could swim in it, a sauna using steam forced through the leaves of the medicinal herb mugwort, and a large hot pool with a revolving Saturn-shaped spout continuously spewing out hot water. On my way home from a tiring day's teaching, I would stop off there – what a wonderful way to restore the soul! As an institution, the *mogyok-t'ang* still exists, but is now known by more 'up-market' names such as a sauna or a health club because virtually every home now has its own bathroom. The *mogyok-t'ang* has become more of a leisure destination, but nonetheless the same function of socialising remains.

The *tabang* [literally 'tea room'] was another place for socialising, a place for meeting up with people for a chat or to debate business. Seeing someone on the street, one would 'pop in' for a cup, or use the shop as an agreed meeting venue. Although they were called 'tea rooms', *tabang* mostly served (not very good) coffee or different kinds of Korean herbal teas, but not Indian leaf tea. It seems difficult to believe in the current day when Korea has the most extensive network of mobile telephony in the world that in the early 1970s possession of a land line telephone was not common. Partly this was a matter of expense, and partly a matter of the lack of a sufficient number of connections. Because ordering a telephone through

the Ministry of Telecommunications could literally take ages, a thriving market in re-sold telephone lines existed. You went into a shop and purchased a telephone line (and separately a telephone), which had been sold on to the shop. This was not a particularly cheap option, but it did provide a means of more quickly acquiring a telephone. For many small businesses – especially small shops and businesses in the local markets – possession of a telephone was not possible because of the expense. However, since all *tabang* did have to have a telephone to receive take-out orders, they became the place where small businessmen would spend the day receiving calls and entertaining clients. Anyone who went to a *tabang* would not be startled to hear the manageress call out *Kim sajang-nim!* [Proprietor Kim!] to bring an entrepreneur to the telephone.

A unique feature, I believe, of Korean culture during the 1950s to 1980s was the *ŭmak kamsang-sil* ['music listening room']. This was a specialised kind of *tabang* where you went to listen to music. You came in, ordered a drink, and if you wanted to do so, requested a piece of music. You sat down, enjoyed your drink and heard classical music which either you had selected, or someone else had. The most famous, and I believe the first, of the *ŭmak kamsang-sil* was the *Renaissance* on Chongno street in Seoul. The story of its origin is that the owner, who had a very large collection of 78 r.p.m. records of Western classical music, found himself in impoverished circumstances after the Korean War and decided to use listening to his records as a means for earning an income. By the time I arrived in Korea as a missionary in the 1970s, there were several of these *kamsang-sil* in Seoul and as well as elsewhere in the country. When I went to Taegu to live, I quickly sought out the most famous *kamsang-sil* there, the *Heimat* [German: 'hometown']. The recent rapid development of other means of obtaining and listening to music has meant the death knell for this aspect of Korean culture, and I don't believe that any of these 'music listening rooms' now exist.

In the absence of 'supermarkets', in the 1970s and even into the 1980s, local neighbourhood markets were everywhere selling local produce and manufactured products. From our neighbourhood market in Seoul, I learned that even if a bottle of shampoo had a 'fixed price' stamped on it, one could haggle for the price! Our local market in the Samdŏk-tong area of Taegu had the [usual] range of butchers, greengrocers, fruiterers, and small appliance shops, but it also had shops that made products such as sesame oil. The smell of sesame seeds being pressed to make oil was one of the highlights of the day as I walked to work in the morning. There were specialised markets as well, where certain kinds of goods could be found, like the Fresh Fruit Market, and the Kyo-dong Market in Taegu which specialised in electrical goods. In Taegu, the greatest market was the Sŏmun (West Gate) Market which although a massive general market was known as *the* place to buy cloth. This was because Taegu was at that time the centre of the Korean cloth industry. I used

to go there to purchase cloth for a suit and then go to one of the tailors inside the market who would make a superbly fitting suit for me. Once when I was interviewed on television I remember the two tailors told me that they nervously watched to see if the suit would look alright! In the 1970s, people tired of having to continuously polish their brass rice and soup bowls and chopsticks and switched to using aluminium products instead. In the Sŏmun Market, there was a stall which would buy brass goods by weight and ship them on to factories in Seoul to be turned into brass lampstands. I conducted a kind of salvage operation by purchasing a set of brass rice bowls with covers, soup bowls, condiment jars with covers, a *sinsollo* brazier (a brazier for a stew) and various hairpins and other ornaments. Korean brass is of an especially high quality; when these vessels are struck on the lip they produce a beautiful ring. I also discovered that some companies produced rice and soup bowls of brass which were heavily plated with stainless steel to prevent staining or discolouration. They too produced a beautiful ring.

These features of normal social and cultural life were framed by the political events revolving around us. The earliest recollection of political activity I remember is coming out of language class at Yonsei to be confronted by soldiers moving onto campus to impose order after a student demonstration against the imposition of martial law. This must have been in late 1971. It was quite a shock. The President then proposed a referendum on a new constitution, the Yusin ('Revitalising Reforms') Constitution, which would allow President Park Chung Hee (Pak Chŏnghŭi) to remain in office permanently. Our house received a brochure explaining why the constitutional revision was necessary and had a series of cartoons which illustrated the different points being made. Two in particular stick in my mind. One showed a long road up a hill slope at the top of which were American, British, German, and Japanese open cars with bags of money hanging from the back. In the mid-slope was a sleek Korean car, also with a bag of money, with the driver leaning over the windscreen saying, 'We're going to catch up!' The other cartoon showed a view of the curvature of the globe with the Korean peninsula looming unusually large in the centre, laden with factories, shipyards and petrochemical plants. On either side of the fringe of the globe were groups of people who were clearly neither Korean nor Western asking a man in the Korean peninsula, 'Could you lend us some money?' With a smile he is leaning over with a bag of money saying, 'Of course!' These two cartoons in particular sum up a general attitude amongst the populace which provides a psychological explanation for South Korea's rapid development – the urge to recapture Korea's perceived place on the world stage as a developed, prosperous nation. Economic development was a nationalist goal, not just a goal for personal self-betterment.

On 4 July 1972, everyone was told that the President would make a very important announcement and that we should be sure to watch the televisions or listen on the

radio. I remember being startled when President Park said that his representative had met with Kim Ilsung of North Korea, and that they would begin discussions about eventual unification of the two states. This was an electric statement. Direct contact between north and south; possible unification; peace. The date is also significant: American Independence Day. South Korea (and North Korea) was indicating that it would pursue its own policy. This stance has to be seen in the context of President Nixon's visit to China, and the shock waves which that visit sent to the leaders of both Korean states. One fruit of the 4 July Declaration was the first series of North and South Korean Red Cross talks about bringing together families divided by the Korean War and national division. It was exciting to see vehicles from 'our side' cross over the DMZ to head north to P'yŏngyang. Even more exciting was to stand at the end of our alley way and watch the cavalcade of cars carrying the North Korean delegation past the Kyŏngbok Palace walls and into the Capitol building in its grounds. There was an open car in the front with the chief delegate. It was like seeing someone from Mars. The North had seemed like another planet and now people from 'there' were 'here'. That first evening there was a banquet held to welcome the delegation. The first thing which the delegates did before being seated was to find out who had been at what middle school with whom. A very Korean way of sorting out the important social relationships, and proof to me that whatever else had changed, certain basic features of Korean culture up north hadn't.

This mood of goodwill did not last long in the end. By 1973, the Red Cross talks to discuss the issue of reunions of families separated by the national division had become moribund. There was a north Korean-sponsored assassination attempt on the life of President Park on the Independence Day celebrations on 15 August 1974 which resulted in the death of his wife, Madame Yuk. Photographs taken at that moment showed her resolute composure while everyone else on the stage was scattering. Her state funeral showed the depth of personal emotion which people felt. She was genuinely popular whereas the President was respected by the general populace for the development of the nation, and disliked by the intellectuals for his authoritarian rule. When the President was assassinated in 1979, his state funeral demonstrated this difference. People were respectfully watching the cortege, but there was none of the emotion expressed for Madame Yuk. Park was not a charismatic leader and was never popular the way she had been.

The principal reminders of the continued state of confrontation with the North were the monthly air raid drills and the nightly curfew. The former was conducted nationally on the fifteenth day of each month. Everyone was expected to take shelter in a building, or if you were travelling through the countryside, beneath a bridge or in another shelter. I can remember in the early 70s one elaborate drill conducted at the central Kwanghwa-mun intersection in Seoul with the droning sound of aircraft accompanied by the sound of anti-aircraft fire emanating from the local police

box, red smoke simulating dropped bombs, and motorcycle policemen with sirens screaming around the central road network. This was followed by a tannoy voice at the end saying, 'Seoul is free! Seoul is free!' In spite of all these elaborate attempts to make the event seem real, the sheer frequency and regularity of the event made people become rather blasé about the drills. In the 1980s, my wife and I used to say that the 15th of any month would be the best day for the North to invade because no one would believe it. However, that changed dramatically in 1983. I was downtown, at the Kwanghwa-mun intersection, when the sirens went off. It was not the 15th and a voice on the tannoy shouted, 'This is not a drill! This is not a drill!' The fear on the faces of the pedestrians was a memory I will never forget. On that day, a North Korean air force pilot was defecting to the south – bringing with him the latest MIG fighter, triggering the national air raid sirens as the ROK Air Force scrambled to meet him.

The nightly curfew was the other reminder of the tense relations between the two Korean states. Instituted by the American Military Government in 1945, it was finally abolished in January of 1982. Operating between midnight and 4 a.m., it meant that night life business closed at 11 p.m. to be sure to give people time to get home. My first encounter with the curfew was in 1967 when I stepped out into a main road from the alleyway where a friend's house was situated and was surprised by the eerie emptiness of this great street. Friends used to joke that the curfew was the President's way of ensuring that everyone got a good night's sleep for the next day's work. In the late 1970s, I had visited a friend in Pusan and got the last train north to Taegu. Unfortunately, this train was considerably delayed leaving Pusan and didn't get to Tong Taegu Station until well after midnight. The mad scramble in the station was amazing to see. As you went out the door, someone would stamp the back of your hand with red ink to show that you were authorised to be out. Trying to get a cab home was also nearly impossible, until one policeman got a cab to get me home.

Throughout the 1970s, there was increasing unrest about the authoritarian nature of the Government. Student demonstrations were becoming more usual, not only in Seoul but in most major cities as well. Demonstrations in Taegu in those days were not the violent confrontations which they subsequently became, nor did the police have the more sophisticated equipment which was the hallmark of their armoury in the 1980s. When the first demonstration was held at Kyŏngbuk National University, I was struck by how different it seemed from those in the capital. A long line of students, linked two abreast, were singing and chugging towards the back gate of the university where the riot police were arrayed. This consisted of two rows of small cannon-like canisters to shoot-off teargas, behind each of which stood a riot policeman – looking an ordinary policeman, legs akimbo and arms crossed behind his back. Behind them was an open-sided lorry like a small troop transporter. In front of this array stood the *ch'onggyŏng*, the commandant of the provincial police, with cap full of braid,

and holding a swagger stick. He went up and met the line of students, leaning into the head of the line. The whole line chugged in a stationary position while he leaned forward and said that they could stay on campus and demonstrate but if they went out of the campus, he would have to apply force to stop them. After a bit of negotiation they turned around and chugged off into the main part of the campus. He then turned back to his 'men' and saw me. We had met a few days earlier at the church where his wife attended. He immediately took off his cap and we both bowed deeply asking how we were. Instantly, the visage of every one of the assembled grim-faced policemen switched to broad smiles!

Political events framed my departure in 1976 to do a post-graduate programme of research at Edinburgh, when American soldiers were killed at the DMZ attempting to trim trees, and my return in 1979 when President Park was assassinated. I had not yet moved into my home in Samdŏk-tong and was staying with the chaplain of Keimyung University where I was now to work. Mrs. Ch'oi burst out of the kitchen in a state of shock exclaiming that the President had been killed. The funeral was stately and proper, but without significant emotion. And things began to change. I remember one activist student saying, 'I like what I read in the papers now'. The interim government under the Acting President Choi Kyuha was moving to make orderly changes, when on the 12th December 1979 a faction of the military took control. This event, subsequent demonstrations, the Kwangju uprising in May 1980, and the subsequent removal of the Acting President and the 'approval' of a new constitution brought the leader of the military coup, Chun Doo Hwan to power as President. This final period of my stay in Korea during the Chun years was a contrast to the Park years. Chun was more ruthless and had more sophisticated means of imposing 'stability' on society. He was also not respected, even grudgingly, in the way in which Park had been. In addition to the way in which he and his group had overturned the natural course of development, there was deep resentment about the Chun family, on both his and his wife's sides, for the extensive corruption. Chun was seen to be running a kleptocracy on a grand scale. For all the criticism of Park's authoritarian rule, no one then or later has accused him of being corrupt – a marked contrast to Ferdinand Marcos and other dictatorial leaders in Asia and Africa.

Chun's use of the media led to many sarcastic remarks, one of which was the phrase '*ttaengjŏn*'. '*Ttaeng*' is the sound a bell makes in Korean, and '*jŏn*' is short for Chun Doo Hwan. When the TV news broadcast came on, a bell would sound indicating the new hour, and the newsreader instantly would begin on cue 'Chun Doo Hwan, President of Korea, today …', hence '*ttaengjŏn*'! No one, in other words, had any regard for what was to follow.

However, by the 1980s, many things in Korean society had begun to change. Most noticeable to me was the Korean attitude towards traditional culture and traditional objects. After finishing language training in 1973, I bought some traditional or

traditional-style furniture to take with me, including a *samch'ŭng-jang* (three-tiered clothes chest), a *pandaji* chest, an antique Korean desk, and a modern Korean-style desk which I had commissioned to be made along with a six-panel embroidered screen which I had also commissioned using Korean folk art to illustrate Christian theology. When I had first moved into my house in Samdŏk-tong in Taegu in 1974, a neighbour, who was also a member of the church I attended, saw some of the traditional Korean furniture which I had and asked me why I had those old things. He was astounded that a 'sophisticated' young man like me would be interested in them. When I moved back into the house in 1979 after returning from Edinburgh, the same neighbour came around to welcome me back and, in an astonished manner, asked where I had gotten those beautiful pieces of Korean furniture. I knew then that during the late 1970s, people's attitudes toward their culture must have changed, reflecting both greater prosperity and a greater confidence in their own traditions.

At the same time as this change was taking place, other dramatic and non-traditional changes in lifestyle were occurring. Until the 1980s, the personal motor car was something only for the wealthy. By the mid- or late 1980s, the motor car was used by people of all classes. Whereas before, in the 1970s and early 1980s, academic institutions would run a fleet of coaches or mini-buses to pick up staff to take them to work, by the late 1980s, it was assumed that they would have their cars. More significant was the change from a floor-sitting culture to a culture where people sat on chairs and slept on beds – even if the dwelling was heated by an *ondol* system. Beds might be covered with *yo*s and *ibul*s, but they were *beds* and above the floor. Even with these changes, people would still use the floor, especially if there was a large gathering. When we had the home group from our church gather in our house, you could easily get 20 people into a room which would be hard to fill with half that number with chairs. The biggest change, however, was the change from living in homes with gardens surrounded by high walls to living in blocs of flats. When I went to Korea in the early 1970s, only poor people lived in the equivalent of Council flats, the *sibŏm* apartments. People with any money lived in a house. There was a 'modernistic' style of house which had developed in the late 1970s, brick, multi-storey and with large gardens. By the late 1980s, the reverse was true. Only poor people lived in houses, the well-to-do lived in blocs of towering flats. Before you had neighbourhoods with little alleys and daily face-to-face contact with people. With the development of living in flats, the whole concept of a neighbourhood disappeared. The assumption that a home is a flat happened rapidly, and it is strange that this attitude did not happen in Japan which has similar constraints on space.

I have not yet said anything about the Christian church for which I was working, first teaching general subjects such as anthropology and mentoring Christian student groups in Taegu and then teaching world religions and scriptures to theological students at the Theological Seminary in Seoul. The Christian Church (Protestant

and Catholic) at the beginning of the 1960s represented six per cent of the national population. By the end of the 1980s, it was more than 20 per cent, and now accounts for just under 30 per cent of the national population. This rapid growth paralleled the dramatic economic growth and general social changes, and to a certain extent is closely linked to these other developments. Although Korean Christianity has a significant rural presence, it is largely an urban phenomenon in current times. In three decades, Korea changed from a rural, agrarian society to an urban, industrial society, drawing a labour force out of face-to-face life in villages to essentially faceless urban settings. The community of the churches with a plethora of activities beyond worship provided a new face-to-face community for uprooted people. More than that it provided an ethic for living in a new world, a world characterised by equality of the sexes and concern for others.

In the early 1970s, very traditional forms of social behaviour were manifest in even the most sophisticated congregations. At Chonggyo Methodist Church in Seoul, which had a congregation of highly educated people who had travelled or lived abroad, one could see a middle-aged couple come in on a Sunday morning and then separate at the entrance, the man going to the men's side of the church and the woman to the women's side. This was a residue of a custom from more than sixty years before when congregations had to be divided because the Confucian tradition was that male and female could not sit together after the age of seven. Not only was there a men's and a women's side there, the sides of the church were arranged so that the older (more respected) people sat at the front and the younger people sat towards the back. As one looked from the front of the church to the back, you could make out a clear series of age ranks. People made this social separation quite naturally, because it was respectful.

The importance of the display of proper etiquette was also manifest in the conduct of the service itself. At Chonggyo Church, an elder would be responsible for leading the congregation in prayer. He or she would ascend to the lectern, remove their glasses and begin to pray. The first time I saw an elder removing their glasses, I thought it odd, until I subsequently realised that everyone of the elders did this when they prayed. In late traditional society, it was considered rude for a young person to wear glasses in the presence of a parent or an elder as the wearing of glasses was a sign of age. Removing one's glasses showed respect. Thus, as God was the Father of all, and as a sign of respect to Him, elders removed their glasses before initiating prayer. This custom, however, is no longer practised, not even at Chonggyo Methodist Church.

Korean Protestants, in particular, have brought to their worship an extraordinary enthusiasm as attendance at any service where hymns are sung vigorously and simultaneous out-loud prayers (*tongsŏng kido*) sound like a clap of thunder. Although the majority of hymns sung and the form of liturgy used follow closely Western

patterns, Korean Protestants have contributed something unique to world Christianity in the *ch'udo yebae* service, a memorial service for the dead. In a nation steeped in the Confucian values of filial piety and the prescribed performance of memorial rituals for the ancestors, indigenous values would clash with Christian values against the practice of idolatry, the worship of gods other than God Himself. Filial piety and monotheism, an irresolvable conflict? *Ch'udo yebae* is a Korean-origin ritual which is both Christian and Confucian in that it focuses on God while allowing the believer to give thanks for the life of the deceased and to fulfil feelings of filial piety. This accommodation to Korean culture and deeply felt values was a significant factor in the rapid and wide-spread acceptance of Christian belief.

The growing confidence of South Korean society was evident in several incidents. When there was massive flooding in Seoul and other parts of the country, North Korea offered food aid, which was accepted without any apparent hesitation. Likewise, when a North Korean delegation came to the south and a friend of ours, Prof. Yi Yŏngdŏk, who was Vice-Chair of the South Korean Red Cross, was asked how they would show the North Koreans around, he answered that the North Koreans would see things just as they were with no attempt being made to make things better than they were. Ten years before, no one would have spoken like that.

What eventually brought the regime down was the general popular revulsion at the continued military dominance of the Government. A young student died as a result of torture in January of 1987 leading not just to student demonstrations, but general demonstrations, grandmothers shaking umbrellas at the massed lines of riot police. It was if the people were staying 'Go away; you're making us look like a banana republic'. I think that it was this general pride in Korea's accomplishments in a very short period of time, its reclamation of its place on the world's stage that made the general population angry at the continued presence of the generals. The generals backed down. Nationalism, I think even more than the desire for a better life, has been the driving force behind South Korea's leap into the ranks of the world's leading countries.

Without planning it, my time of encounter and living in South Korea from 1965 to 1987 was a period of the most extraordinary and extraordinarily rapid economic, social, cultural and political change. Daily change was happening before one's eyes, even if one wasn't aware of it at the time. It was a privilege to have lived in and have taken part in a country which was recapturing its rightful place on the world stage. During the 1970s, I used to say to myself looking at all the difficulties, 'I'm sure in twenty years I'll say that this was an interesting time – but not now!!' It was interesting – and a privilege to have had a front row seat.

ON FIRST HEARING THE COURT NIGHTINGALE
(Reflections on a personal view of Korean music in the 1970s)*

KEITH PRATT

The 1970s would prove to be a fateful decade for *gugak*, traditional Korean music. Its greatest modern historian, Professor Lee Hye-ku, was at the height of his analytical powers; after decades of neglect through the colonial and post-war eras, its popularity was growing among South Korean music students and beginning to experience a long overdue revival in popular awareness; even in the Western world it was greeted with acclaim, almost certainly for the first time ever.

When I first set foot in Seoul in 1972 I knew very little about Korea and nothing whatever about its music. I was researching Chinese music, and a terse mention in William Henthorn's *A History of Korea* that Emperor Song Huizong had sent King Yejong two huge gifts of its latest ceremonial and ritual music encouraged me to try and discover more about this. Being unable to get a visa for the People's Republic of China I headed instead for South Korea.[1]

Having asked to stay with a Korean family I was invited into the home of Yi Chaesuk in Changŭi-dong. It was the beginning of a friendship that would shape my life for decades to come. The very first evening after my arrival she took me to the old National Theater in Myŏngdong (Figure 1) for a performance on stage of traditional music and dance. It was a programme of mixed *tangak* and *hyangak*,[2] which seemed to bear no resemblance to the Chinese music that I was familiar with and interested in, and culture shock was immediately added to my jet lag!

Yi Chaesuk was a teacher of *kayagŭm* in the College of Music at Seoul National University (SNU), a well known recitalist, and the creator of a recently published system for transcribing the microtonal shading of traditional *kayagŭm sanjo* into Western stave notation. The following morning she introduced me to Professor Lee

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Figure 1. The National Theater, Myŏngdong

Hye-ku, Dean of the College.[3] When I explained what I wanted to research, however, he seemed to be unwilling to help, saying, first, that I should not simply approach Korea as a repository of *Chinese* culture, and, second, that until I knew something about *Korean* music from the inside, I wouldn't be able to understand what it was that I was reading about. He was perfectly right.

And so it was that one very hot summer's day in early June I arrived at the National Classical Music Institute (*Kungnip kugagwŏn*) on Namsan, to be welcomed by its director, Sŏng Kyŏngnin. In those days the NCMI shared premises with its High School, facing the site on which the new National Theater was being built. To my horror, Director Sŏng informed me that I had – through Lee Hye-ku's intercession – been allocated lessons with Choi Choong'ung (*kayagŭm*) and Chung Jaegak (*piri*). I was the first Englishman to have turned up there, and this was the beginning of my second stage of culture shock!

The Seoul through which I travelled daily to Namsan, by generally old and overcrowded buses, was still struggling to recover from the war, and people had plenty of grumbles. The capital still exerted its age-old pull on all countryside families aspiring to better themselves and streets were overcrowded with pedestrians. Their sudden emptying one lunchtime in July, as everyone crowded indoors to try and

watch film of the Red Cross delegation on its first epoch-making visit to P'yŏngyang, created an eerie stillness and quiet. Signs of economic austerity and constraints on freedom were obvious, even to a bewildered newcomer, though evidence of post-war recovery was clear. Ugly concrete flyovers straddled the equally ugly buildings of the Japanese colonial period. Public transport was badly overcrowded, taxis were few and far between, and there were almost no privately-owned cars. The first subway line was being dug and laid, which for the time being led to traffic jams and long delays. Troops guarded the few bridges across the Han River, the curfew curtailed everybody's evening activities, and taxis were almost impossible to find late at night. Monthly air-raid practices drove people off the streets (and me, with music teachers and fellow students, into the shelters below the High School where the Classical Music Institute worked). Koreans (like my Yi family) with a foreign contact could gain entry to the US forces' Commissariat, otherwise supplies of Western food and drink, like scotch whisky, Maxwell House coffee, and digestive biscuits were unobtainable). Little English or even romanised *han'gŭl* was in evidence, though as a sinologist I appreciated the widespread use of Chinese characters. From time to time itinerant vendors would climb aboard buses and sell the latest lists, along with such things as socks, dictionaries, ball-point pens, and mouse-traps. One of the most valuable things that I thus acquired was a list of government-approved Chinese characters with their *han'gŭl* equivalents.

The next two months put me on a physical, intellectual and emotional roller-

Figure 2. Yi Chaesuk

Figure 3. The Court Nightingale Dance

coaster. Trying to play and to understand the two instruments and an unfamiliar notational system using non-standard Chinese characters, when taught individually in exceptional heat by two outstanding but uncompromising virtuosi, caused me intense pain, both physical and mental. I was suitably ashamed one day when Chung Jaegak, no doubt bored beyond endurance by my feeble efforts, lay down on the floor and went to sleep. On the other hand I felt genuinely satisfied if and when he praised my playing, saying that I must have been out on the beer the night before! It was good teaching psychology! To make up for my blistered fingers and the pressure of practising at home within Yi Chaesuk's ever-attentive earshot, I would marvel at the sound of her own playing and the *sanjo* lessons I heard her giving her own students in the house (Figure 2). And even if I had to force myself to catch the bus up Namsan in the mornings I was at least consoled by the thought that my labours were as nothing compared with the sufferings of the workmen with wet flannels on their heads chipping away in the mid-day sun at huge blocks of granite to build the slowly rising National Theater opposite the High School.

I found occasional opportunities to witness performances of traditional court dance by the beautiful girls who belonged to the NCMI dance troupe. Some of these were performed by soloists but most by teams. I particularly remember the thrill I felt on seeing the Sword Dance, the Drum Dance, and the Court Nightingale Dance for the first time. I was immensely excited by the possibility that in the Sword Dance I might be witnessing something that represented a direct cultural link with Tang China and the Drum Dance with Koryŏ Korea.[4] But for sheer aesthetic and breath-taking quality nothing could rival the Court Nightingale Dance (*Ch'unaengjŏn*), one of the last surviving solo pieces in the formerly extensive court repertoire (Figure 3).

Performed by a female or male dancer entirely within the confined space of a small woven mat, it represents even today the acme of control and sophistication. The performer's torso and shoulders rise and fall very slowly as she advances, retires and inclines in time with the music. Her entire body, limbs and hands are concealed by a gorgeous costume with long sleeves, and the viewer's attention becomes concentrated on the movement of her arms and flicks of her wrists. Though the dance may only date from the early nineteenth century and was probably Korean rather than Chinese in origin,[5] it nevertheless represented the ultimate refinement visible in dance style at either court. Sometimes a special performance of *gugak* was put on to welcome a visiting dignitary. On such occasions it was customary at the NCMI to position the guest and Director Sŏng Kyŏngnin on chairs at one end of the hall, facing the orchestra seated on the floor at the other. The dancers performed in the intervening space. One of the principles of court dance, as expounded in the 1970s, was that the dancers should show no sign of emotion or awareness of their surroundings. Having encountered them in the High School corridors I knew just how lively and excitable they really were, but so disciplined were they that not a hint of this showed when they were performing, and I found them hardly recognisable. On one such occasion I was privileged to watch from the balcony at the end of the main hall. In the course of one dance two lines of girls glided slowly down the hall, eyes straight ahead and unfocussed, evidently oblivious of the two spectators sitting straight ahead of them. As they got closer to them I was amused to see the guest growing increasingly anxious

Figure 4. Kim Ch'ŏnhŭng's Court Nightingale Dance

Figure 5. Lee Hye-ku in 2008, aged 100

and uncomfortable. When, at the very last moment, they wheeled away to right and left with only inches to spare he was quite unable to conceal his sense of relief.

The musicians and dancers who performed on such occasions were, so to speak, descended from the last court orchestra of the Chosŏn dynasty. In 1972 just one of them, the great dance expert Kim Ch'ŏnhŭng (Figure 4), had actually been a member of that orchestra as a boy, and from him I heard something of the exacting discipline maintained at the court.[6] Before a performance the musicians were marched to their playing positions and sat down cross-legged on the floor. There they must remain for hours, before, during and after the entertainment, without showing any sign of discomfort. Anyone who made any unnecessary movement would be hit with a stick by the *chef d'orchestre*, and perhaps incur further punishment when the whole ordeal was over.

A visit to the annual performance of *Munmyoak* at the Confucian Shrine provided me with an introduction to *aak* (Confucian music), and my third culture shock of the summer. This, I sensed with renewed excitement, put me within fingertip distance of the rites and culture of ancient Confucianism as it was preserved nowhere else in the modern world: it was the survival of just that very Chinese music that I had come to Korea to research, and this must be a taste of what formal court life in ancient China might have felt like. I was actually jumping to rather emotional and naïve conclusions, but as I watched the eight lines of eight male dancers making the slow, stately movements of the civil and military dances, exactly as described in the

Analects of Confucius,[7] my excitement was pardonable. Here, for example, I got my first sight of some of the most esoteric of ancient Chinese instruments, the ocarina (Ch. *xun*, Kor. *hun*), the tiger (Ch. *hu*, Kor. ŏ), the tub (Ch. *zhu*, Kor. *ch'uk*), and the huge *zhian'gu* (Kor. *kŏn'go*) drum. What's more, on that lovely September morning, I was almost the only foreigner in evidence. Never, I believe, have I felt as privileged as I was that summer at the welcome and attention that I was given in Korea.

I returned to Seoul in 1974. By this time SNU had moved from its old downtown buildings to a new, spacious, and airy campus in Kwanak-gu. But the sense of freedom afforded by the wide open spaces, multiple sports grounds, attractive vegetation and rugged granite hillsides was contradicted by the military guards at the main gates, and it was here that I had my first encounter with student demonstrations, and the whiff of tear-gas. Now at last Lee Hye-ku (Figure 5) was ready and waiting to let me in on the secrets of *gugak* history – almost literally 'secrets' because apart from Professor Chang Sahun, who didn't speak English, he was almost the only person working in the field at that time. I remember lying awake at night, wondering if I would ever get used to the hard floor and almost equally hard bean-filled pillow, and struggling to understand the implications of what I was reading about in the *Song Shi*, *Koryŏsa*, etc.

Figure 6. Farmers' music at the Suwŏn Folk Village

This trip also gave me the chance to visit the Suwŏn Folk Village prior to its opening later that year (October), and to see the musicians practising there (Figure 6). I hadn't encountered the concept of the open-air working museum before, and I wondered if this was the first such project in the world: certainly it filled me, as a historian with a rapidly growing interest in the culture of traditional Korea, with fascination and enthusiasm.[8] It was here that I first saw farmers' music, *nongak*, being played – if not spontaneously – then at least in more or less appropriate surroundings rather than the confined space of a theatre or concert hall.

In 1978 a third trip to Korea coincided with another significant opening, that of the Sejong Cultural Center, celebrated with a grand Arts Festival between 14 April and 8 July. Not only did these three visits give me unprecedented opportunities to study and enjoy Korean traditional music, they also brought me flattering invitations to give lectures to Koreans on their own traditional music,[9] and to write an article on Korean musical instruments for the in-flight magazine of Korean Air Lines.[10] During these three visits I was honoured to be assisted by such great scholars as Lee Hye-ku, Chang Sahun, Hwang Byunggi (Figure 7), Kim Kisoo, Hahn Manyoung, Yi Byongwon, and Song Bang Song. Yet to my never-ending astonishment, the music to be heard in the coffee shops and even the concert halls was almost invariably Western; more than ninety per cent of the students in the music colleges practised Western classical music; the greater part of the programmes played through the opening season at the Sejong Cultural Center was Western, and even when traditional Korean music was played, it was mostly in the Small Hall, and attracted small audiences and earned sparse applause.

Unlike today, performances of Korean traditional music were infrequent in the 1970s and attracted scant attention compared with Western music, either pop or classical. But there were encouraging signs: student enrolments on courses in *gugak*

Figure 7. Hwang Byunggi

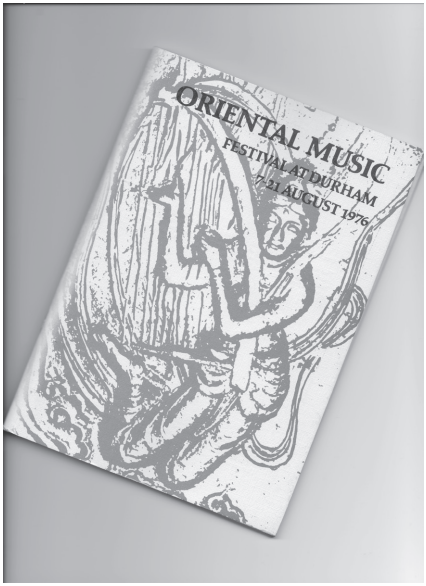

Figure 8. 1976 Durham Festival programme

Figure 9. Kim Sohee

increased through the 1970s and were accompanied by the success of the *Tonga Ilbo*'s newly introduced *kayagŭm* competition;[11] the Little Angels paid their first visit to Europe, including the United Kingdom, in 1973; 1978 saw the formation of the now well-known percussion group Samulnori.

My growing obsession with Korea and its music resulted in the creation of the Durham Oriental Music Festival (1976–82) (Figure 8). To this, thanks to the generous support of government and musicians themselves in Korea, I was able to bring to the UK such outstanding instrumentalists, singers and dancers as Hwang Byunggi,Yi Chaesuk, Kim Chŏngja, Kim Sohee (Figure 9), Mun Ilji and many more. In the course of three unprecedented festivals such great Korean traditional music as *sanjo*, *kagok*, and *sinawi* was played, folk song and *p'ansori* were sung, and individual pieces such as *Sujech'ŏn*, *Yŏmillak*, and *Yŏngsan hoesang* were heard in authentic and full version in this country for the very first time. Professor Lee Hye-ku came to Durham to receive an Honorary Doctorate; programmes were broadcast on Radio Three; both the BBC Proms and Edinburgh Festival 'borrowed' performers when they had finished playing in Durham; rising ethnomusicologists such as Keith Howard[12] first encountered Korean music; and even the closed world of musicologists in post-Mao China found itself confronted by the excitement of *gugak*. In response to Beijing musicians' uncomprehending reaction to their first encounter with it during the 1982 Durham Oriental Music Festival a seminar was arranged to discuss what was meant by 'traditional' music. The leader of the Chinese ensemble from

the Beijing Conservatory, Fan Kun, later wrote an article describing the seminar in *Renmin yinyue*,[13] and soon, as the Maoist era drew to a close, Chinese musicologists were at last freed to explore and enjoy the depths of their own 'ancient music'.

Notes

1 The unprecedented and hugely significant gifts were sent in 1114 and 1116. The results of my research were eventually published in 'Music as a Factor in Sung-Koryŏ Diplomatic Relations, 1069–1126', *T'oung Pao*, vol. LXII (1976), 4–5, pp. 199–218, and 'Sung Hui Tsung's Musical Diplomacy and the Korean Response', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XLIV (1981), Part 3, pp. 509–21.

2 *Tangak* refers to music of traditional Chinese origin, *hyangak* to that of native Korean and other foreign origin.

3 Only as the years passed would I come to appreciate the greatness of Lee Hye-ku's scholarship, the significance of his lifetime's contribution to the unraveling of *gugak*, Korean traditional music, and his genuine humility and kindness as a human being. See my 'Memories of Professor Lee Hye-ku', in *Essays on Music Offered to Dr Lee Hey-ku in Honor of his Hundredth Birthday* (Seoul, 2008), pp. 75–80.

4 I was wrong about the likely source of the Sword Dance (*Kŭmmu*): it may indeed be possible to trace its origins to the Tang era (AD 618–907), but is now thought to commemorate a Korean youth of the Silla kingdom, perhaps a member of the *hwarang* order. Its costumes retain a military flavour. The Drum Dance (*Mugo*) is said to date from the late thirteenth century, and underwent substantial changes in the early and late Chosŏn dynasty.

5 Although it is frequently referred to in English as the Court Nightingale Dance, the name in both Korean and Chinese means Spring Nightingale (or Oriole) Dance. The *Muja Chinjak ŭigwe* of 1828 indicates that it was composed by Prince Ikchong in the early nineteenth century, although the *Chinch'an ŭigwe* of 1848 says firmly that it was composed in 1469. Mun Ilji suggests that Ikchong rearranged and completed the dance. See her 'Ch'unaengjŏn (Nightingale Dance), a Korean Court Dance', *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, vol. 15, 1983. Other dances that are still performed provide evidence of the repertoire inherited from China as far back as the twelfth century, such as the Ball-throwing Dance (*P'ogurak*). See also the excellent PhD thesis by Soe Jung Rock, *Ancient Korean and Japanese Court Dance: Historical Relationship and Transmission*, SOAS, London, 2010.

6 1909–2007. "His contributions to Korean culture, which include dancing before Korea's last king in Ch'angdŏk Palace and playing music for an elaborate ceremony to relocate the tomb of Korea's last queen, were formally recognized many times, and twice by the Korean government when he was designated a National Living Treasure for his expertise in important performing art forms of Korea." University of Hawai'i, 4 May 2009. http://hawaii.edu/news/article.php?aId=2850

7 *Analects*, Book 3, no. 1.

8 Beamish Open Air Museum, Co. Durham, England, opened in May 1972. A smaller but somewhat equivalent Asian example, the Hong Kong Sung Dynasty Village, opened in 1979.

9 For example the Korea-UK Society, the Korean Musicological Society, and the Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch.

10 *Morning Calm*, vol. 2 no. 3, August 1978, pp. 27–31.

11 Seoul National University was the first to establish a department of traditional music, in 1959. It was followed in 1974 by Hanyang University, and by Ewha and Chugye.

12 Now Professor of Music at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

13 *Renmin Yinyue* ('People's Music'), no 178, Beijing: January 1980, pp. 38–40; trans. K. Pratt, 'A Discussion on Chinese National Musical Traditions', *Asian Music*, XII-2, 1981, pp. 1–16.

RECALLING KOREA PAST: A DIPLOMAT'S VIEW OF THE 1970s*

WARWICK MORRIS

I was fortunate to have, between 1975 and 2008, three diplomatic postings to the British Embassy, Seoul, totalling 13 years. I was accompanied on all three by my wife Pam. What made this experience especially interesting was that each posting coincided with a different phase in South Korea's remarkable economic, social and political development.

The first posting, in the 1970s, I shall discuss in some detail in a moment. The second, from mid-1988 to late 1991, was noteworthy for the door-opening Seoul Olympics, related infrastructure developments, moves under President Roh Tae Woo (No Taeu) towards full democracy, and the recognition of South Korea as a major economic power. It also coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the first formal links between South Korea and the communist world, and in 1991 the two Koreas' UN membership. My first visit to the DPRK took place in May 1991, on the occasion of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference in Pyongyang, prior to Britain establishing diplomatic relations with the North.

My third posting, as Britain's Ambassador, was from late 2003 to early 2008. It covered most of the late President Noh Moo Hyun (Roh Moohyun)'s presidency – including his continuation of the Sunshine Policy towards the DPRK – as well as the election of his successor Lee Myung Bak. By then South Korea was truly democratic, the 12th largest economy in the world, and making a diverse and very significant contribution to world affairs. Domestically it was experiencing fast-changing societal attitudes and growing multi-culturalism, and externally a tremendous surge in its links with China. I made a second visit to the DPRK in 2004, by which time Britain had an embassy in Pyongyang. But it's the first posting in Seoul, from 1975 to 1979, that I've been invited to talk about today; not so much about my work at our Embassy, but more to provide a flavour of what we found in Korea, and of our life there.

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* A talk given on 26 November 2011 at the Korean Cultural Centre to the BAKS seminar on *Recalling Korea Past: an Oral History of the 1950s to 1980s*.

Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies, vol. 14 (2012), pp. 63–70.

In mid-1974 we were approaching the end of a busy first posting overseas at our large Embassy in cosmopolitan Paris. Highlights had included a State Visit by HM The Queen, the Vietnam Peace Conference and Britain's entry into the Common Market. A letter arrived informing me that my next assignment would be back to London to learn Turkish. So be it, I thought, as I purchased *Teach Yourself Turkish*. One week later – no email or even fax in those days – came a second letter with different instructions: because of growing interest in Korea, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO, our Foreign Ministry) had decided it was time to start a Korean language training programme, and I was to be the guinea pig. This was to involve two years in Seoul on fulltime Korean language training, followed by a three-year posting in our Embassy's Political Section. (As a footnote I'm pleased to say the FCO has maintained this language training programme ever since. So I must have done something right!)

Barely had Pam and I found Korea on the map, than we were shocked to find ourselves watching live on television an assassination attempt on South Korea's President Park at Seoul's National Theater in October 1974, which tragically killed the popular First Lady. Their elder daughter, who at a young age then bravely assumed the duties of the First Lady, is today a Presidential candidate.

Having left behind anxious parents, we arrived at our then small Embassy in far-off Seoul on a freezing day in January 1975. Korea seemed, in those first few days, a bleak place compared to Paris or London, and at around minus 20 degrees centigrade felt bone-numbingly cold, the more so after our stopover in balmy Hong Kong. The shops contained no imported foodstuffs, and wine and cheese – practically our diet in France! – were almost impossible to find. We were also struck by how mono-cultural, inward-looking and conformist Koreans seemed to be, in opinions, dress and general outlook. The appearance of many military around the country and the fact that all schoolchildren wore black, brass-buttoned uniforms, with short-cropped hair, added to this feeling.

And, though it's hard to believe it now, per capita income was just US$ 600 per annum in 1975 – similar to India or Vietnam today. It's now around $ 20,000. But in 1975 of course the South's economy had only recently overtaken that of the North, which had always benefited from a large proportion of the peninsula's industry, minerals and energy resources. A remarkable economic turn-around in the South was just getting under way.

It was a tough environment for most Koreans, but the combination of ex-Generals dispensing military-style discipline, some very able US-trained economic planners, a tremendous work ethic and a strong sense of nationalism was starting to produce impressive results. Take, for example, Ulsan, a small fishing village down south. This was being turned into a massive shipyard, soon to be building the biggest tankers in the world. Nearby, Hyundai's first car plant was also under way. Both of these

major industrial projects benefited from British know-how and equipment. Chung Seyung of Hyundai Motors had enlisted George Turnbull, a past Managing Director of British Leyland, to help. (It was said that he took a UK-built Morris Marina to Korea to demonstrate how NOT to build a car!). I recall him once taking a break in our Embassy bar and saying, on a bad day: 'These Koreans will never build a car!' Nonetheless, the Hyundai Pony rolled off the Ulsan production line in 1977, and the rest is history. Meanwhile at Pohang Korea's first two steel mills (under the guidance of General Park Taejoon) were going up, with Davy McKee blast furnaces supplied from Britain.

The newly completed Seoul–Pusan highway, which had opened up the country top to bottom, was paving the way for the construction of a whole slew of further highways. Samsung's domestic and white goods, Lucky Gold Star kitchen appliances, as well as stainless steel cutlery, tyres and other items were starting to hit foreign shores. Lotte had branched out from chewing gum into a wide range of confectionery, as well as moving into Department stores. That said, the British Government was still providing aid in the form of technical assistance to Korea as late as the mid-1970s. We knew the British couple running an agricultural extension project in Suwŏn, then deep in the countryside, near where the Seoul Club had its country branch, and another British expert who was helping to improve Korea's stilted, state-controlled television programmes. Today of course South Korea itself has become an impressive aid donor.

Politically, the South Korea that greeted us was swathed in a palpably tense atmosphere. President Park Chung Hee, in charge since the coup of 1961, cut a rather sad figure after the tragic death of his wife and was said to lead a frugal existence. Pictures of his activities appeared daily in every newspaper, which like the TV and radio stations were very much influenced by the authorities. In what was pretty much a military dictatorship there was scant regard for many of the civil rights which we from a Western democracy took for granted, and any signs of domestic dissent were quickly quashed. There were no real trade unions, and the economy was largely 'planned' by the Government, who worked in close collaboration with half a dozen big companies (*chaebŏl).* There was no meaningful Parliamentary opposition, and no NGOs. As well as a strictly enforced nightly curfew, with jittery young conscripts at check points throughout Seoul, there were monthly air raid drills which had to be taken seriously. There were even campaigns from time to time against inappropriate dress and long hair, with enforced haircuts for young men. At Yonsei University, where I studied Korean for 18 months, tear gas often wafted across the campus as riot police clashed with students wanting change, often in front of waiting TV cameras. Creators of 'unrest' and critical writers were branded as sympathisers of North Korea or of communism and dealt with accordingly. There were many political prisoners

and in our Embassy we dealt with much correspondence from Amnesty International and from concerned individuals about human rights issues.

That said, the North Korean regime under Kim Il Sung was in hostile mood and there was a definite feeling that its forces could well attack or invade again. Land and sea border incidents were frequent, some putting the country onto red alert. I especially recall the tree-cutting affair in the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) at Panmunjŏm in August 1976 when several US soldiers were hacked to death. Jostling and fights took place at Panmunjŏm itself – I knew a US colonel whose throat was stamped on by North Korean guards – and patrol boats were occasionally sunk in skirmishes at sea. Several times foreigners left for the safety of Hong Kong. Ever vigilant anti-aircraft batteries surrounded Seoul, and the hills behind the Blue House and the nearby roads were out of bounds. The military were highly visible. There were regular incursions by North Korean mini-submarines to put agents ashore in remote spots, and two extraordinary tunnels dug at huge cost by the North under the DMZ for use as invasion routes were discovered during our time.

Another thing to recall was that the South Korean Government allowed no contact with communist, or even socialist countries. This meant, among other things, a complete absence of Embassies or citizens in Korea from the countries concerned. So incidents like the forcing down by Soviet jets of a Korean Air airliner in Murmansk in 1978 was not only dreadful in itself, but also very awkward to handle diplomatically.

With all unauthorised contact with North Korea banned I kept under lock and key my modest North Korean stamp collection, as well as the highly abusive North Korean propaganda leaflets dropped by balloon that I'd find on weekend hikes in the hills around Seoul!

As for South Korea's diplomatic effort generally, that was aimed mostly on competing with North Korea around the globe. This was not simply for propaganda purposes, but in order to win over the governments of other countries, however tiny, because each had a vote at the UN.

Apart from occasional Red Cross talks, and periodic meetings of the Military Armistice Committee, on which our Embassy's Defence Attaché sat, there was at that time no constructive engagement between the two Koreas. Because of that I especially relished contact with the four members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC), especially the Czechs and Poles. Based in the DMZ, they were unique in that they had access to both Koreas. Today only the Swedes and Swiss remain. As a legacy of Britain's important role in the Korean War a platoon of British soldiers, on rotation from Hong Kong, still formed part of the UN Honour Guard stationed in Seoul's Yongsan base. Thanks to their British Forces Post Office and access to NAAFI facilities in Hong Kong, we in the Embassy were sometimes able to obtain much appreciated supplies of food from Britain. (The detachment was withdrawn in the early 1980s.)

Not surprisingly, I soon realised that contrary to first impressions, this was a highly stimulating, challenging and exciting environment for a young Embassy political officer. Not only was I involved in helping to strengthen bilateral links, but part of my job was to find out what was *really* going on in South Korean government and non-government circles, and notwithstanding the attentions of the KCIA, behind the scenes too. Additionally, since Britain then had no diplomatic relations with North Korea, the job included trying to find out what one could within South Korea about the developments in the North, though, frankly, I can't say this was terribly productive.

Whether a continuation of democracy in South Korea in the 1960s and 1970s would have achieved more for the Korean people, no one can say. Personally I rather doubt it, given the dreadful state in which the South found itself as a result of the Korean War, and the difficulties the immediate post-War government got into. And one should not forget that the South had been a poor relation of the North economically. I think it is now widely recognised that had it not been for the powerful leadership and vision provided by President Park and those around him, coupled with the seemingly tireless endeavours of a very determined people, and some foreign assistance, the development of Korea's economy and the social changes that that brought would have been far, far slower. By the mid-1970s it was clear that a springboard had been built, albeit at the cost of certain civil liberties, which would deliver unprecedentedly rapid industrialisation and economic growth, and significant improvements in most people's living standards. A lengthy period of 10% growth per annum was just beginning, and unlike in some developing countries today, there really was visible trickle-down effect.

However, Koreans with early wealth had to be careful not to flaunt it; for example scrutiny by the authorities of cars at (the few) golf clubs and (more numerous) 'love hotels' was commonplace. (This did not prevent the official entertainment of visiting VIPs taking place at *kisaeng* houses, where most evenings ended with everyone in turn having to sing and sometimes dance with the female staff. I can hazily recall some visiting British Ministers and MPs more keen on this than others.)

As for our own daily life, we lived in a quiet street in Sodaemun-gu in central Seoul in a red-brick house built by the oil company ESSO in the 1930s. I grew vegetables in the garden. Next door was a little shop selling guttering, watering cans and other aluminium goods made from scrap. Sewage, used on crops in the fields, was collected weekly by the 'honey wagon' from the many traditional houses around us. I took a bus to Yonsei, and could walk to the Embassy. My wife, like me, enjoyed exploring on foot the older parts of Seoul, which still had a number of thatched buildings even near City Hall. Among other activities, she recorded English soundtracks for cultural films produced by Korea's Overseas Information Service (KOIS), and gave English conversation lessons at home to a number of foreign and Korean ladies, including

for a while the President's younger daughter. It was bliss having so little traffic, even if many roads outside Seoul, e.g. on Kangwha-do and Cheju-do, were still rough. Most of the vehicles when we arrived were either very old, or imported from Japan, but bizarrely there were many British Ford Cortinas in evidence, assembled locally from kits. Of course no self-respecting private Korean citizen drove himself. It was all chauffeurs (male) in white gloves. Our own imported blue Ford Escort was the same colour as most taxis, so we were often flagged down, especially by drunks near curfew time, even when my heavily pregnant wife was at the wheel … without the white gloves, of course.

Apart from the US military, there were few foreigners in the country, and all were seen initially as *migug-saram* (Americans). 'Ah, English gentlemen!' was the happy reaction when we revealed our origins. There were no imported food items in the shops, though I believe goods could be 'ordered' from US bases through the black market. I remember once spotting in a small shop (*kumong kargei*) a packet of British Polo mints and rushing in to buy it at an absurdly high price! There was no British School or British Chamber of Commerce, and only a couple of decent hotels in Seoul, notably the Chosun. The newly-arrived British Council Representative occupied just one room in the Embassy. Smart houses were starting to be built in Sungbuk-dong but there was little significant construction south of the Han River, where the new National Assembly building stood in splendid near-isolation by Yoido Plaza. Immediately south of the river we would skate in the winter, on frozen rice field flooded by enterprising farmers. Skates were cheaply hired, loud music was played and a kettle of welcome rice wine was always on the boil. A great way to keep warm, even though one's knees were cut to pieces by frozen stubble! Along the filthy banks of the river – where the Olympic highway was later built – was much slum housing, often swept away in the rainy season. And there were only three river bridges, including Banpo and Hannam, compared with about 23 when we returned finally in 2003.

It was always fun exploring the countryside in those days. Despite the paucity of decent roads I recall our driving ourselves to Sŏrak, and Kyŏngpodae on the East coast, where most of the beaches, mined and heavily guarded, were inaccessible. We spent two pleasant short breaks in a house at Taejŏn Beach, a site where foreign missionaries had been allowed to establish holiday homes, complete with bakery and refectory. We also drove down to Kyŏngju, where the famed Royal tombs were yet to be opened, and flew to Cheju island where we were the only foreigners – and only non-honeymooners – at the Honeymoon House Hotel in Sŏgwip'o. (No Koreans held passports then; they were issued for special authorised trips so THE place to honeymoon was Cheju.) An ancient bus took us round the island on mainly unmade roads.

It is worth recalling that in the mid-1970s, South Korea's farming and fishing

sector was hugely important, the source of employment for 45% of the population compared to about 6% now. On trips with the Royal Asiatic Society or driving round rural areas to assess local conditions or the state of the all-important rice harvest, we would see many thatched houses and ploughs pulled by oxen. Rice-planting was done by hand and farm workers struggled under heavily loaded A-frames. Traditional dress, for men and women, was commonplace in rural areas and in towns on festive occasions. Conditions in the countryside, still pretty poor in the mid-1970s, began to improve however as the *Saemaŭl Undong* (New Village Movement), a far-sighted campaign to improve rural and village life, got under way. Widespread reforestation was going ahead too following the devastation of the War. There were some beggars in the cities, mostly women, old or with babies, but on the whole the less well-off did not complain, rather they scrimped and saved and did anything to increase their income and improve their prospects.

All in all, these five years turned out to be hugely exciting and memorable ones for us, with a host of new experiences, masses to learn and a fascinating culture to explore. Several friendships we made during that time with Koreans have lasted to this very day. I count of special worth my involvement every Saturday evening with a group of enthusiastic Korean university students who would meet at our Embassy, at some risk to themselves, to practise their English. One arranged for me to live with her family for two months to immerse myself in the language; another who left for the US is now running for a Congressional seat there; others went on to senior posts in the private sector or government, and at least three went on to be South Korean Ambassadors. I am still in touch with several of them, more than 35 years later.

It was a special posting for us in another way too, because our first two children were born, in a Korean hospital, the Cheil, in Seoul in 1976 and 1978. Our firstborn, a boy, in the Year of the Dragon, naturally got us bonus points in the eyes of our Korean friends!

But all good things come to an end. By the autumn of 1979 my successor had duly completed his own Korean language training and was ready to take my place in the British Embassy. Our departure date had arrived. With mixed emotions, and accompanied now by two small children 'Made in Korea', we flew out of Kimp'o airport on the morning of 26 October 1979 to spend a few days relaxing in Malaysia before getting back to Britain.

The following morning, however, brought shocking news. No sooner had we sat down to breakfast than the hotel receptionist rushed over: ' Your President has been shot!' he cried. Out of the blue, President Park had indeed been shot, and killed – not by a North Korean assassin but by his own security chief – just a few hours after we had said farewell to Seoul. Tanks were on the streets amid shock and confusion. I instinctively felt I should go back to Seoul at once, but as Pam rightly pointed out I had left; my successor was now in the hot seat!

As things turned out, therefore, this was not just for us the end of a fascinating five-year assignment; for South Korea and its people it was the sudden end of a long and hugely important era in their country's development. With hindsight, I count myself privileged to have witnessed at first hand something of that era during those last five years of President Park Chung Hee's remarkable 18 years in office. Not only did the experience provide an invaluable backdrop and point of reference for my two further postings to Seoul, but also for much that has happened, and continues to happen, on the peninsula as a whole to this very day.

1979 – DAYS OF RAGE AND PRESIDENT PARK'S ASSASSINATION*

JOHN OWEN-DAVIES

In this short presentation, I will try to outline what it was like to cover South Korea's October 1979 riots and the aftermath of the assassination of President Park Chung Hee in the same month. Also, for reasons that will become evident, I will talk about the problems and pitfalls sometimes experienced by foreign correspondents while covering major stories such as Park's death.

Among major international news agencies such as Reuters, Associated Press and Agence France Press, competition has always been fierce. This competition has increased in recent years with the sophistication of computers. We used to say in Reuters, even back in the 1970s when computers were in their infancy, that every second was a deadline. My South Korean experience was certainly a test in this regard.

Unlike other speakers today, I am not a Korea expert. But I was fortunate enough to be in the right place at the right time. At the time, I was Reuters news editor in Japan and was asked to help the South Korea bureau following rioting in the south of the country. A major Reuters Tokyo brief at the time was to keep a weather eye on the Korean peninsula. But this changed after the dramatic events of 1979–80, with Reuters beefing up its office in Seoul. Before launching into my main topic, I will give you a brief idea of how Reuters operated in South Korea in those days and the problems we faced.

Our office was in the Hapdong news agency building in Seoul. The bureau was staffed by two South Korean journalists together with an interpreter and a driver. The bureau chief was Lee Siho, a highly respected correspondent with excellent English. Unfortunately, he died from liver cancer in 1980. His number two was the very able Oh Ilson, who, by 1979, had got to grips with the way Reuters worked. Working life for our staffers, as with most other news outlets, could be extremely difficult.

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* A talk given on 26 November 2011 at the Korean Cultural Centre to the BAKS seminar on *Recalling Korea Past: an Oral History of the 1950s to 1980s*.

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The office driver, nicknamed 'Uncle Cho', was famous in Reuters for carrying a correspondent under his arm to flee fighting among spectators at a major boxing match. At the same time, he managed to fight off rioters with the other arm. Cho was known as 'Uncle' for glaring dangerously at any Reuter person who looked for too long – or too often – at his pretty niece. Thus, the 'Uncle' title.

The office translator was Moon Ilwan, who later helped Reuters to cover the 1980 rebellion in Kwangju. Soon after the army took control of the city, he was forced into the centre of a circle of soldiers with fixed bayonets and beaten with a helmet wielded by an officer. Several hundred civilians were killed in the Kwangju uprising, now seen by many people as a pivotal moment in South Korea's struggle for democracy.

Finally, there was the daily noon-time sonic boom heard in Seoul as a US recce plane flew just south of the DMZ to note any changes in the disposition of North Korean troops on the other side.

The bureau had reasonable access to South Korean officials, and others in any kind of authority in those days. But this access has improved vastly since then. Indeed, the sizes of the Reuters bureaux in both Japan and South Korea have increased enormously, especially since the 1980s. In Japan by the mid-1990s, the staff figure had risen to around 450 from 17 in 1979, while the South Korean operation had nearly 50 people. These figures included not only journalists, many of them economic folk, but also computer experts, television camera crews, photographers, lawyers and accountants.

In the 1970s there was a body of opinion that believed South Korea constantly overstated the threat it faced from North Korea in an effort to keep the US Army in situ between Seoul and the Imjin. In a Reuters interview during my time in the region an official, known as the 'Korean Kissinger', said off-the-record that if the North ever attacked the South, the South would be "On the Yalu in 10 days". This was taken as tacit recognition of the relative economic and military strengths of the two countries and the generally poorly trained and equipped soldiers of the North. It was a policy that apparently worked. Jimmy Carter had vowed during his presidential campaign to pull US forces out of Korea. But after his election, the Pentagon produced a study saying the disposition of North Korean forces had changed dramatically. This allowed Carter to back out of his campaign pledge.

In the 1970s, South Korea, as all of you know, was a vastly different place to what it is today. The 1960s and 1970s were the years of Park Chung Hee. In 1961, then an army major-general, he emerged as South Korea's leader following a military coup. By the time of his assassination in 1979, he had ruled South Korea for 18 years with dictatorial powers and harsh martial laws.

Also in 1961, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency – the KCIA – was formed. It coordinated international and domestic intelligence activities and was also used to suppress mainly domestic opposition to Park's regime. Among foreign

correspondents working in South Korea – at least in the 1970s – it was believed that the KCIA regularly monitored room telephones at the Chosun Hotel, Seoul's premier haunt for foreign journalists. This also applied to the Lotte Hotel. Some people also suspected that the KCIA had control rooms in both hotels. But, as with others things in South Korea at the time, it was difficult to know the difference between legend and reality. One noticeable quirk was the immobile 'blinds' in room windows, especially in hotels that overlooked the presidential Blue House. The blinds purposely made it impossible to see the building.

Returning briefly to Park's rule, he nearly lost the 1971 presidential election to Kim Dae Jung. You will also remember that in 1972, Park established the Yushin Constitution which, among other things, abolished direct voting for presidential elections and replaced it with an indirect voting system involving delegates of the National Assembly. Any act of opposition or denial of the constitution, disliked intensely by opposition parties and groups, was punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

My first full day in South Korea was 23 October 1979, when Oh Ilson and I were driven some 200 kilometres by Uncle Cho to the southern city of Pusan. Pusan, the country's second largest city, and the nearby industrial city of Masan, recently had been the scene of the worst anti-government violence since Park came to power in 1961. For a newcomer, the journey south was fascinating. Of particular interest were the mountains and hills, often with little or no foliage – a result of napalm bombing by the United States in the Korean War.

We eventually reached Pusan, South Korea's second largest city and the home city of Kim Young Sam, the newly-elected New Democratic Party leader. He had taken a policy of never compromising or cooperating with Park until the repeal of the Yushin Constitution. In an earlier newspaper interview, he also appealed to the United States to end support for Park. Kim had been elected NDP chairman in May 1979, despite intense KCIA efforts to persuade the party to back 'a more acceptable candidate'.

In August 1979, around 2,000 policemen stormed NDP headquarters. After this much-criticised incident, Park was determined to remove Kim from the political scene and instructed the KCIA to engineer such a move. In September, a court ordered the suspension of Kim's chairmanship of the NDP. This was followed by Park's Democratic Republican Party expelling Kim from the National Assembly in a secret session. This move led all 66 NDP lawmakers to submit their resignations to the National Assembly in protest. At the same time, Jimmy Carter's administration in the U.S. recalled its Seoul-based ambassador.

On 16 October, uprisings broke out in Pusan, followed by arson attacks on police stations. It was the largest demonstration since the days of President Syngman Rhee. On 19 October, rioting spread to Masan, with students and other citizens seeking

repeal of the Yushin Constitution. At this stage, the KCIA said the demonstrations were not being carried out solely by college students but were part of a popular uprising, joined by regular citizens, to resist the regime. The KCIA apparently warned President Park that the uprisings probably could spread to other large cities, including Seoul. Park was reported to have said that he himself would give an order to fire on demonstrators if the situation worsened.

It was clear when we arrived in Pusan on 23 October that the government had moved with a heavy hand against the protesters. The city and surrounding areas had been clamped under emergency martial law. But during the evening of 23 October, Pusan's martial law commander, Lieutenant-General Park Chunggung, announced that the overnight curfew would be reduced from six hours to four, in line with the rest of South Korea. Under internal security regulations, in force throughout Korea since the end of the Korean War, a midnight-to-dawn curfew had been imposed throughout the country.

In both Pusan and Masan during my visit, there were no immediate figures for the dead and injured. In Pusan, tanks and armoured personnel carriers were still stationed outside the city hall, while regular troops were positioned behind sandbags outside railway stations and newspaper and television offices. At the same time, vehicles carrying paratroopers, with American M-16 rifles and fixed bayonets, were reported to be moving towards the city. This most certainly did not give the impression of a return – even gradual – to normality. The same was true for Masan.

Oh Ilson and I headed back to Seoul on 25 October. On the 26th we met various government and diplomatic sources and wrote follow-up stories, which in those days were transmitted via our office telex. In emergencies, we could always phone our Tokyo office or another Reuters office elsewhere in the world to dictate stories. But there was a problem in South Korea – we could not make direct foreign calls from our offices or hotels. All such calls had to go through the South Korean telephone exchange system. We had to give the number we sought and then waited for a call back when a connection could be made. This system could take 20 minutes or more for a connection, and was not the greatest way to send out an urgent story.

One story I wrote on return to Seoul from Pusan and Masan contained a paragraph, with which many people in some kind of authoritative position – be they South Koreans or foreigners – would have agreed at the time. It read: 'Western diplomatic sources said there was no immediate threat to the power of President Park, who has about 600,000 regular soldiers, sailors and airmen, and about three million reservists, to maintain security.'

During a telephone call with my Tokyo office mid-way through 26 October it was agreed that I should return to Japan early on Saturday the 27th because the rioting in the south appeared under control. On the evening of the 26th, Oh Ilson and I enjoyed a farewell drink. I thanked him for his good work and returned the keys he had given

me for entry to our office, the telex room and the telex machine. At around 5 a.m. the following morning – Saturday, 27 October – I had a phone call to my hotel room from Oh Ilson. He said: "Something has happened to the president, I have no details." "Is he dead?" I asked. "I don't know," Oh replied, adding that it would take him some time to reach the office. Armed with typewriter and other paraphernalia, I raced out of the Lotte Hotel. Walking to the Hapdong building through quiet streets, two battle tanks were visible under trees guarding government buildings. And, at the entrance to Hapdong, two armed soldiers guarded the main door. Yes, something really was up.

Then came the big blow. I had no office keys. What to do? With a few rugby-style shoulder charges, the fragile office door caved in. But the telex remained a problem – I broke the glass door to the telex office and managed to gain entry. But with no telex key, I was in the dark. Minutes earlier, on entering the main office, I had put through a telephone call to my boss in Tokyo. The Seoul exchange said I would have to wait for some time.

Some 25 minutes later the telephone rang … It was not the Tokyo office. It was a South Korean government spokesman. The gist of his call was: "President Park Chung Hee was shot and killed last night during an accidental row at a private dinner with KCIA director Kim Jaekyu … The President died at 7.50 p.m. while being taken to a military hospital … Two men shot at each other and the president was struck by a stray bullet … Five people, including President Park and the chief of presidential security forces were killed … Kim Jaekyu was arrested by the Martial Law Command … Prime Minister Choi Kyuhah has become acting President under Article 48 of the Constitution. Martial Law has been declared throughout South Korea, except for Cheju …" That, in a nutshell, was the original news. Fortunately, only minutes after the spokesman put his phone down I received my call from the Reuters Tokyo office. I dictated the story. We were up and running … but woefully late with the story and the run-up to it as a whole.

It would take some days for the truth of what actually happened to emerge in the public domain. But as the first day rattled on there was almost a non-stop flow of developments, comments and the like. A Swedish journalist, also Tokyo-based, at one stage rushed into our office to say he had heard that two young women had been present at the fateful dinner at the private KCIA restaurant in Seoul. This seemed somewhat fanciful but it was true. The women were identified later as a well-known singer, Shim Soobong, and a university student, Jeong Seunghwa.

My day was enlightened by the arrival from Tokyo of a good chum, Bob Friend, the then Japan-based BBC correspondent for the region. Together for the next few days we worked in tandem from the Reuters office. Late on the first day, Bob and I wrote a story which we believed gave a basically true version of events the previous evening at the KCIA restaurant. The story never went out to our respective organisations

for obvious reasons. But when the government version of events emerged in early November, we found we had been not far from the truth.

The first comprehensive report on what happened at the now infamous dinner came out on November 6 from 'a martial law command spokesman'. He was Major-General Chŏn Tuhwan, who would seize power in a military coup in 1980. Chŏn said the KCIA's Kim Jaekyu had plotted for nearly five months to assassinate Park and take over the government, with the tacit approval of Park's chief aide, Kim Kaewong. He said apart from Park, five other people were in the dining room on the fateful evening of 26 October. They were the two Kims, Park's security chief Cha Chichoi and two women "who had been helping with the dinner". In the first half of 1980, both Kims were executed, as were a KCIA section chief, two KCIA guards and a chauffeur.

Interesting times!

A *KWANGDAE* IN TRAINING, 1981–1984: FIELDWORK, AND LEARNING KOREAN MUSIC IN SEOUL AND CHINDO*

KEITH HOWARD

I was not a sensible teenager. I wanted to become a musician, or perhaps a composer, despite my parents calling in heavy support from careers advisers briefed of the need to shift my sights towards law or accountancy. Such stories are commonplace amongst musicians and musicologists. Indeed, here, I take my title from one who was steered towards a career in journalism, Kim Myŏnggon, who recorded his talks with famous Korean musicians in *Kim Myŏnggon ŭi kwangdae kihaeng* (Seoul: Tosŏ ch'ulp'ansa, 1993).

Kwangdae were male performers during the Chosŏn dynasty. Records tell how *kwangdae* gave a spectacular performance in 1488 that included fire eating, mask drama, puppetry and rope walking during a visit to the Korean court by the Chinese envoy Dong Yue. In the eighteenth century, *kwangdae* sang, danced and told stories, routinely accompanying successful candidates for government office on celebratory tours of their home counties. *Kwangdae* were synonymous with singers of *p'ansori*, the genre of epic storytelling through song, by the time that the petty government official, Shin Chaehyo (1812–1884), popularized the genre in the last few decades of his life. Shin's poem, '*Kwangdaega*/Song of the *Kwangdae*', written around 1875, details *kwangdae* singing:

> The singing voice in high register is like a boat floating with a fair wind,
> Gradually changing like a stream that turns around a peak and alters direction.
> The 'lifting voice' is like a lofty peak soaring,
> The 'rolling down voice' like the sound of a waterfall,
> Long and short, high and low – endless changes.
> A clear 'rolling voice' like the crying of a phoenix on Mount Cinnabar,
> A clear 'floating voice' like the whooping of a crane in the clear sky,

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> A 'murmuring voice' of grief, just like the lute.
> An infinite variety of technique, a sudden 'bouncing voice' like a peal of thunder,
> A loud command that seems to shake Mount T'ae,
> A rapidly changing voice like a desolate wind among bare trees.[1]

Kwangdae, then, are Korea's singers of tales, to paraphrase Albert Lord (1960) by way of Marshall Pihl (1994).

A constellation of factors coincided to encourage my journey to Seoul in July 1981. Growing up in what seemed a largely monocultural Surrey, I had little knowledge about Korea, except for one small connection, a by-way if you like, discovered during an outing while at school. During my 'A' level studies, I had been introduced to St Peter's Convent at Maybury Hill, Woking, and had discovered the longstanding relationship that community had with the Anglican (Episcopalian) Church in Korea. The sisterhood at St Peter's had been founded in 1861, and in 1892 had been invited by the then Bishop of Korea, Charles Corfe, to help with nursing and running an orphanage. One sister, Mary Clare, died in the first year of the Korean War when forced by North Korean captors to march northwards to an internment camp.[2] However, that was a long way from my mind when, in 1978, I began to study for an MA in composition at the University of Durham. Robert Provine had just arrived to teach ethnomusicology; he joined the Chinese specialist Keith Pratt, who had a longstanding interest in Korea. Pratt had established the Durham Oriental Music Festival, for which, in 1979, fascinated by earthy Korean percussion bands and ancient sacrificial ritual music – the two very different types of music that Provine wrote about and had introduced me to – I volunteered as a student helper. I was given the task of assisting Korean musicians from the National Gugak Center[3] and the scholar Hahn Manyoung. By this time, disappointed by academic composition, and unsure I wanted to develop my career as a secondary school music teacher, I had decided I wanted to research how people used music. I hoped this could become a PhD project. But, recognising that I would be too subjective if I researched music in Britain, I wanted to conduct fieldwork in a much more distant place. I scoured the globe to find a rapidly changing society where remnants of folklore coexisted with a modern, urban music culture, thinking that this would allow me to contrast music *of* people with music *for* people – music shared and music consumed – and Korea fitted the bill. One of the plus points, of course, was the wonderful music.

Learning Music in Seoul

I was poorly prepared when I arrived in Seoul. I knew virtually no language – nothing beyond a few badly pronounced sentences lifted from a Korean phrasebook – and felt that the Korean *han'gŭl* writing system (let alone Chinese characters) would be

difficult to master. In fact, the night I worked out how to read *han'gŭl* came several weeks later, when, after taking a bus going in the wrong direction and wasting four hours before returning to where I had started, I realised I needed to learn it. Colleagues in Korean Studies will not be impressed, but in my defence I was in the process of shifting academic disciplines from music to anthropology. I knew that to undertake my research required training in social science methodologies, and in 1981 the discipline of ethnomusicology remained small except for in one university department – the Department of Social Anthropology at Queen's University Belfast. The British anthropology tradition was to learn language skills in the field, taking as its base the Tyler maxim that 'culture was a complex whole' of behaviour, ritual and performance that could not be expressed simply in words. I knew Korean would require serious and time-consuming study to learn, but funding within my academic disciplines to do so was minimal. Hence, when I arrived in Seoul, my lack of linguistic competence. And, in keeping with a youthful spirit of adventure, I had not pre-booked accommodation beyond one night's hotel in Seoul. But, my school memory had proved useful: I had visited St Peter's before setting off, and had been given gifts to deliver to Holy Cross Convent, just behind the Anglican Cathedral beside Tŏksu Palace (a convent now rebuilt courtesy of the conglomerate who in the late 1980s undermined its foundations when it built the KCIA premises behind it). The sisters kindly found me accommodation with a priest in Shinch'on.

Robert Provine had written out the address of his drum teacher, the Chŏngŭp-born Kim Pyŏngsŏp (1921–1987), in *han'gŭl*. Kim was a well-known *nongak* (a.k.a. *p'ungmul*) percussion band performer who specialized in the double-headed hourglass-shaped drum, the *changgo*. He had developed his own extended drum dance. After a career in the southwestern Chŏlla provinces, Kim had moved to Seoul in 1975, encouraged by a clutch of Seoul-based foreign residents who wanted him to teach them in return for subsidizing the rent on his studio. And so, on my first day in Seoul, I hailed a taxi and showed the driver the piece of paper containing Kim's address. The taxi dropped me outside a dilapidated building, the driver pointing to a door. I went in and climbed to the top floor, where Kim greeted me. I had no way to say what I wanted, so I signed as if playing the drum, pointed to him then me, and joined my hands together in an effort to signal 'please'. He nodded, went to a clock and pointed to a time – 8.00 a.m. – then went to a calendar hung on the wall – tomorrow. I gasped in surprise when he wrote out what seemed to be an exorbitant price for the lesson, but he returned to his calendar and pointed out that lessons would be each day for a month …

Kim taught by rote. This was once the standard way of doing things in much of the world,[4] and in Korea it had been the typical method until music training moved into universities. The first Korean music degree course began at Seoul National University only in 1959, so the 1960s was when notation books began to be written for student

use. Since Kim was teaching a drum dance, he would stand in front of me, play and dance a short segment, and ask me to repeat it.[5] He would then repeat the segment, perhaps shaking his head to indicate I had something wrong. He rarely told me what was incorrect: it might be a foot movement, or a misplaced acciaccatura, or possibly he wanted me to stop grimacing. Repetition developed fluency. Gradually, Kim built up a piece, which during the six weeks I spent learning from him in 1981 stretched to about four minutes of music. This was an abbreviated version of his total drum dance, which, lasting 15 minutes, I was to master after a further five months of daily lessons in 1982. The full piece comprised around 260 distinct rhythmic patterns that Kim called *karak* – fingers of rhythm (or, in other contexts, melody) – that were essentially variants built as sequences of motifs around five basic model patterns.

Kim's rote method involved him playing a mirror image of what I played. Because this requires swapping sticks from one hand to the other, it is something I have never managed to duplicate with my own students, but Kim's practice actually grew from a shift that had occurred in percussion band practice during the twentieth century. In percussion bands and also in drum dances, the *changgo* is played with two sticks, a thin whip-like *yŏl ch'ae* that strikes the higher-pitched drum skin, and a mallet-like *kunggul ch'ae* that mostly strikes the lower-pitched skin but which, through a simple bend at the elbow, can also strike the other skin. Virtually all contemporary drum players grasp the whip-like stick in their right hand, matching how the drum is played just with this one stick in court music and for accompanying instrumentalists and singers (where the palm of the hand replaces the mallet-like stick on the lower-pitched drum skin). Both the hand and the mallet stick provide basic punctuation, although the mallet, unlike the hand, rebounds quickly and thus facilitates rapid repeating strikes that allow more complex patterns to emerge. Amongst contemporary percussion band and drum dance players, the mallet is held in the left hand. Kim, though, held the mallet in his right hand and the whip in his left. Although some have suggested otherwise, there was nothing left-handed about this. Rather, by holding the mallet in his right hand he matched other players in percussion bands, where the two punctuating instruments, the *ching* large gong and the *puk* barrel drum, are both played with beaters held in the right hand.

Two weeks of daily lessons had passed when Kim received a phone call. Laughing and regularly glancing in my direction, he was asked to supply a foreign student for a show on MBC television. I was quickly measured for a costume, and the next day we went to the studio. I should say that I am fortunate that, at least so far as I know, no film survives of this embarrassing performance! Four weeks later, an annual contest co-sponsored by KBS television and the English-language newspaper, *The Korea Herald*, was held at which foreigners showed off their musical skills. Now a little more confident, I entered, and was awarded the 'most outstanding' prize. That performance was aired at least half a dozen times.

While learning from Kim, I never notated the drum dance. Provine had privately published a score in 1975, but I didn't refer to this since I wanted my ears and body to learn Korean music without my former Western training getting in the way. Later, when I added melodic instruments to my studies, I still felt the need to develop 'Korean ears' – pitching, and ornaments with what Korean musicologists refer to as 'microtonal shading', contrast Western major and minor scales. I learnt the *haegŭm* two-stringed fiddle and *kayagŭm* 12-stringed zither, concentrating on the court repertoires. My teachers used scores, but these were written in Korean square-box notation, *chŏngganbo*, a system that traces back to the fifteenth century court, but which during the latter half of the twentieth century became a standard way to notate any traditional repertoire. This is the notation I still use today, and, curiously, but unlike the contemporary Korean musicians I know, I cannot play either instrument using Western staff notation.

My *haegŭm* lessons began courtesy of the National Gugak Center. The acting director at the time, Yi Sŭngnyŏl, advised me I should choose a court music instrument. I asked for *kayagŭm* lessons, but he told me this was an instrument too strongly associated with women, so I should learn the more masculine *kŏmun'go* six-stringed zither. I found little in the *kŏmun'go* sound to get excited about, so we compromised: I would be offered *haegŭm* lessons from Yun Ch'an'gu, a senior musician then working at the National Gugak Center who had been part of the performance group who had been sent to the 1979 Durham Oriental Music Festival. The reason for the masculine/feminine division of the players of zithers goes back to a treatise, the *Akhak kweböm* (Guide to the Study of Music; 1493), where, though somewhat simplistically, the *kŏmun'go* is listed as an instrument with origins in China but the *kayagŭm* as a Korean instrument. The *kŏmun'go* thereafter became associated with the literati, and indeed many of the historical scores that survive in Korea are for it, while the *kayagŭm* took on the role of the instrument of *kisaeng* courtesans – the female equivalents to male *kwangdae*.[6] Yi Sŭngnyŏl's recommendation, though, had an element of irony within it, since the *kayagŭm* had never disappeared from the court and, indeed, it was the instrument that Yi himself played as a professional musician. And, of course, the *kayagŭm* is related to the Chinese *zheng* and to many other East Asian zithers, including the Japanese *koto* and Mongolian/Buryatian *yatga*/*yatag*, so it is stretching the broader reality to persist with the female player tag. So, unrelenting, I asked Kim Chŏngja, a *kayagŭm* professor at Seoul National University, to help me find somebody to teach me the *kayagŭm*, and she introduced me to her student, Haekyung Um. Um later left to pursue postgraduate studies in Maryland, and from there went to Belfast to complete her PhD; she is today a lecturer at the University of Liverpool.

My discursion into learning to perform illustrates a change in the academic practice of ethnomusicology that coincided with my PhD research. At the University of California in Los Angeles in the 1950s, in the formative period of what had then

been a new discipline, Mantle Hood had coined the term 'bimusicality'. Bimusicality began as an experiment: rather than use recordings and photographs to illustrate his classes about music from around the world, Hood introduced workshops in his campus studio on a *gamelan*, a set of Indonesian bronze gongs and chimes. Bimusicality, to Hood, was a way to understand a different musical culture by learning to play. This, he later argued, brought understanding through doing, and thereby challenged the known. This was precisely what I was attempting by refusing to notate Kim's drum dance, and by using an unfamiliar notation system for melodic instruments rather than Western staff notation. I, like Hood's students, had previous musical experience, but in Western music, and the conventions that we knew needed to be challenged and, if necessary, forgotten. Bimusicality, then, as Hood's student Ricardo Trimillos puts it, was 'a means of understanding the music of another culture, that is, accessing the musical Other' (2004: 24). The idea spread fast, and learning through doing soon became a standard way to explore plural artistic aesthetics and discrete musical practices, particularly as it was influenced by the emerging philosophy of multiculturalism and postwar tolerance.[7] These days, though, the term has come to be seen as limiting, and we might want to substitute 'poly-musicality' or some such term to reflect the plethora of different musical styles and traditions that we listen to and perhaps perform within our contemporary world.[8] And, in reality, 'bimusicality' was always something of a misnomer, since a European or American student of ethnomusicology was not expected to gain equal fluency in, say, Indonesian *gamelan* learnt for one semester as they had in, say, the piano or violin learnt for 10 or more years.

It is of note that Hood, along with ethnomusicologists of his generation and including my PhD supervisor, John Blacking, did not expect or want students to become proficient performers. But, by the time I began my Korean sojourn, many ethnomusicologists were becoming professional or near-professional performers.[9] I, too, hoped to gain a modicum of proficiency in the performance of Korean music. In fact, the shift towards greater competence in performance is probably as it has to be, since the tertiary university system in Britain as in America increasingly expects ethnomusicology lecturers to run performance classes for students, and to develop sufficient competence to allow the students to perform at the end of a semester or year. One intriguing result of this has been an increasing acceptance that ethnomusicologists, whether music performers or not, will rarely be phenotypal ringers – people brought up within the culture from which the music they teach or perform comes.[10]

Kim Pyŏngsŏp had a reputation for teaching foreigners, and he subsequently invited me to perform within him in Seoul and Chŏlla. This does not indicate that I was particularly proficient, since one could argue that he was often asked to perform precisely because of his foreign students. Anyhow, we performed at the YWCA

and other places in Seoul, in Puan to celebrate the *hwan'gap* sixtieth birthday celebrations of his former band colleague, Yi Tongwŏn, at the North Chŏlla coast to inaugurate the opening of a village hall where another of Kim's students, Brian Berry, had served as a Peace Corps volunteer, and so on. After my fieldwork ended, and beginning in 1985, I have also performed Kim's drum dance professionally in Britain, Europe, and beyond, although rarely outside the academic circuit. One film featuring my performance was for a number of years sold by the Haus der Kultur in Berlin. These days, I no longer venture beyond taking a drum accompaniment role for visiting Korean master musicians.

While learning to perform Korean music was for me primarily a tool to understand, it also opened many doors. More than trying to explain what I was trying to research during fieldwork, playing along with musicians allowed me a way to introduce myself, and resulted in opportunities to interview and record musicians.[11] And so, after learning some Korean from the late William Skillend at SOAS, I returned to Korea, and to fieldwork, in 1982. I chose Chindo, an island off the southwestern tip of the peninsula, as my fieldwork site. It was there I hoped to find both the old and new Korea, and to explore how music and life was undergoing transformation as rapid development took place.

Chindo: The Jewel Island

'I enjoy reading accounts of Korean life of 50 or 60 years ago and comparing them to the present state of the villages … They are still far too much in use as source-books for writing about contemporary Korean life.' So wrote Richard Rutt in his *Korean Works and Days* (1964: 183), a book based on a series of articles written in 1957 and 1958 for the *Korea Times* newspaper about his life as a rural priest. Just as Rutt noted that some of the observations of rural life in earlier times remained pertinent, so his book chimed with what I found in 1982 in Korea's countryside. His account hardly seemed to come from a bygone era. I also, despite the overall aim of my research, found it easy to focus in on aspects of life that seemed redolent of that past age: men with 'A'-frames, ploughing with oxen, thatching a roof, and so on. Evidence, perhaps, of Orientalism at work in my mind, yet, surely, an understandable reaction to the attraction we all have for difference, coupled to nostalgia for the ways things had once been done.

Vincent Brandt's observation of coastal village life, based on 1960s fieldwork some 60 miles south of Inch'ŏn, also presented much that still seemed to apply. The remoteness to Brandt of his fieldwork site remained tangible to me: 'A two-hour walk is necessary to reach the nearest bus line, a ramshackle affair that offers regular transportation over narrow dirt roads to the town of T'aean and the nearby county seat, Sŏsan. From there another two hours by bus and four by train will get one to

Seoul' (1971: 2). In 1982, Chindo, an island county situated at the southwestern tip of the peninsula whose name translates as 'Jewel Island', was still a long way from Seoul. A five-hour bus ride from Seoul to Kwangju – a city still recovering from the citizens' uprising of 1980 – began the journey. Then one switched to a different bus station, and travelled three hours more, mostly on gravel and stone roads to the coast beyond Haenam. The bus drove onto a rusty ferry to cross the strait, and emerged on the island, where 30 minutes more took passengers to the Chindo township.[12] In the township, I had to transfer for the irregular island bus for a further hour-long journey to the western district of the island and my base in Inji village. Usually, I had to stay overnight, either in Kwangju or the township, on my way. Now, all is different. On a good day (that is, outside holidays when expressways resemble parking lots), it takes three hours or so from Seoul to Chindo, mostly along new roads, crossing the strait by a cantilever bridge; any island village is about 10 minutes from the township.

In 1982, Chindo had precisely one tarmac road, which ran for just a few hundred metres within the township. Mud and stone roads built largely during the Japanese colonial period connected the major settlements, but these were so rutted that a taxi's life was reckoned at 18 months, making fares prohibitively expensive. These roads usually passed villages rather than going into them, a cluster of shops and official buildings being positioned where they joined the small concrete roads that took visitors and residents to the village centre. Many hamlets were reached on small mud tracks built atop the dividing walls of paddy fields. Buses had only been introduced in 1976, and were packed and rickety. Live chicken, sacks of rice, dried fish strung together with straw, and bowls of fresh *tubu* or fermenting cabbage limited passenger space. A seat went through the floor of one bus, so the seat was removed leaving the hole; another bus was so full that the conductor had to climb in the back window because he couldn't get near the door, losing his flip-flop as he did so. The timetable made the most of a limited number of vehicles, with the last bus of the day to outlying villages staying overnight, with driver and conductor, and returning as the first bus the next morning. As a bus hit a boulder, I might be thrown out of my seat, if I was lucky enough to have one, or the bus would end up in a field as it encountered an obstacle at speed. Earlier times had been worse, and Rutt tells us of buses that 'roar and splutter to a stop with a groan which suggests they will never start again' (1964: 107), and of the fights to get on – only grandfathers climb in through the windows, he says. He also recalls hearing about buses where 'the springs of the accelerator and foot brake are replaced by elastic rubber attached to the steering column' (1964: 109). Much, then, had improved. It was further south, on Cheju island, that a bus conductor introduced me to one legacy of the colonial period – the use of phrases imported from European languages. Standing behind to supervise a driver reversing, he shouted 'Ora! Ora!' the local dialect version of the Japanese version of 'Alright! Alright!'

Chindo finally and fully joined the Korean electricity grid in 1978, but in 1982 power rarely stayed on for a whole day, so many households still had generators for emergency use. Outside the township, phones were of the wind-up variety and were restricted to the offices of village leaders, restaurants and a few shops. Direct dial came a few years later, but in 1982 one called an operator in the district (*myŏn*) post office, who called an operator in the township (*ŭp*), who directed the call beyond the island. As the call request travelled up the chain, it could take up to an hour to get a line abroad. Saemaŭl Undong, the New Village Movement, was in full swing. It had taken over some of the projects associated with the American funded 4–H clubs of Korea's post-war years, although a few faded 4-H signs, painted on a green four-leafed clover, could still be found. Saemaŭl, initiated in 1971, was meant to redress the rural and urban wage imbalance – one report from 1966 had it that Korean farm households earned 34.4% of the national average while fishing households earned just 23.5% (Kim Int'ae 1966: 438) – but it came coupled to an ideological framework (within a few years of my fieldwork, it was undermined by family nepotism during Chun Doo Hwan's presidency). By 1982, Saemaŭl supplies of two-wheeled tractors had reduced much of the rice cultivation and irrigation that had previously been done by hand.[13] Attempts were being made to introduce 'unification' rice, though many farmers were reluctant to plant it, considering well established strains better for the local climate (Chun 1984: 72; see also Dege 1982: 127–38 for a summary of national patterns). Although Saemaŭl had helped build local stores and shops, and had supplied machinery and fertilizers, farmers had begun to build up debts that they now needed to service. It had also subsidised the replacement of thatched roofs with tin, although, and despite Park Chung Hee's famous claim to have eliminated it, some thatch made of rice straw remained in use across Chindo. Saemaŭl leaders, appointed by distant bodies, had arguably become more powerful than the village leaders; village leaders were still either locally elected or appointed at provincial level. And, in some places, Saemaŭl loudspeakers broadcast messages each morning, encouraging the tardy to get ready for work.[14] The messages were accompanied by songs, generally from the sub-genre of propagandistic 'healthy songs' (*kŏnjŏn kayo*); '*Saemaŭl norae*/Song of the New Village', for which Park Chung Hee had allegedly been offered royalties due to repeated radio play in the 1970s (Kim Chip'yŏng 2000: 213), was often heard:

> The early morning bell has rung; it is a new dawn.
> Let's get up, you and I, and look after our new village.
> Let's get rid of straw-thatched houses and widen village roads.
> Let's make a green garden and tend it thriftily …
> My village is so nice to live in, let us create it ourselves.[15]

Sanitation remained basic, and Rutt's observation that tigers vie with toilets as powerfully evocative of dramatic situations in the minds of Koreans remained

applicable to the Chindo situation (tigers were recalled in a foundation legend for the annual festival when the sea parts between island and mainland). Rutt reminds us of the custom to cough as one approached the door of a toilet shed, to see if anybody was inside. He knew of a bishop, he wrote, who coughed but kept getting grunts as an answer from inside, and who only much later after suffering with his legs crossed realised he was being answered by a pig in the sty next to the toilet (1964: 41). That, to me, is a somewhat rosy picture. The long-term resident of Korea, the writer and musician Alan Heyman, once told me how in 1964 he had accompanied the short-sighted John Levy to Cheju Island, where one night Levy rushed out of the toilet shed screaming he had been bitten on his rear end. The Cheju custom – common, too, in Chindo – was to connect the pigsty to the toilet. That, the story went, was why local pork was so tasty. Levy worked for the BBC, and in Cheju recorded the songs of women divers. His archive is now at the National Museum of Scotland, and 10 CDs of his Korean recordings have recently been issued by the National Gugak Center in Seoul; a room was set up at the 1979 Durham Oriental Music Festival, where his recordings were played. Anyhow, I heeded the advice hidden in Heyman's story, and always wore my spectacles when visiting toilet sheds. Often, toilets were simple pits over which a wooden board would be strategically placed. In some places, night soil was still used as fertilizer. I once stayed after a shaman ritual with the local ritualist near the village of Habojŏn. Asking where the toilet was, he pointed me to loose earth in the corner of a hut, and when I emerged he had a spade, ready to feed his crops. Things only became troublesome for my cautious mind when a few minutes later he served breakfast, boasting that we were to eat his own vegetables.

Now, a *kwangdae* would not have found anything problematic in Chindo's toilet sheds. Indeed, those who were singers of *p'ansori* would have been all too familiar with a traditional practice. Singers trained by vocalising until totally hoarse, until their throats bled. There was a tradition to go on '100-day' mountain retreats, where they would sing in competition with waterfalls, or to fill caves with song. They struggled to control damage to their vocal chords. This was the point at which the tradition came in, as a way to help recover a damaged voice. It involved drinking the fluid from a hollow stem of bamboo that, sealed at both ends, had been left in a toilet pit for two months.[16] Now, one singer who reputedly took this route was the highly celebrated Pak Tongjin (1916–2003). He once recalled to me, when I interviewed him about his composition in *p'ansori* style, '*Yesujŏn*/Story of Jesus', how he had been a Buddhist but converted to Christianity shortly after having lost his voice for many months. He recalled how the bamboo fluid treatment had been recommended as a cure by a Buddhist monk – and it worked. He left me to draw my own conclusion, and I like to think that it was this dreadful experience that led him to switch religion.

In Inji village, I stayed in the house of the Saemaŭl leader, Kim Kisun, a man who was also a noted singer. He had converted a couple of stores along one side

of his household compound to rooms, one of which was allocated to me. It had an underfloor heating system, *ondŏl*, using coal briquettes placed in a void beneath the floor. In a more developed system, the briquette, or firewood or some other similar material, will be placed outside the room, often in the kitchen where it can also heat cooking pots. The heat is transferred to the room by pipes buried in the floor, or by convection through the void under the floor. Many houses on Chindo, though, including Kim's, simply placed the briquette under the floor. In the 1980s, this was still common, and some readers will doubtless remember the 'burnt' spot on the floor – a spot kindly reserved for guests, and the prized spot to sleep on, but the spot above where the briquette burned. Placing the briquette directly under the floor hid potential danger: the briquette gave off carbon monoxide. Since Koreans sleep on thin mattresses on the floor, if there was a crack in the floor, gas could leak, accumulating at floor level. And so it was that one morning, after an electrical fire took hold in the building backing onto my room, I failed to wake up, because of gas. Kim broke through the door to rescue me. To an extent, this was the result of my own insistence that the paper newly pasted over the wooden frame of the door should not have any holes in it at floor level because I wanted to keep warm: I had failed to grasp the significance and necessity of ventilation.

At Kim Kisun's, there was an outside tap for washing. My memories of dousing myself with cold water on crisp and freezing mornings are tempered by the old tale about a *kwangdae* who was uncovered trying to pass himself off as a member of the aristocracy to gain free and presumably luxurious lodging for the night. The story comes from the nineteenth century, or perhaps before, when men had topknots and did not cut their hair. After washing, this man tied his topknot then shook his head several times. He was observed doing so, and recognised for who he was: a musician needed to ensure his topknot remained firmly secured under the wide-brimmed horsehair hat he wore when he performed, otherwise the hat would oscillate comically to the beat of the music, hence why he shook his head. This man was given a beating by his outraged hosts.[17]

The story reflects how *kwangdae* sang not just for the populace, but also for the gentry, and because of this they knew how to behave amongst the upper echelons of society. We can see this in Shin Chaehyo's efforts to popularise *p'ansori* in the 1870s amongst the gentry, though I should preface my comments here by noting that not all scholars would agree.[18] Shin certainly collected texts, and certainly smoothed them for consumption by more wealthy patrons, adding classical Chinese references and ensuring the texts reflected Confucian codes (*p'ansori* singers prior to this time were all male *kwangdae*, and Shin also trained the first female singer, introducing her to the court where she became particularly close to the prince regent, the *Taewŏn'gun*). It is generally accepted that *p'ansori* in earlier times had been sung for the rural populace, at market places or in village communal spaces, at parties and so on, but that by the

second half of the nineteenth century it was enjoyed by all. Shin, in his versions of the *p'ansori* stories, left a complexity of allusions in which, however, the Confucian codes and any sense of propriety are subverted, and in which animist and shamanist elements vie for our attention.[19] So, '*Hŭngboga*/The Song of Two Brothers' is about a corrupt elder brother and a kind younger brother. It challenges the inheritance rule in which the eldest son inherited all family wealth, since here he squanders it, leaving the younger brother in penury. The elder brother gets his comeuppance after the younger brother heals the broken leg of a swallow and is given gourd seeds that when harvested break open to reveal untold wealth. The elder brother tries to copy the younger, by breaking the leg of a bird, but the seeds he is given ripen into gourds full of goblins and other nasty things. Again, consider '*Sugungga*/The Song of the Underwater Palace', a story that centres on a wily hare and a slow terrapin. I wrote in 1983, in my first effort at capturing something of *p'ansori*, and noting how the genre developed in the southwestern Chŏlla province, that

> if *Sugungga* epitomizes the relationship of subject to king, then it should have been the hare ridiculing the king. In addition, Chŏlla people have never been fond of the national government and have rarely actively supported it, hence a story developed by them is hardly likely to exalt the king. Similarly, if *Ch'unhyangga* is a story to illustrate the Confucian ideal of husband and wife relationship, then the story, of Ch'unhyang marrying a *yangban* (gentry) while she is the daughter of a *kisaeng* courtesan, goes against the Confucian code and was actually illegal (1983b: 64).

1983 was 15 years before Kim Dae Jung took the reigns as Korean president, and Chŏlla Province, with Chindo at its southwestern tip, remained distant from the centre, Seoul. In 1983, I was in the middle of my fieldwork. I had become accustomed to police following me, questioning those I interviewed after I left. I was familiar with soldiers checking the passengers on buses or ferries as they arrived. Every time I came or went, I was the one who was checked. Once I dared to question a soldier: 'You are looking for North Korean spies, and everyone on this bus looks like they could be from North Korea except me. Why check me but nobody else?' I was ordered off at gunpoint and held for an hour or so, but my return to the bus was greeted with hearty cheers.

I had chosen Inji village as my base because it was known to keep core island music genres alive. It was the administrative centre for Chisan district. Chisan was connected to the rest of the island by a single narrow road that hung between a marshy tidal inlet below to one side and a mountain rising steeply upwards on the other side. While I was conducting fieldwork, the inlet was being reclaimed to provide much needed rice paddies. Nowadays, a metalled road cuts straight across it. But, in the early twentieth century, because of the isolation of the district, it had been an area for government horse ranches. In the 1980s, a legacy of this remained,

in that it was central to the island's controlled breeding programme for the Chindo dog, an intelligent and loyal spitz with a curly tale that is now designated as National Monument (*Kinyŏmmul*) 53.[20]

Fieldwork: Theory and Practice

Few foreigners had visited the island in recent times. British advisers had begun work on the bridge that by then was being built to the island, but they stayed on the mainland side of the narrow strait. One or two missionaries had passed through. A handful of scholars – the German Eckart Dege and a clutch of Japanese amongst them – had conducted research. Elderly men, not unsurprisingly, assumed I must speak Japanese. Korean scholars had often visited, but normally for short periods,[21] the brevity of their stays being amply illustrated by a 700-page volume of island oral literature published by the Academy of Korean Studies in 1980 that had been collected in barely a week (Chi 1980).[22] Students visited for a week or two during vacations, complying with the culture-of-the-masses *minjung munhwa* philosophy of learning from rural inhabitants by attempting to work alongside them.[23] My intended fieldwork, which would continue for more than a year, contrasted such Korean enterprises but matched the then standard European and American ethnomusicology and anthropology practice.[24]

Fieldwork, to me, was premised on observing local life, attending and recording weddings, *kye* mutual savings groups, farming and fishing work, the making of *makkŏlli* rice wine, *kim* laver and *tubu* and *toenjang* from soy beans, building activities, *hwan'gap* sixtieth birthday celebrations, shaman rituals, funerals, and so on. Yes, the old ways were fast disappearing, but I wanted to put flesh on what I could read about them in the available ethnographies.[25] I learnt to tell the sweet *makkŏlli* made on the island's west from the slightly sour *makkŏlli* favoured to the east. I learnt the process of producing the thin and crispy *kim* – the shallows on the coast near Sop'o were divided up and owned, growing the laver on trellises in the water; harvested, the laver was repeatedly washed then spread out in thin layers on sheets of split bamboo and straw, the sheets then being hung on frames to dry in the sun. I noted how a pig was slaughtered for a *hwan'gap*, the head boiled and shared by the men. *Hwan'gap* parties still marked life's full quota, since they were held after 60 years of life as the two cyclical 10 heavenly and 12 zodiacal animals returned to the same alignment as at birth. They marked the time when children took over a father's fields and when the eldest inherited the *k'ŭn chip* (main house). But people now lived longer, due to better care and access to medication, and older men complained how they were left with little to do except waste time in endless games of *hwat'u*, the ubiquitous flower cards used for petty gambling. I watched, then, as four old men built a bridge across a stream in Inji village, leading from the road to stone memorial

tablets of remembered villagers, and proudly carved an inscription: 'built by four old men'.[26]

Knowing that I had a girlfriend elsewhere, the Inji women's *kye* took me under its wing. A *kye* is a mutual savings club. Rutt recalls Isabella Bird Bishop, who in her 1898 book noted *kye* were a Korean curse. To Rutt, *kye* had 'ruinous potentialities' with a potential for catastrophe and the building of huge debts; they were, he tells us, false get-rich-fast clubs dominated by women (1964: 85–6). Rutt's negativity needs balancing, not least since before the arrival of banks they allowed resources to be pooled in order to manage expensive rites of passage such as weddings and funerals or the purchase of shared oxen or tractors. Indeed, there are much more positive accounts (e.g., Pak and Gamble 1975: 46–50, 173–7; Eikemeier 1986, 1991; Janelli and Janelli 1988–89). In Inji, the women's *kye* cost each attendee at a meeting around 3,500 *wŏn*, hardly an excessive amount that risked catastrophe. The accumulated fund could be loaned to members, but much of it was used to subsidise regular outings by the group. Its meetings were social events, contrasting the more common investment and loan activities. In an earlier publication, I wrote about one Inji women's *kye* meeting in January 1983:

> The postman knocked, looking for me. My host invited him in, but he politely refused. He looked gingerly inside the room where we were gathered, but dared not enter. My host was drunk, and so were her friends. They were smoking, telling each other explicit, lewd stories. Men weren't welcome here in the woman's society but I, as a foreigner, well I didn't count. The postman was young, afraid at the sight of women his mother's age doing things they would never do in public … Chindo was a bastion of Confucian propriety, a patrilineal society where male ancestors received semi-annual libations. On Chindo, supposedly, women reared children. Women prepared the food and looked after the house. Only men supposedly drank and smoked, swearing, convulsing in laughter at the crudity of the jokes of colleagues. Here, one woman sang, lamenting her lot in life, as another made a grab for the postman's trousers. He ran off (cited from Howard 1995: 181).

The life cycle ended with death. Shaman rituals were still held to lead the soul of the dead to the other world, and were sometimes given for illness, to ensure support and help with travel or new building work, and so on. Known as *Ssikkim kut*, a name indicating the central activity of spiritual cleansing, major rituals ran through the night and could reunite the dead (the clothes of the dead and paper effigies hung behind the altar) or even marry the souls of two who had died (straw effigies of the two stood by the altar). In Chindo, as in much of Korea's south, shamans were hereditary specialists whose efficacy with spiritual forces was measured through performance rather than in terms of possession and trance. Until the 1960s, there had been a fraternity of ritualists, with a meeting house, a *shinch'ŏng* ('place of the spirits'), in Sŏngnae village within Chindo township. This controlled the territories

within which each shaman practised. Clients within a territory referred to their shamans as a *tan'gol*, a term used elsewhere to indicate the relationship between shopkeepers and regular customers to whom a line of credit might be extended. But, by the 1980s, shamans worked wherever they were required. Several were part of the ritual preservation society that was formed with the November 1980 appointment of *Ssikkim kut* within the state preservation system as Intangible Cultural Property (*Muhyŏng munhwajae*) 72. Three ritualists were 'holders' (*poyuja*) or 'Human Cultural Properties' (*In'gan munhwajae*) of the Intangible Cultural Property, the shaman Kim Taerye (1935–2009), and the musicians Ch'ae Kyeman (1915–2002) and Pak Pyŏngch'ŏn (1933–2008).[27] The preservation society was meant to hold rehearsals and training sessions monthly in the Chindo Cultural Centre.

After the shaman ritual had ended, funeral processions set out from a village, acting out the journey to the other world. In the house, the dead would be wrapped and a tied in a muslin sheet. People came to pay their respects in front of a small portable shrine containing a portrait of the dead surmounted by a black ribbon. At dawn, the bier was taken from the house, lifted by pallbearers and placed on a lattice frame surrounded by a catafalque with canvas awning. Coloured paper chrysanthemums and bells or chimes hung from vertical corner posts,[28] and ropes were tied to the posts, streaming out to the back of the catafalque where they were grasped by wailing women. Elderly women wailed, as they had done regularly when the dead lay in the house, at times encouraging younger women to join in. A silk flag inscribed with the dead's name led the procession, preceding the portable shrine that now enclosed shoes as well as the portrait. A small team of percussionists might mark paces. Competing with the wailing, songs marked out the funeral journey. A very slow dirge gave way to a slightly less slow dirge. A third song featured lyrics meant to console the dead, and at the village boundary a fourth song marked the point where the bier was lowered and raised three times, as the dead gave their final bows to the home village. A sequence of songs then matched the walk up a hillside, in increasingly brisk tempi. At the chosen burial site, the dead was placed in the grave, and all present stamped down the earth on top, creating the familiar mounds. Back in 1974, Inji villagers had assembled a set of songs, working with two shamans to match this earthly journey to the equivalent enactments of the final spiritual journey within rituals; in 1987, this set, known as *Man'ga*, was appointed Provincial Intangible Cultural Property 19.

One old practice needs to be added to the ritual and funeral sequence. Much as earlier generations in my country used the death bell, attached to a finger of the dead lest they woke up before burial, so Chindo islanders recalled stories in which people came back to life after days or even a week. These stories coupled to a belief that rain and worms might make the dead suffer when buried under the earth, thereby risking an unhappy ancestor who would plague his or her living descendants. And

so the practice involved an initial internment on stones above the ground under a straw house known as a *ch'obun*. After the standard mourning period of three years, the bones would be removed from the straw house, taken back to the former home overnight, and buried the following morning. During fieldwork, I was only shown two *ch'obun*. Both were surrounded by misfortune: the head of the dead had been stolen, presumably for medicine, from one, and the other had no living descendants, so both had been left to decay long beyond the mourning period.

With the bones of an ancestor returned to the house overnight to await burial, respect demanded the living stay awake. This provided the justification for a masque-based performance known as *Tashiregi*. Revived in the late 1970s, two competing versions vied for my attention during fieldwork, one performed by local villagers and the other controlled by remnants of the shaman fraternity. The latter won the Intangible Cultural Property appointment in 1985 (as number 81), but not without dispute. A curious take on the masque and second burial practice came in a 1987 KBS television documentary, where a straw house was recreated but the dead was wrapped in plastic in a way that defeated the very reason for the straw house. This same documentary featured two stone *ch'angsŭng*, effigies of village tutelary spirits that had stood for many years at the entrance to Tŏkp'yŏng village in the island's northeast. *Ch'angsŭng* are usually made from wood, so these stone carvings had considerable rarity value. Shortly after filming, news of their existence leaked out, and one was loaded onto a truck and stolen. When the programme aired it reported how shortly after the theft the village leader suddenly died, a sure signal, according to other villagers, that the tutelary spirit was unhappy.

Learning Music in Chindo

Cho Kongnye (1930–1997) lived in Inji village. She had probably been born some five years earlier than her registration document stated, in 1925 (delaying registration of a female child was not uncommon during the colonial period), and moved to the village when married off as a young teenager. She had been appointed holder of Intangible Cultural Property 51, rice cultivation songs known as *Namdo tŭllorae*, in 1973. Cho taught me *Namdo tŭllorae*, *Man'ga*, and the songs of a third genre, the women's song and dance *Kanggangsullae* – Intangible Cultural Property 8, but with holders to the east of the island and on the adjacent mainland. I visited her most days over a two-month period. She sat one side of a drum and I the other, often with her four-year-old grandson sitting with us to interpret when I asked a question. She sang a line, accompanying herself on the drum, and I repeated it. Gradually, we built up each song in each set. Unlike when I had learnt the drum dance from Kim Pyŏngsŏp, the oral method was a little different, since I had the words to songs written out and placed beside me. The words had already been published, and I could refer to the

pages, correcting and adding comments to help my memorization of songs as lessons progressed.

Once I knew the songs, I began to experiment as lessons continued. What was Cho's tolerance for different ornamentation, or slightly different melodic lines? I often observed rehearsals and performances of the preservation societies for each genre (for an account of one, see Howard 2006: 105–106), and knew there were a variety of ways to sing the songs, sometimes the difference being a matter of detail but occasionally constituting considerable variation. I also added different pitches: what were the limits of Cho's conception of mode? I had recognized that some pitches she and her village friends sang fell outside the modes that had been defined by Korean musicologists for such songs – indeed, one scholar, Kwon Oh-sung, once justified the ironing out of tones and ornaments to comply with his scholarly model by commenting how, '[b]ecause [they] were non-professional singers, they sang the songs with undifferentiated ornamentation' (Kwon 1983: 60). I felt this was wrong, since I was working with a highly accomplished, great singer. Anyhow, scholars wrote about how the local mode, *kyemyŏnjo*, had three core tones supplemented by a few additional tones. My analysis revealed greater complexity while confirming three tones were always foregrounded (Howard 1987: 240; 1989: 146–51): a heavily vibrated low dominant (the *ttŏnŭn mok*), a steady-pitched tonic, and a higher 'falling tone' (*kkŏngnŭn mok*) with an upper acciaccatura resolving to a note a semitone or tone lower. There were many additional tones, consistently used, and I analysed the tonal palette using what ethnomusicologists since David McAllester in the 1950s have called 'weighted scales'. However, rather than think just in terms of pitch, the vocal style was at least an equal in importance to mode and was constant, foregrounding sorrow and emotion – the terms '*aewan*' or '*sulp'ŭn*' applied – typically favouring slow rhythmic cycles, and adding lots of rubato, heavy ornamentation and sharp rhythmic contrasts to enhance individual words or phrases. When I asked Cho and other villagers to contrast their vocal style to Western songs, they criticized the latter for lacking emotion and keeping too much rhythmic and melodic regularity.

Cho was a favourite of university students. She told me in 1990 how

> many university students have come to study with me during their vacations … Normally, about a dozen students come, but I've taught groups of 40 at one time. They don't pay me much, but try to cook for me. Students ask me why I continue to teach: I tell them it's because I know Chindo songs better than others.

After she died, she was remembered fondly by some of the (former) students:

> Teacher! No, more than a teacher, I wanted to call for the celebrated grandmother. More than the songs of the teachers that I wanted to find, I was filled with what the grandmother gave me … [She] was always informal but at the same time passionate, and

> she knew so many songs. Gradually, working with her during each day, we studied her songs (Pak Ponggu 1997: 10).

Cho taught Korean students much as she taught me.

Elsewhere, in Sop'o village I spent several weeks learning *nongak* percussion band music. We agreed a deal: I could stay in the *noin tang* (old people's meeting room) and would teach English in the mornings to local children, while members of the local band would come by in the evenings to work with me. In Songjŏng village, the ritualist Kim Kwibong (b.1934) taught me the *p'iri* oboe used in rituals. Chindo ritualists had developed a particular way to play this instrument, using embouchure around the oversized double reed to produce several pitches and wide portamento from a single fingering. This allowed the instrument to be played with one hand, freeing up the second hand to strike a gong, which was a technique responding to local poverty, since many clients could only afford to hire one or two musicians. The result of this technique, though, was to make my learning of the instrument both confusing and difficult. Ritual musicians improvised around short motivic cells, reacting to a vocalist or to a shaman's dance. The cells were model patterns that were rarely played without variation. In my first lesson, I asked Kim what pitch should be produced when covering three holes, and he replied, 'It depends'. Embouchure and reed were equally significant in the tone produced, but he didn't tell me this. He asked me to copy him, and played a sequence of eight tones. He was reluctant to break this down. Through trial and error I gradually assembled a sequence using the same fingerings. But, this sounded different. He wanted me to play the same sequence of pitches, not fingerings, he told me. But, once I had a sequence that sounded right, he advised me to never play it this way, because it was a model pattern rather than anything suitable for ritual performance. He demonstrated a sequence that he claimed was the same as the first sequence, but more suitable for performance; it sounded very different. Not surprisingly, my learning was slow.

There was, of course, much more music to study, and during my fieldwork I interviewed, recorded or played with more than 200 islanders; in respect to rice cultivation songs alone, I recorded 50 examples from 56 islanders in 12 villages. My recordings of music, but not interviews, are archived in the British Library. But it is at this point I must close my account, for since I never emerged as a fully-fledged Korean musician, but only as an academic (some might, of course, disagree even with this), I remain a *kwangdae* in training.

Appendix: Chindo Scenes, 1982–1984

Credits: all photographs © Keith Howard

Figure 1. Villagers from the outlying Nabaedo island being taken from the ferry to the shore

Figure 2. By the 1980s, although some agricultural work was still done by hand, Saemaŭl tractors had become ubiquitous to Chindo

Figure 3. An Inji village street in Chisan district, with the local coffee shop

Figure 4. Resting from one's labour: a man with 'A' frame

Figure 5. Some agricultural work was still done by hand, and here rice is harvesting near Sŏkkyo village

Figure 6. Once grain had been set out by the side of the road to dry in the sun, it was time for a snooze

Figure 7. Grain drying in the sun outside a former shop in Inji village

Figure 8. Tobacco drying

Figure 9. Rice straw was still used for thatching on Chodo island in the 1980s

Figure 10. Laver (*kim*) cultivation at the shore near Sop'o

Figure 11. Washing laver and setting it out to dry on bamboo and straw

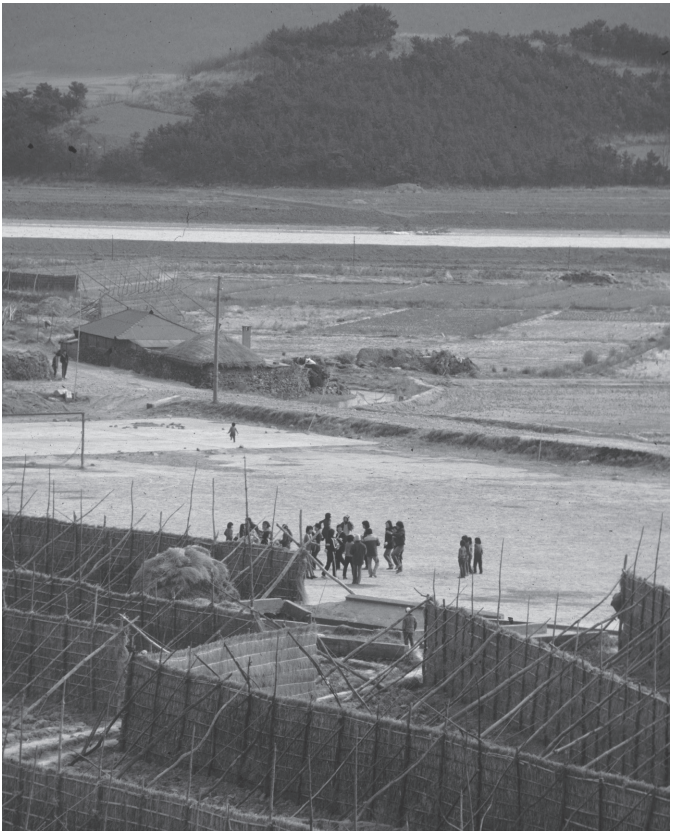

Figure 12. Laver drying in the sun on lines of bamboo and straw fencing at Sop'o, with the playing field, rice paddies and a tidal inlet behind

Figure 13. Washing clothes was often still done by hand in local streams

Figure 14. 'Shibilshi', 'Ten Day Town', situated at a junction of the road from Chindo township to Chisan and Imhoe districts, held a market every ten days

Figure 15. I found it tough going walking across a mountain on Chodo island to meet a musician, but this old man seemed to take it in his stride

Figure 16. The perilous road from Shibilshi to Chisan district, with a thatched cottage still in place, hung between a tidal inlet below to the right and a mountain rising steeply to the left

Figure 17. Groups of boys played in Chindo, as anywhere else

Figure 18. Chindo roads were not kind to bikes, but several shops existed. Here, a child poses for me outside one

Figure 19. A tipple of choice?

Figure 20. The celebrated Chindo dog, Natural Monument 53. In my experience, dogs with tan coats tended to have rounder heads and broader gaits than other colours

Figure 21. The shaman dances in *Ssikkim kut*. The paper streamers, that in design are said to resemble paper money from the Chosŏn dynasty, are used to direct visiting spirits to the altar to eat and drink, to sit and listen, and to dance

Figure 22. The shaman ritual, *Ssikkim kut*, was appointed as Intangible Cultural Property 72 in 1980. Here, a preservation society performance in early 1984 features the portable shrine to the deceased passing along the cloth of life

Figure 23. A funeral procession, having left the village, moves toward the local mountain where the dead will be buried

Figure 24. A *ch'obun* straw house. I was told that this *ch'obun* was nine years old, and had been left undisturbed because there was no living descendant to bury the deceased

Figure 25. A local percussion band gives a New Year's *maegut* ritual in Sangman village

Figure 26. Members of the preservation society for *Namdo tŭllorae*, Intangible Cultural Property 51, kindly re-enact how they once sang these songs during the cultivation of rice

Figure 27. The stone *ch'angsŭng* protecting Tŏkp'yŏng village that was stolen shortly after being filmed for a KBS television documentary

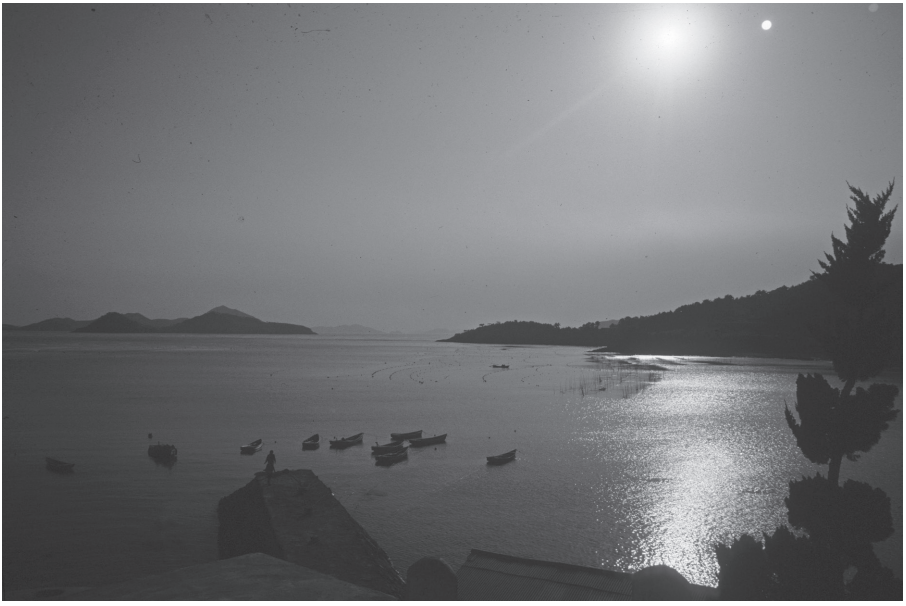

Figure 28. Night falls over the island

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Notes

1 Translation by Song Bang Song (1976: 25–7), adjusted.

2 Bishop Cooper was also detained by North Korean forces. A short account of Sister Mary Clare is at http://www.illyria.com/irish/irish_clare.html (accessed on 18 February 2012).

3 This is the new (2010) name for an institution, the *Kungnip kugagwŏn* in Korean, founded sixty years ago but tracing its roots back at least 1200 years through various court music institutes. The English name was initially the National Classical Music Institute, but it has changed several times, to the National Traditional Performing Arts Center in the 1980s, and to the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts in the 1990s.

4 See, for example, Malm (1986).

5 This brief discussion is much compressed; I have discussed Kim's teaching method in greater depth elsewhere (Howard 1983a and 2006: 26–7).

6 An English-language discussion of courtesans, though focused largely on the twentieth century, is by Pilzer (2006; for a brief overview of their activities prior to the twentieth century, see 2006: 296–297). The Korean scholar Kwŏn Tohŭi has written a number of excellent accounts about courtesan music (for example, Kwŏn 2001 and 2002).

7 Hood noted this in his address to the *Teaching World Music* symposium in Basel in 1993 (published as 1995: 56–8). See also Hood (1960) for his initial discussion of bimusicality.

8 Cottrell (2004) begins to explore this, based on his experience as a jazz, classical and theatre (musical) saxophonist in London. Multiple musicalities within the average Western musician are also implicit in John Drummond's discussion (Drummond 2005). And, if I look at my current students, some learn and perform many different musical traditions, encompassing *klezmer*, Indonesian *gamelan*, Korean *samullori*, Chinese *sizhu* and so on.

9 See the chapters in Solís (2004) for many examples.

10 However, the commercial world music market is, if anything, going the other way, that is, back towards an expectancy that the performers of Korean, Indian, African or Latin music will possess the appropriate Asian, African or American heritage. I consider this to reflect Orientalism, as famously discussed by Edward Said, in that it reinforces concepts of the familiar by juxtaposing distance within musical Others. For a perspective that challenges the commercial market attitude by a Zimbabwean musician resident in Britain, see Dutiro and Howard (2007: 5).

11 Anne Rasmussen says much the same about playing the Middle Eastern *ud* (2004: 215–6).

12 An alternative route was by overnight train from Seoul to the port city of Mokp'o, or to Kwangju and then a bus to Mokp'o, then an hour's ferry to the island. Since the ferry ran early in the morning, this provided the chance to sample the old buildings from the Japanese colonial period that still stood near Mokp'o's harbour.

13 I was told by local Saemaŭl officers that the design, with its long handlebars, came from Thailand. However, the main factory there commenced operation only in 1978; Vietnam had been producing similar machines since the 1960s, and two-wheeled designs (but with different handlebars) had been popular in Japan since at least the 1930s.

14 My memory gets hazy at this point, and I associate the loudspeakers largely with *Shibilshi*, a market village (the name indicating a market held every ten days) where the road from the township divided, one way going to Inji village and the other to the south of the island.

15 Translation from Maliangkay (2006: 56).

16 The practice is described by Ch'oe Chongmin (2003: 90–92) who, in turn, is cited by Sunghee Park (2010: chapter 2).

17 Adapted from Crane (1967: 16).

18 Compare Chan E. Park (2003: 114–8) with Killick (2010: 153–8). Killick usefully cites what Cho Tongil before him had described as a mix of earthy rural dialect and erudite poetic expression, of subversive satire and orthodox morality, and Marshall Pihl's account of 'core

and accretion' that contrasts a 'tidy schematic idea' with 'contradictions and inconsistencies' in *p'ansori* stories (Pihl 1994: 71).

19 The five surviving stories from the twelve that were known during Shin's time are outlined by, amongst others, Chan E. Park (2003: 6–11) and Howard (2006: 60–61).

20 The Chindo/Jindo dog has since the 1980s won recognition as a distinct breed by international pedigree associations (see http://eng.jindo.go.kr). 'Chindo' in McCune-Reischauer romanisation, but more commonly encountered on the Internet as 'Jindo'.

21 An exception is the Seoul National University professor Chun Kyungsoo; see his 1984 book, *Reciprocity and Korean Society*.

22 As an additional element of this lack of extended fieldwork, research on folksongs by Korean musicologists was until the 1980s based on analysis and comparison rather than ethnography, and was therefore characterized by a marked preference for work on the popular folksongs repertoires available in Seoul (see Howard 2006: 86–88).

23 Some visiting students researched local music for MA dissertations during these short stays, including Chang Kwio (1982), Chŏng Aeyŏn (1982) and Chin Hoesuk (1985).

24 For a statement of which, see Myers (1992).

25 Here, I have in mind less Rutt's *Korean Works and Days* than the accounts of Brandt (1971: 108–43), Pak and Gamble (1975), Han Sangbok (1977: 53–62) and Lee Man-Gap (1982: 73–7). Many detailed ethnographies have, of course, appeared since 1982.

26 Elders still commanded respect, but old age was often viewed as a return to uselessness (or childhood, as in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*). On 7 August 1983, after a number of reports appeared lamenting how Seoul's busy buses were trying to drive off before slow elderly folk had any chance to get on, I contributed a short article to *Korea Times* discussing the troubling issues elderly Koreans faced.

27 See Howard (1989: 159–216; 2006: 135–58) for detailed discussions of the ritual and its practitioners, and Howard (2012) for an exploration of East Asia's state preservation systems for the intangible heritage.

28 Rutt's more extensive evocation of local funerals, apart from presenting more detail on activities within the household, parallels my brief account here (1964: 173–7). He is, as we might expect, scathing of shaman rituals.

KOREA'S TIPPING POINT TO DEMOCRACY: A CORRESPONDENT'S VIEW OF THE EIGHTIES*

WILLIAM HORSLEY

Somewhat in contrast to the presentations we heard earlier today, I will present my memories and assessments of South Korea in the Eighties mostly in terms of how the country's development fitted into the global trend of evolution in the latter part of the twentieth century. It was an era which saw countries in many parts of the world move towards democratic government, and away from authoritarian regimes of both the left and right which ruled by force – indeed many were in the habit of repressing, killing and torturing their own people to stay in power.

Most of us think of the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, and the dramatic collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, as an almost miraculous moment when totalitarianism lost and the democratic idea won a great victory. In fact, the decade of the Eighties saw a series of challenges to totalitarian or military-backed governments, notably those against Soviet communist domination in Poland, Hungary and other countries of Eastern Europe. And for me, living in East Asia and reporting on the region from my base in Japan, I saw a groundswell of popular demands for more representative government, and popular opposition to a number of autocratic regimes in the region, building throughout the decade. And my contention is that South Korea has a special and positive place in what was a global trend towards constitutionality and the rule of law and democracy, which often went hand in hand with more prosperity.

I first visited South Korea as a BBC reporter on a short visit in the mid-1970s. Then, between 1983 and 1990, I was a BBC correspondent based in Tokyo but also covering events in East Asia as a whole during a turbulent decade up and down the region. The Eighties also saw the overthrow of the military-backed regime of President Marcos in the Philippines, and it ended with attempts at something like 'people power' revolts in both Burma and China, although both of those were bloodily suppressed.

It seems to me that in that context South Korea occupies an unusual – even a

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* A talk given on 26 November 2011 at the Korean Cultural Centre to the BAKS seminar on *Recalling Korea Past: an Oral History of the 1950s to 1980s*.

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unique – place. On each visit I made there I was struck by the dynamism of the conscientious social and political movements which rebelled against the authoritarian rule of successive military-backed governments. Earlier, back in the 1960s, a mass student-led protest had already led to the expulsion of South Korea's then military strongman, Syngman Rhee. The same set of forces endured and kept up a vigorous struggle year after year, for workers' rights and for free elections and against military rule under the regimes led in turn by President Park Chung Hee, and then Chun Doo Hwan and finally Roh Tae Woo. And I think few would now dispute that the final tipping-point to democratic rule came in the years 1987 to '88, during the years before and immediately after the1988 Seoul Olympics.

Park was, as we have heard, shot and killed by his own intelligence chief in a kind of palace coup in 1979, and was then succeeded by other military strongmen. But remarkably, South Koreans eventually experienced something that was not seen in any of the other countries of East Asia which were dominated in that period by authoritarian right-wing regimes – that is, they saw both the generals who followed Park Chung Hee, namely Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, charged, convicted and dressed in prison clothes, serving prison sentences for their autocratic rule and the abuses which they ordered to maintain their power.

And to me one figure above all embodied these movements towards a more open civic society and what he himself called 'participatory democracy': Kim Dae Jung. He was a candidate in presidential elections several times from the 1970s onwards – and each time he and his supporters claimed that he only lost the vote as a result of election fraud managed by the ruling elite and the army. But finally, some time after the army's domination of South Korean politics came to an end, he was elected president, and served for a single five-year term from 1998. And today South Korea has evolved into a remarkably vibrant and open society, and the most wired nation in East Asia (if not the world) in terms of Internet use and the vigour and energy of its blogosphere.

The vitality of the pro-democratic forces in South Korea during the long Cold War years seemed to me all the more remarkable because the country was right on one of the most dangerous Cold War borders. The American army was there in force as a 'tripwire' – to make clear to the North Korean communist regime that if the North should attack or invade again, the full force of America's military might, including nuclear weapons, stood ready to strike back with devastating consequences. On one trip to the DMZ I recall an American army officer remarking casually that Korea was one of the three 'flashpoints' which the US had identified for the possible start of the Third World War. The DMZ was indeed a scary place, the scene of the gruesome axe murders in 1976 of two American officers who rashly decided to cut down a tree that was blocking the view, and many other incidents.

In Seoul, everyone experienced the regular air raid warnings and civil defence

drills, designed to school the population in what they should do during the 15 minutes after North Korea had scrambled its attack jets and before they would be expected to drop their bombs on Seoul. The 1980s were punctuated by tragedies that grew out of the great powers' Cold War confrontation and the unpredictability of the North Korean regime under Kim Il Sung: there was the shooting down in 1983 of a South Korean airliner which flew into Soviet airspace over Sakhalin; the Rangoon bombing, later the same year, that killed several members of the South Korean cabinet; and in 1987 the planting by North Korean agents of a bomb on another Korean Airlines passenger plane which was blown up over the Andaman Sea. That constant tension and the threat of military attack were of course cited by the military as a powerful reason why South Korea needed an iron-strong government; and Kim Dae Jung especially was painted as a dangerous leftist radical, with his ideas of civilian control of the military, and labour rights, and participatory democracy.

I consider that Korea was exceptional in Asia because the Korean people actually liberated themselves from autocratic rule and built their own democracy. I also covered the 'people power' uprising in the Philippines which drove out President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. It was a very impressive turnout of millions of ordinary Filipinos, who won an important victory when the Marcoses were airlifted off the roof of the Malacanang Palace with their bars of gold to a safe haven in Hawai'i. But that revolt failed to break the stranglehold of the country's oligarchs, a handful of hugely wealthy families, or to usher in an era of lively democracy or control of corruption. As for Japan, by the 1980s it was already established as a stable democracy and America's primary ally in the region. But the Japanese people never rose up and demanded democracy themselves; it was something grafted onto the society after the country's unconditional surrender at the end of the Pacific war. And Japan evolved a very peculiar form of democratic government in the second half of the twentieth century, one based for almost all that time on one-party rule, and a high degree of social conformity. Boisterous public debate and meaningful transfers of power between competing political groups with genuinely different agendas remains a rather alien idea in Japan.

So why? Why did the South Koreans exhibit this plucky and determined will to oppose authoritarian rule and demand a more responsible form of politics? Part of the answer, I suppose, lies in the mind-set of struggle against colonial oppression, and of sacrifice, which the Koreans had developed during the long period of Japanese occupation up to 1945. It struck me forcefully, too, that a substantial part of the South Korean population were and are Christians – either Protestants or Catholics (Kim Dae Jung was in fact a Catholic). However you look at it, I was struck by the way in which many Koreans seemed to be motivated by the idea of individual conscience – both in terms of the struggle for workers' rights and their aptitude for personal participation in political movements, rallies and elections.

I am sure that another very powerful motivation was also at work – a fervent national desire to catch up with and even to overtake Japan in every way possible – economically, of course, but also in terms of social and political development.

I saw the very early stage of South Korea's 'economic miracle' already in 1976, on my very first reporting trip there. I vividly recall going by road down to Ulsan, near Pusan, and being astonished at the sight of the vast shipyard there, which was still being built but was designed to be one of the largest shipbuilding sites in the world – as indeed it became quite soon after that. And I was impressed by the resourcefulness of people, too. I was driven down to Ulsan by a driver in a very basic and rather clapped-out little Hyundai car, which broke down on the road. The fan belt had broken so the car wouldn't move. But very quickly the driver had improvised a temporary fan belt, with a piece of string, or a pair of women's stockings, and we were back on the road.

On that trip I first met Kim Dae Jung, at his house – he liked to invite foreign reporters there and talk to them over a cup of ginseng tea. He had been in jail as a dissident for some time already, and I photographed him in front of a calendar, on which he had marked all the months when he was incarcerated with a red cross. He told me then the extraordinary story of how in 1973 he had been kidnapped by Korean CIA agents in the Grand Palace hotel in Tokyo. He had been drugged, and bound hand and foot, and taken on a small boat out into Tokyo Bay and out to sea. His captors, he said, put heavy stones round his legs, planning to throw him into the sea to drown, but at the crucial moment an American helicopter had appeared and 'buzzed' the boat, in a clear warning to the KCIA not to do it. So his life was saved.

He also spoke of how he had suffered what he said was another assassination attempt, at about the time when he had stood against Park Chung Hee as a candidate in the 1971 presidential election. A car had driven into him in the street and injured him badly. He walked with a limp for the rest of his life as a result. He believed that the election had been rigged. The published result of the vote had been remarkably close – with only a few percentage points between him and Park. He claimed that the regime had simply counted all the votes of the army – at least about a million men – for Park Chung Hee; without that, he argued, he would already have been elected president and made South Korea a democracy.

Instead he was to spend the next seventeen years either in jail, or under house arrest, or in exile.

During that meeting Kim Dae Jung used a memorable phrase about himself – he said that he had survived those hardships, and close shaves with death, thanks to what he called his 'strong thread of life'. Altogether he made a big impression on me, as a man of conscience as well as a brilliant politician and public speaker. I remember speaking about him to a senior British diplomat at some point later, and suggesting that Kim Dae Jung could be seen as the Nelson Mandela of Korea. I'm afraid the

diplomat blenched at that idea; Kim Dae Jung was regarded by conservative forces, including some in the British government, as a dangerous radical.

I must say many years later I felt my judgement had been vindicated, when Kim Dae Jung became South Korea's president and was also awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

It's important to remember that through most of those years of military-backed rule, South Korea was in effect a police state. Foreign reporters had to assume their phones were bugged. I always assumed that the reason why visiting correspondents, who usually came over from Japan, were put in rooms on the same couple of floors of the main hotels, was to make sure the authorities could listen in. And from time to time officials would summon one of them for a sharp interrogation and dressing-down for what they had written. For example, one American journalist was summoned and harangued in the late Seventies for describing South Korea at that time as 'a tinderbox' in a BBC radio interview. Political opponents and dissidents were constantly harassed, and there were many political prisoners.

The paranoia of the regime in those days had its amusing side. I remember one incident when I went back to Seoul at the end of the Seventies to make a BBC radio documentary with John Tusa. The government press office helpfully arranged a number of interviews with officials and other public figures for us, but we had made separate arrangements on a certain day to go to the headquarters of one of the opposition parties to interview its leader, Kim Young Sam. So we made our excuses from our official minder and said thanks, but we would not need the services of an official driver; and we headed off by taxi to the party headquarters. When we got there, sure enough our government minder was sitting on the steps waiting for us – just to make sure that his masters knew everything they could about what we were doing during our stay in Seoul.

In 1980 the most serious popular uprising against the military regime took place, in protest against the martial law that was imposed under a new military strongman, Chun Doo Hwan. The uprising in the southwestern city of Kwangju – Kim Dae Jung's political stronghold – was ruthlessly suppressed, with the deaths of some 200 people. It came to be known as the Kwangju massacre.

The government, true to form, blamed Kim Dae Jung for stirring up the rebellion; he was charged with sedition and sentenced to death. He spent some weeks on death row but again his life was saved – this time after interventions by, among others, the much-respected American Ambassador to Japan, Edwin Reischauer, and by a plea for clemency from Pope John-Paul the Second.

The Seoul Olympics, as I've said, proved to be the catalyst for the final toppling of the military-backed regime. Already in 1987 the protests against the Chun Doo Hwan government were becoming fierce; it was commonplace to have raging battles on the campuses of the main universities in Seoul, which quite often spilled out into

the streets. The road to the airport ran just past Yonsei, one of the biggest and most radical universities, and quite often when one passed by there would be tear gas in the street and the sounds of battle coming out of there.

From the mid-1980s onwards, as the BBC correspondent in the region, I found myself constantly jumping on a plane from Tokyo to cover mass protests and crises in Korea. On one occasion an all-day battle raged around the big hotels in the centre of the city, with hundreds of students throwing stones at police and the police firing tear gas at them. The streets were choked with the noxious fumes, which later caused me quite serious throat and ear problems for a year or two. As a reporter I often had to wear a gas mask in order to witness what was going on, and I was told by my foreign editor that I was the first correspondent who had sent over a voice report from the streets recorded with my gas mask on! It was really hard to make out what I was saying, I admit, but it was authentic.

The street battles were quite ritualised but they raged at that time for several weeks. I was told by an ITV crew about an embarrassing thing that happened to them. They had retreated from the battlefield to take a break through a side entrance of one of the big hotels, only to find themselves in the middle of a line of guests greeting the bride and groom at a Korean wedding reception. The reporter and his camera crew were covered in white powder from the tear gas, which made the people inside sneeze and clutch their handkerchiefs. The TV team had to beat a hasty retreat.

For me a highlight of that period was a particular day, in June 1987, when the ruling party, the Democratic Justice Party, the DJP, decided that with the Olympics coming up the next year they had to do something drastic to defuse the protests. It was a hectic time and I like other journalists was reporting from Seoul almost round the clock. But early one morning I woke up and remembered that on that day the DJP candidate for the next presidential election, General Roh Tae Woo, who was in effect Chun Doo Hwan's second-in command, was due to make an important speech in response to the weeks of continuous street protests. So I called up a South Korean government press officer I knew, who was on the spot at the party headquarters. He told me the speech was about to be given and that he had the text in front of him. "Anything special in it?" I asked. He told me that Roh Tae Woo would announce that he was going to "Save the Nation" by introducing sweeping political reforms, including the freeing of all political prisoners. "Does that include Kim Dae Jung?" I asked. "I assume so", I was told. That was enough. And so I was the first to report to the world that South Korea, one year before the Seoul Olympics, had embraced the idea of a genuinely open democracy.

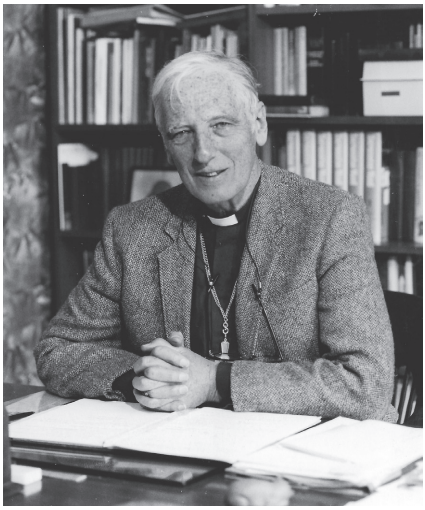
In reality the ruling elite were not ready to give up control so easily. The government did win some time, though, and it still had many ways to manipulate public opinion, which it used to the full. Once again Kim Dae Jung stood in the presidential election that was held the next year; once again there were allegations of electoral fraud; and

in the end Roh Tae Woo was declared the winner by a narrow margin. The result was largely thanks to the disunity of three opposition candidates, including Kim Dae Jung and Kim Young Sam, who all insisted on standing, so splitting the opposition vote three ways.

Even so, a turning-point had been reached. From then on South Korea started to develop friendly ties with China. Kim Young Sam became the first truly civilian president. Roh Tae Woo and Chun were both jailed and disgraced. And Kim Dae Jung became South Korea's president for five years from 1998 and won the Nobel Prize, for his 'Sunshine policy' towards North Korea and his lifelong contribution to human rights in East Asia. Kim Dae Jung's own record was in the end tarnished to some extent by the proven corruption of his sons, and the revelation that a lot of money had secretly been paid to persuade Kim Il Sung's son, Kim Jong Il, to take part in the first ever inter-Korean summit in 2000 inside North Korea.

But Kim Dae Jung's personal courage and his extraordinary dedication to the cause of democracy and human rights make a remarkable story. It's also the clearest symbol of South Korea's unique experience in East Asia, of building a functioning democracy through the nation's own efforts – and so serving as an important example to others, too.

OBITUARY: MONSIGNOR RICHARD RUTT



Richard Rutt, an honorary member of BAKS, died on 27 July 2011, aged 85.

Ordained to the Anglican priesthood in 1952, he was sent to Korea in 1954. There he served as a parish priest in isolated rural villages until 1966, when he was made Assistant Bishop of Taejon. Two years later he was consecrated as its Bishop. After five years he sought to have episcopal responsibility placed in Korean hands and to return to Korean parish life, but permission was refused and in 1974 he came back to England as Bishop of St Germans, a suffragan within the diocese of Truro. Untested in British church life, he was well suited to the rural Cornish setting, so when he was promoted to the urban Midland see of Leicester in 1979 it was a novel challenge. He proved to be an admirable choice for this growing multi-cultural environment, and made a notable success of community and inter-faith relations. He and Joan retired to Falmouth in 1990, where they converted to the Roman Catholic church in 1994.

The following tribute appeared in the Bulletin of the Association for Korean Studies in Europe, *and is reprinted by kind permission with minor additions*:

With the death of Richard Rutt at the age of 85 the world of Korean scholarship has lost one of its most learned, yet most unassuming figures. Pitched into the

deep end of war-shattered Korean life shortly after ordination in 1954, he mastered vernacular and classical Korean with equal facility, and as parish priest of Anjung he immediately showed that characteristic and deep empathy with whatever society he was to find himself in at any stage of his life, be it in rural Korea or multi-cultural urban England. His wife Joan followed him in Korea and quickly acquired a post as lecturer in English Literature at Sungsil University, Taejon. Richard was proud of the Korean cookery book she compiled and published. Their shared love of the countryside inspired the regular columns he wrote anonymously for *The Korean Times*, that would lead to the first of many publications of enduring significance, *Korean Works and Days* (1964). Fascination with East Asian tradition shone through here and in later books, such as his introduction to *sijo* (*The Bamboo Grove*, 1971) and even his unique study and translation of the difficult Chinese Classic, the *Zhou Yi* (*The Book of Changes: a Bronze Age Document*, 1996). He was an enthusiastic president of The Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch. After serving as Bishop of Taejon for six years (1968–74) he sought to return to life as a country priest, but the Archbishop of Canterbury (concerned, so it was rumoured, that he was in danger of going "too native"), recalled him to England. Honoured in Britain with a CBE and in Korea with the Order of Civil Merit and a DLitt from Sungkyunkwan University, he returned to Korea only once, to consecrate the new Bishop of Seoul in 1984. He did, however, continue to research and write about Korea, *inter alia* co-authoring

Richard and Joan in retirement in Falmouth

(and meticulously editing alongside his beloved wife Joan) *Korea, a Historical and Cultural Dictionary* (1999).

Richard was a kind and gentle man. He recoiled from hearing himself described as a polymath, yet how else might one sum up someone with an encyclopaedic memory and expert knowledge of, on one hand, Chinese and Korean etymology and literature, cooking, and the Catholic martyrs, and on the other, knitting (*A History of Handknitting*, 1987), the Cornish language, and English history? His Korean library now sits on the shelves in the Bodleian Library, symbolising his deserved place alongside his own great and learned missionary heroes, Mark Trollope and James Scarth Gale (*James Scarth Gale and his* History of the Korean People, 1972).

As strong traditionalists neither Richard nor Joan could bring themselves to accept the ordination of women, and in 1994, already retired, Richard was among the small number of married Anglican clergy who sought and was granted a place in the Catholic church. With typical enthusiasm for his new *milieu* he threw himself into fresh study of the Catholic martyrs in Korea. He was given permission to officiate for services at a convent in Falmouth, and was immensely proud when the Pope designated him Monsignor in 2009. In their turn, the nuns of the convent cared for him with much love during his last few months.

BAKS members write:

The Foreign Office sent me at relatively short notice to Seoul in 1977 to spend two years learning Korean and then one year in the political section of the British Embassy. I knew nothing about the Far East, let alone Korea, and I think there was comparatively little about Korean history and culture in English at that time. I found two books by Richard Rutt extremely valuable in helping me to understand more about Korean society. One was his edition of James Scarth Gale's *History of the Korean People*. This could be read on a number of levels: as a history of Korea, as a history of western, and particularly missionary, contacts with Korea, and as a modern appreciation of Korean civilisation. The second was his collection of translations of *sijo*, *The Bamboo Grove*. Quite apart from being a stunning work of scholarship and an important artistic achievement in its own right, it did more than anything else I came across to both place Korea in its East Asian context and to demonstrate its unique cultural identity. Both works were also imbued with a profound respect and admiration for Korea which certainly rubbed off on me and has endured. Although I never met Richard Rutt nor knew anything much about his pastoral activities, his work on Korea certainly had a great influence on one lowly diplomat.

Nigel Bowie

I did not really know Richard very well, though from about 1983 onwards I had regular dealings with him until about 18 months before he died. I only really learnt who he was after I was posted to Seoul in 1981 and acquired *Korean Works and Days* and later his account of James Gale. The former I read more than once and found it provided insights into Korean behaviour that were still valid, although it had described a world some twenty-five years past.

I first corresponded with Joan Rutt over the Anglican Mission, and when I wrote a short piece on British missionaries in Korea as part of the diplomatic centenary events in 1983, I sent her a copy. Eventually I got a friendly if slightly pained note from Richard, pointing out that I had failed to refer to his paper in the KBRAS series on the medical missionary Landis. I was suitably apologetic!

In 1984, Richard came to represent the Archbishop of Canterbury at the inauguration of a new bishop of Seoul. The ambassador was not able to go so I represented the embassy and was able to see the hand-knitted mitre of which he was very proud. You would not have been able to tell that it was hand-knitted unless you were told. Susan and I invited him to dinner, along with the ambassador and other guests. This raised a protocol question. Richard would normally have been the guest of honour, but one's ambassador always takes precedence. Normally, it was my role to advise on protocol matters but this time I put it to the ambassador, who was not one for airs and graces. But this time he was adamant. He represented The Queen, who was the head of the Church of England, and therefore he took precedence. Richard, to whom I explained the position, took it in good part and we had a very jolly evening. Those of us who drove were surprised when he said how well-behaved Seoul traffic was compared with his day – a judgement that seemed mainly to be based on watching the cars go around the City Hall Plaza from his hotel window.

After we returned from Seoul, I had the occasional exchange of correspondence and he was always most friendly and helpful. He also praised some pieces I wrote, which pleased me a lot. Among those who had known him in Korea, he was always highly regarded both as a priest and as a scholar.

James Hoare

I hadn't been in the UK very long and went up to Newcastle to a BAKS conference, where I presented a paper on Amenomori Hōshū's *Kōrin teisei*, an extended memorandum written in 1728–29 on diplomacy with Korea from the Tsushima Confucianist (Amenomori Hōshū) to his feudal lord, the daimyō of Tsushima. Richard recognised a quote I had used: 'When there is hoarfrost underfoot, Solid ice is not far off.' In the question and answer period, he commented that the quote was from the *Yijing* (Book of Changes), when I had no idea of its origins. I was startled and felt very foolish. Of course, I thought, Hōshū was a Confucianist, and all those obtuse lines in the text probably derived from classical texts. I was tempted to run

all the other oddities by Richard, but felt too embarrassed to be such a bore, spared him the bother, and went looking for them on my own. Later, I heard that he had been translating the *Yijing* in his spare time, as one does. The passage is below.

《易经》第二卦 坤 坤为地 坤上坤下

Kun, the second hexagram, 'the receptive' with earth above and earth below; in the lines, with six at the beginning, the commentary states, 'When there is hoarfrost underfoot, Solid ice is not far off.' (履霜, 坚冰至。tr. Legge: 'Treading on hoarfrost. The strong ice will come (by and by).')

Jay Lewis

When I was in Korea for the first time, in summer 1972, I came across *Korean Works and Days*. I knew nothing of its author, but his obvious sympathy for and insight into the country immediately attracted me, and I wrote to him, care of the Royal Asiatic Society, with some questions. He wrote straight back, inviting me down to Taejon. There, in late August, I first made the acquaintance of Richard and Joan Rutt. Joan's Korean cooking remains in my memory to this day, and as Richard walked me round the town I got my first glimpse of his gentleness and his seemingly boundless knowledge of traditional Korean society and culture.

Two years later he returned to the UK as Bishop of St German's and I invited him to Durham to address students at the School of Oriental Studies. This he did, not standing at the lectern provided on the stage for a more formal lecture, but perched on the edge of a table, chatting without notes and captivating his audience. It was the first of several visits, as a result of which he was made an Honorary Fellow, donated some of the Korean artefacts he had brought back from Taejon to the Oriental Museum, and bequeathed the first part of his important Korean library to the University Library. Richard stayed with Sondra and me for one of these visits. Our young son was in a bad mood one lunchtime. Richard, perhaps aiming to create a diversion, suddenly came out with a remark quite unrelated to anything that had gone before but guaranteed to change the atmosphere, "Of course, you know that Joan of Arc had no heels in her socks …" There was certainly no answer to a tension-busting remark like that. An Anglican bishop who was not only an expert on traditional Korea but also on a saint's socks!

The transfer from Taejon to St German's suited him well, and he quickly set about learning Cornish and investigating Cornish culture. He viewed the plethora of Cornish saints with good-tempered humour: "there are scores of them, of course," he once told me, "but only a dozen or so of them can be authenticated, and seven of *them* are a bit dubious …"

As a lover of country ways he was given the name Lapwing when he became a

Cornish bard. But though he threw himself enthusiastically into 'Cornish works and days', his fascination with ancient China and traditional Korea continued unabated. In the introduction to his new translation of the Confucian classic *Zhou Yi* ('Rites of Zhou'), published as the first in the Durham East Asia Series, he drew attention to the shared culture that linked the flora, fauna and social habits of the two countries in ancient times. Reading and commenting on the text in draft with a view to publication showed me the depth of his scholarship and the way that, as every good historian should, he used his imagination when interpreting arcane material. When we later cooperated on *Korea: a Historical and Cultural Dictionary* (Curzon 1999), I had frequent and grateful reason to admire not only the range and depth of his knowledge, but the casual and unpretentious way he would explain and tell me things. "Of course", he would say quite unassumingly, "you know that …" I suspected he knew that I *didn't* know whatever it was, but one always felt that he had the knack of 'saving face' in the most unpatronising way possible.

Keith Pratt

CONTRIBUTORS TO *BAKS 14*

JOHN BOWLER MC was a nineteen-year-old commissioned National Serviceman who served on the front line in Korea from November 1951 to August 1952. He and his platoon met the Chinese on 8 of their 15 patrols in No Man's Land. He was wounded twice and lost 50% of his hearing, and was awarded the Military Cross for the good work carried out by No. 3 Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion The Welch Regiment. His later career was in advertising and marketing, and he ran his own company for 20 years. He lives in Oxfordshire.

JAMES GRAYSON, an anthropologist and Methodist minister, served as an educational missionary in Korea from 1971 to 1987. From then until his retirement in 2009, he taught at the School of East Asian Studies of the University of Sheffield. His main research interests are the religions and folklore of Korea, and more broadly East Asian religions and folklore. Professor Grayson is currently President of the British Association for Korean Studies.

MICHAEL HICKEY was commissioned in 1949 and served with the RASC in Korea from 1950–52. In 1981, he retired as a General Staff Colonel with the Ministry of Defence. He is the author of *The Unforgettable Army – Slim and the 14th Army in Burma* (1992); *Gallipoli* (1995) and *The Korean War 1950–53* (1999).

WILLIAM HORSLEY is an independent journalist and UK chairman of the Association of European Journalists. He spent more than ten years as a BBC foreign correspondent in East Asia in the 1970s and 80s, reporting on the popular rebellions that led to the ousting of military-backed regimes in South Korea and the Philippines in the 1980s, and the rise of Japan as an economic superpower. He holds the post of International Director of the Centre for Freedom of the Media at the University of Sheffield and is a Visiting Fellow at the Centre for Law, Justice and Journalism at City University London.

KEITH HOWARD is Professor of Music at SOAS. He was previously Director of the AHRC Research Centre for Cross-Cultural Music and Dance Performance, and the founder, director, and licensee of the SOASIS CD and DVD label and OpenAir Radio. Among his many books are *Korean Kayagŭm Sanjo: A Traditional Instrumental Genre* (co-author, with Chaesuk Lee and Nicholasa Casswell, 2008), *Korean Pop Music: Riding the Wave* (editor, 2006), *Preserving Korean Music: Intangible*

Cultural Properties as Icons of Identity and *Creating Korean Music: Intangible Cultural Properties as Icons of Identity* (author, 2006).

WARWICK MORRIS was Ambassador to Vietnam for three years (2000–3) and served three times in South Korea for a total of 13 years, starting with 18 months learning Korean at Yonsei University in 1975–6, and concluding as Ambassador from 2003 to 2008. He made working visits to North Korea in 1991 and 2004. He has been Chairman of the Anglo-Korean Society since 2011, and Honorary President of the British–Korean Law Society since 2009. He is an Adviser to Lloyd's Insurance on Korea and Vietnam and External Director of Prudential's life insurance business in Korea and Vietnam. He was awarded an Honorary PhD by Soonchunyang University in 2006 and elected an Honorary Fellow of Robinson College, Cambridge in 2011.

JOHN OWEN-DAVIES retired from Reuters in 1999. For most of his 25 years with the company he was based in Asia, the Middle East and Africa. This was after working on newspapers in South Africa, Malaysia, Fleet Street and Northern Ireland. He visited North Korea in 2000 for the Geneva-based International Federation of the Red Cross to look at hospitals and general healthcare in that country.

MICHAEL PIKE KCVO, CMG, joined the Diplomatic Service in 1956 after a brief spell in journalism. After serving in Seoul, Singapore, Warsaw, Washington and Tel Aviv he became Ambassador to Vietnam in 1983, a post he held until 1985. He was Minister to NATO from 1985–87 and High Commissioner in Singapore from 1987–90. He retired in 1991, and is currently Chairman of the Editorial Board of *Asian Affairs*.

KEITH PRATT spent most of his career studying and teaching Chinese history and culture in the School of Oriental Studies, University of Durham, with special emphasis on sino-Korean relations. Since his retirement as Professor of Chinese he has concentrated on writing about Korean culture, and his publications have included *Korea: a Historical and Cultural Dictionary* (with Richard Rutt, 1999) and *Everlasting Flower, a History of Korea* (2006). He is a past President of BAKS.