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# About the British Association for Korean Studies and *BAKS Papers*

The British Association for Korean Studies (BAKS) was founded in 1987 as a forum to host conferences and workshops on Korean Studies around the UK. At such events, papers have been presented on a wide range of subjects including archaeology, art, economics, literature, politics, and society. BAKS continues to hold annual conferences, sometimes in partnership with her sister organisations, The British Association for Chinese Studies (BACS) and The British Association for Japanese Studies (BAJS).

*Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies* (BAKS Papers) was founded in 1991 to publish the editorially approved transactions of the then annual conferences of the Association. The journal for several years actively solicited submissions from outside the conferences as well. Fifteen volumes were published, the final two issues digitally.

Initially the quality of *BAKS Papers* was maintained by an internal editorial board and the editor. Since Volume 14 (2012), *BAKS Papers* became a fully peer-reviewed journal. There was established an external editorial board of 20 international scholars covering a range of areas within the humanities and the social sciences. The Editorial Board is under the leadership of the Editor. There are prescribed rules for the examination of submissions and regulations for writers making a submission. Just under half of the submissions (including external submissions) were rejected for publication in Volume 15 (2013).

Since its inception in the late 1980s, the *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies* has focused on modern and contemporary Korea but has not neglected traditional culture and history. For example, Volume 5 (1994) was a special issue devoted to archaeology and material culture. The journal has published other special issues, such as Volume 6, which focused on 'Nationality and Nationalism in East Asia', reflecting the Association's broader interests in contemporary East Asia, and Volume 14 (2012), which focused on British witnesses to the social, cultural, political and economic changes in late twentieth-century Korea.

# About the *European Journal of Korean Studies*

At the General Meeting for The British Association for Korean Studies in London on 9 September 2016 the Association decided to re-launch *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies* (BAKS Papers) as the *European Journal of Korean Studies*.

The new name better reflects the existing breadth of the editorial board as well as the extensive range of submissions that result from expanded offerings on Korean Studies across the European continent, including Great Britain. Using our experience gained in publishing the *BAKS Papers* over the last 25 years, we are delighted to relaunch the publication as a Europe-wide journal dedicated to Korean Studies.

*BAKS Papers* has been blind, peer-reviewed since volume 15, and the *European Journal of Korean Studies* will carry on being blind, peer-reviewed. The new *Journal* will be published twice a year, rather than just annually. It is the only English-language journal in Europe devoted to the broad field of Korean Studies, and we hope that it will become the showcase journal for the outstanding work on Korea being done in Europe.

First published in 1991 and originally available in printed format, *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies* (informally known as *BAKS Papers*) is now available on-line through the Association's website. Volumes 1–16 are available for download, as will future issues of the *European Journal of Korean Studies*. Since Volume 17(1) the *European Journal of Korean Studies* is also available again in print and we endeavour to keep back issues physically available in the future. The *Journal* is free to BAKS members and those who want copies should contact Robert Winstanley-Chesters: [treasurer@baks.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@baks.org.uk).

## Editors

Adam Cathcart, Editor in Chief

Robert Winstanley-Chesters, Managing Editor

# Editor's Note

Saying goodbye is always a challenge. With this issue of the *European Journal of Korean Studies*, we say goodbye to the longstanding and much-loved cover design of the *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies*. We have Professor Keith Howard to thank for the previous graphic iteration of the journal, whose generation in 1991, lore has it, was a salve to ruptures among Korean Studies scholars in the United Kingdom. The new design is still a work in progress. His and Hers Design and BBR, our long-standing printers in Sheffield, have developed a new graphic identity in cooperation with the BAKS Council and Professor James Lewis, which will appear across platforms in a way which could not have been imagined in 1991. Volume 18(1) will appear in physical print, but also digitally and online via our new web platform, [www.ejks.org.uk](http://www.ejks.org.uk). We hope you appreciate the new design and format which we believe will make the *European Journal of Korean Studies* much more accessible and attractive to readers and the general public alike.

Good design and more functional tools for dissemination are, of course, nothing without good content. Volume 18(1) has four substantial research articles, a lengthy research note and seven informative book reviews. We at the *European Journal of Korean Studies* are always in search of diversity, in terms of contributors, perspectives and form. While this is normally a challenge we feel that this issue is one of our most wide ranging and diverse yet. Diversity of course brings limitations as much as it does opportunities and we have been challenged in terms of romanization, style and managing the review process as we push the envelope with some ground-breaking writing. Professor Ulambayar of the University of the Humanities, Ulaanbaatar, in particular, provides a window into Mongolian experience during the Korean War, straddling transnational histories of that war (as seen in Tessa Morris-Suzuki's recent edited volume) and Mongolia's ongoing, interesting and unexplored relationship with North Korea. We are delighted that a scholar of such caliber and experience should make a contribution to our journal. While North Korea's foreign relations are at the heart of Professor Ulambayar's work, Dr. Andrew Jackson of Monash University provides a fascinating glimpse into the possible futures for that nation. While his article is rooted in careful, scholarly speculation the author's reframing

of the piece during the review process has added methodological weight to Jackson's enterprise. At the time of writing inter-Korean relations appear more promising than they have in two decades, but North Korea's regime stability is still a subject for inquiry and contention and we believe this paper contributes in fundamental ways. Artistic and creative analysis of both Koreas has been at the core of the scholarship produced by members of the British Association for Korean Studies such as that by Keith Howard, Charlotte Horlyck and our connections with the British Museum, so we are very pleased to offer a brilliantly-documented contribution provided by Pekka Korhonen and Werner Koidl exploring the intersections between music and politics in Pyongyang. Another great tradition of the *Papers of the British Association for Korean Studies* and the work of BAKS alumnus and past editor of this journal, Professor James Grayson, is focus on missionary engagement and linguistic and language development of the Korean peninsula. We are certainly happy, therefore, to have Goeun Lee's exploration of translation practices in the field of mission and evangelism as part of this issue. Lee is currently a graduate student at the Academy of Korean Studies in Seoul, the institution which provided generous funding for the *European Journal of Korean Studies* in 2017–2018 and without which this issue, and its research note, would not have materialized. Finally, thanks are also due to the BAKS Council, the University of Leeds (especially Michelle Ridge in the research office of the School of History) and all of our anonymous reviewers without whose energy, intellect, and patience an enterprise like this would not be possible.





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# Why Has There Been No People's Power Rebellion in North Korea?

**ANDREW JACKSON** Senior Lecturer, Monash University

## Abstract

One scenario put forward by researchers, political commentators and journalists for the collapse of North Korea has been a People's Power (or popular) rebellion. This paper analyses why no popular rebellion has occurred in the DPRK under Kim Jong Un. It challenges the assumption that popular rebellion would happen because of widespread anger caused by a greater awareness of superior economic conditions outside the DPRK. Using Jack Goldstone's theoretical explanations for the outbreak of popular rebellion, and comparisons with the 1989 Romanian and 2010–11 Tunisian transitions, this paper argues that marketization has led to a loosening of state ideological control and to an influx of information about conditions in the outside world. However, unlike the Tunisian transitions—in which a new information context shaped by social media, the Al-Jazeera network and an experience of protest helped create a sense of pan-Arab solidarity amongst Tunisians resisting their government—there has been no similar ideology unifying North Koreans against their regime. There is evidence of discontent in market unrest in the DPRK, although protests between 2011 and the present have mostly been in defense of the right of people to support themselves through private trade. North Koreans believe this right has been guaranteed, or at least tacitly condoned, by the Kim Jong Un government. There has not been any large-scale explosion of popular anger because the state has not attempted to crush market activities outright under Kim Jong Un. There are other reasons why no popular rebellion has occurred in the North. Unlike Tunisia, the DPRK lacks a dissident political elite capable of leading an

opposition movement, and unlike Romania, the DPRK authorities have shown some flexibility in their anti-dissent strategies, taking a more tolerant approach to protests against economic issues. Reduced levels of violence during periods of unrest and an effective system of information control may have helped restrict the expansion of unrest beyond rural areas.

Key words: North Korea, popular rebellion, marketization, unrest

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Predictions of the collapse of North Korea (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or DPRK) have arisen repeatedly over the last thirty years. Such predictions followed the 1989 demise of Eastern European communism, the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, the 1994 death of Kim Il Sung (Kim Ilsŏng, 김일성), the widespread North Korean famine of 1996–7, and the death of Kim Jong Il (Kim Chŏng'il, 김정일) in 2011.<sup>2</sup> Possible scenarios for collapse have included a military coup, external intervention and the assassination of Kim Jong Un (Kim Chŏng'un, 김정은). Another scenario put forward by researchers, political commentators, journalists—and in November 2017, by T'ae Yong-ho, the former DPRK deputy ambassador to the United Kingdom—has been a People's Power (or popular) rebellion.<sup>3</sup> Such a rebellion might follow the pattern of the 2010–2011 Arab Spring events that overthrew entrenched dictatorships in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, or the 1989 overthrow of Ceaușescu in Romania.

The term People Power was first used to describe the 1986 Philippine protest movement that overthrew Ferdinand Marcos' government and became the inspiration for mass rebellions against dictatorships in South Korea in 1987 and in Eastern Europe in 1989.<sup>4</sup> Street protests against dictatorships erupted in major cities, and opposition movements led by disenfranchised elites emerged from these protests, swiftly accumulating widespread followings. In each of these cases, the military refused to suppress the demonstrations, made pacts with the opposition and helped overthrow dictatorships.

Following the succession of Kim Jong Un, the third leader of the DPRK's Kim dynasty, scholars of North Korea have taken an interest in the possibility of People's Power-type rebellions in North Korea. In particular, Lankov<sup>5</sup> argues that greater awareness by North Koreans of the affluence of the South will lead to anger about conditions and attempts to overthrow the Pyongyang regime.<sup>6</sup> Hazel Smith<sup>7</sup> claims that 'popular uprisings' are prevented by the fear of punitive sanctions from the authorities, and because people prioritize their

own survival. Hunger and poverty may generate anger, but more often than not inhibit popular mobilization against the regime.<sup>8</sup>

South Korean journalists and political commentators have speculated for many years about an imminent popular rebellion against the DPRK leadership, with spikes in such journalistic speculation following the Arab Spring<sup>9</sup> and the introduction of tougher sanctions by the Trump Administration.<sup>10</sup> Victor Cha, former North Korean advisor to President George W. Bush (2001–2009), predicted in his 2013 political commentary *North Korea: The Impossible State* that the DPRK is a ‘ticking time bomb’ and the leadership will soon face their own ‘Ceașescu moment,’ referring to the historical moment in December 1989 when a crowd turned on Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceașescu as he gave a speech.<sup>11</sup> The direction of such political commentary and journalistic speculation is notable because many of the assumptions that popular rebellion can be engineered from the outside appear to have filtered into US Government policy towards the DPRK. Lankov<sup>12</sup> argues that the unstated aim of recent economic sanctions—ostensibly aimed at forcing Pyongyang into renouncing its nuclear and ballistic missile development programs—is in fact to starve North Koreans into rising up against their regime.<sup>13,14</sup>

It is seven years since the events of the Arab Spring, and five years since Lankov and others made their predictions, yet the DPRK state stands firm.<sup>15</sup> Its population is apparently no nearer to rising up against it, which invites speculation as to why no popular rebellion has occurred. As a historian I am more used to explaining reasons for the occurrence of rebellions in premodern Korea than I am in speculating about why rebellion has *not* occurred in modern North Korea. In this paper, however, I will provide an explanation for why a People’s Power type rebellion has not happened since the start of Kim Jong Un’s rule (2011–present). Not all political commentary and scholarship has predicted the imminent demise of the DPRK through a popular rebellion, and McCoy and Grice have attempted to explain why no rebellion has occurred. McCoy contends that poor telecommunications means we have never seen the type of social-media fuelled rapid spread of protests that led to the overthrow of Arab dictatorships in 2011.<sup>16</sup> Grice argues that the conditions are in place for a popular rebellion but this has been prevented by total, brutal state suppression.<sup>17</sup> While I agree with the conclusion of both McCoy and Grice, both arguments fail to account for the complex dynamics that can result in popular rebellion, as well as the regime actions that can prevent it. Most problematically, Grice’s analysis takes no account of the massive changes that have occurred in DPRK society since popular marketisation began in the wake of the late 1990s famine (see below).

This changed social reality complicates our understanding of the dynamics that can cause popular rebellion in the DPRK.

To overcome these limitations, I will be using the prism of analytical and sociological literature on rebellions, scholarship on North Korea and a comparative analysis of other historical rebellions. Many of the scholarly and journalistic claims about popular rebellion in the North are based on particular assumptions about how such events start and how they spread. I argue that while many of these assumptions are not inherently wrong, they only provide a partial explanation for why mass rebellions occur. My account aims to expand our understanding of the type of conflict that may have been going on in the DPRK under Kim Jong Un's rule in the context of widespread popular marketization, and why this conflict has not exploded into the type of rebellion predicted by researchers, political commentators, politicians and journalists.

### *Theoretical Framework*

'Revolutions'<sup>18</sup> as Jack Goldstone<sup>19</sup> argues 'do not arise simply from mounting discontent over poverty, inequality, or other changes.' Revolutions are 'complex, emergent processes' produced by a variety of social factors which are themselves reliant upon both contingency and the mobilization of different groups within society.<sup>20</sup> In order to account for its inherent complexity, Goldstone argues that popular rebellion occurs at the rare intersection of seven essential elements:

1. Mass rebellions occur in societies in a state of 'unstable equilibrium' or at a point where social orders are so frayed that even small disorders can accelerate a movement towards the overthrow of the existing regime.<sup>21</sup>
2. Widespread discontent can lead ordinary citizens to join in protests, and this anger arises when people feel they are 'losing their proper place in society' because of government policy.<sup>22</sup> Unstable social equilibrium and anger are caused by structural problems such as uneven economic development, patterns of exclusion, sudden demographic change or discrimination against specific groups.<sup>23</sup>
3. Critical to the eruption of rebellion is the emergence of an ideology offering 'a persuasive shared narrative of resistance' that links the discontent of disenfranchised elites to the rest of the population. Ideology and its impact upon popular rebellion is a contentious area since 'ideology is highly fluid' and although we hope it would provide a 'clear guide to the intentions and actions' of participants of rebellion, in actual

fact, ideologies are often not shared by all participants, and rebel leaders shift policies according to changing circumstances.<sup>24</sup>

4. Popular rebellions are seldom exclusively domestic; they are also international affairs. Rebel movements, for example, often depend upon favorable international support to guarantee a victory.<sup>25</sup>
5. Goldstone's formulation also acknowledges the vital impact of unintended or unforeseen forces upon complex processes like rebellion.<sup>26</sup> He calls these contingent forces 'transient causes', and they include sudden events like massive rises in inflation or riots and demonstrations challenging state authority. Countries with the resilience to handle crises may deal with such events many times over the course of a decade, but states in 'unstable equilibrium' stand a greater chance of breaking down into a revolutionary crisis.<sup>27</sup>
6. Essential to the coordination of mass mobilization into a nationwide movement is the leadership of elites—current, former or out-of-favour power-holders in government. Without the leadership of political elites, spur-of-the-moment protests are more likely to dissipate,<sup>28</sup> and without military elite participation, demonstrations are likely to be suppressed.<sup>29</sup>
7. Goldstone's theoretical framework stresses the actions of the state and its security forces within the conflict process.<sup>30</sup> The state, even in 'unstable equilibrium', is not a passive entity waiting to be seized by the people, but is actively engaged in its own survival.<sup>31</sup> When threatened by a political movement, state security forces often modify strategy in an attempt to ensure regime continuity. Such choices can successfully defend regime interests or even hasten its demise. State decision making is a vital part of our understanding of contingency, because many regime choices within a revolutionary situation are unpredictable.

Goldstone's formulation is an amalgam of elements of the most influential theories of rebellion. For example, notions of 'social equilibrium' closely resemble Chalmers Johnson's systems/value-consensus theories, while the theory of mass discontent follows Ted Gurr's frustration-aggression hypotheses.<sup>32,33</sup> Notions of group-focused mobilization derive from the political conflict perspectives of Charles Tilly and Anthony Oberschall.<sup>34</sup> Goldstone has also drawn on the work of Skocpol and Halliday in highlighting not just international but domestic influences on the causation and expansion of popular rebellion.<sup>35</sup> Goldstone, like Skocpol<sup>36</sup> and Wood,<sup>37</sup> stress that unintended consequences and multiple motivations of participants help shape revolutionary processes.

Current explanations for popular rebellion in the DPRK are theoretically grounded in frustration-aggression theories of revolution. Lankov sees anger arising from the recognition of inequities of wealth between North Koreans and the outside world.<sup>38</sup> He argues that an influx of heterogeneous ideas and above all 'knowledge about available alternatives' like Chinese or South Korean style capitalism will spread anger and enhance the impetus for change.<sup>39</sup> Gurr argues that the catalyst for discontent leading to revolution is 'relative deprivation',<sup>40</sup> a notion implicit in Lankov's assertion of the realization of an unbridgeable lifestyle gap for the populations of the two Koreas.<sup>41</sup> However, within Lankov's assumption lies a limitation common to the frustration-aggression hypothesis. As an explanatory tool for political change, Gurr's theory treats society as 'a passive structure'<sup>42</sup> upon which particular variables (like discontent because of raised expectations) act.<sup>43</sup> In the case of the DPRK, if sufficient information from the outside enters the DPRK, then enough anger will be generated to initiate a popular rebellion. Theories like the frustration-aggression hypothesis also treat mass rebellion as a linear process. If enough anger is generated, then state collapse is inevitable. As Lankov states: 'Once North Koreans come to the conclusion that they have no reason to be afraid of the usual crackdown, they are very likely to do what the East Germans did in 1989.'<sup>44</sup> Theorists like Gurr (or Johnson and Tilly) viewed

revolutions as purposive movements of an opposition that sought to wrest control of the state. They explained revolutions mainly by explaining the origins of the opposition and its recourse to violence. Yet often revolutions began not from the acts of a powerful opposition but from internal breakdown and paralysis of state administrations which rendered states incapable of managing normally routine problems.<sup>45</sup>

Goldstone accounts for a complex revolutionary process using a combination of theoretical constructs like discontent and unstable social equilibrium. He also factors in the impact of ideology, the international situation and contingency to create a formulation that translates across different temporal and cultural contexts.

In this study I speculate on why no popular rebellion has occurred in the DPRK under Kim Jong Un using Goldstone's framework and comparisons to the overthrow of Ceaușescu in Romania and Ben Ali in Tunisia<sup>46</sup> (hereafter, referred to as 'transitions'). Theda Skocpol has argued that: 'Revolutions can be treated as a 'theoretical subject ...' but

There should be included in any study both positive and negative cases, so that hypotheses about the causes of the phenomena under investigation can be checked against cases where that phenomena did not occur.<sup>47</sup>



Through a comparative approach of positive cases in Tunisia and Romania, I hope to better explain why no popular rebellion has occurred in the DPRK, using the key elements identified by Goldstone.

As cases for comparison, there are of course essential differences between the DPRK and Romania in 1989 and Tunisia in 2010, above all in the international dimension stressed by Goldstone. The Romanian transition, like that in Tunisia, came as part of a wave of change in the former Eastern Bloc during which popular movements challenged and overthrew their communist governments. Knowledge of the collapse of regional communist hegemony conditioned the decision making of the Romanian leadership in their handling of the popular challenge because they were concerned with preventing contagion from abroad.<sup>48</sup> In the period since Kim Jong Un took power in December 2011, however, the East Asian region has seen no comparable wave of challenge to authoritarian rule, and little that could inspire a popular movement against the DPRK authorities. In addition, in a swiftly fluid international environment in which former friends became hostile to the authoritarian character of the regimes in Romania and Tunisia, neither Ceaușescu nor Ben Ali could rely on many of their traditional foreign allies for support against domestic opposition movements. This has not been the case in the DPRK. Although Beijing has applied sanctions to punish Kim Jong Un's government for its nuclear brinkmanship, the People's Republic of China (PRC) appears to value the continued existence of the DPRK as a buffer state against South Korean and US regional domination.<sup>49</sup>

At the same time, the 1989 Romanian and 2010 Tunisian transitions are particularly pertinent examples to compare with the DPRK. Tunisia and Romania both maintained extremely politically intransigent and repressive regimes that used substantial violence to suppress dissent,<sup>50</sup> the media and oppositional political discourses.<sup>51</sup> Most importantly, the Tunisian and Romanian transitions also throw up vitally important counterpoints to the DPRK case in specific areas: changes in ideological control and information flow from abroad, sources of popular anger, unrest as transitional causes, elite participation and regime decision making during domestic threats. Comparison of these areas will help to show why widespread rebellion has not occurred in the DPRK.

## Negative and Positive Cases: The DPRK, Tunisia and Romania

It is important to consider why there has been no rebellion in the DPRK under Kim Jong Un in the context of marketization from below in the DPRK, since the type of market activities that exist under Kim Jong Un have become a vital

feature of North Korean daily life. The social changes wrought by marketization and the fluctuating policy of the DPRK regime under Kim Jong Un provide vital insights into the causes of popular anger and the impact of new ideas from abroad.

### *The Context of Marketization*

Marketization has increased rapidly since the 1990s, brought on by that decade's economic collapse, the failure of the Public Distribution System (PDS) and the 1996–7 famine, all of which forced people to find survival mechanisms that do not depend upon state support. Until the mid-1990s, the state exerted almost total economic and considerable political control over North Koreans through its domination of the food supply system. Following the collapse of the PDS, marketplaces have emerged in which labor, foodstuffs, raw materials and consumer goods are traded on a for profit basis.<sup>52</sup> North Koreans who are not actively trading in markets have also become part-time merchants, or have developed cottage industries cooking food or producing goods in their homes to sell at market. In addition, farmer's markets have flourished. Travel has become easier thanks to opportunities to bribe officials.<sup>53</sup> During periods when the border with the PRC has been porous, people have been able to bring in goods from abroad to trade. Thanks to marketization, many North Koreans have experienced a level of 'economic independence'<sup>54</sup> hitherto unknown in the North.<sup>55</sup> State officials and party members are as susceptible to want as other parts of the population, so turn a blind eye to private enterprise for a cut even though such economic activities are deemed anti-socialist in the DPRK.<sup>56</sup> Since the 1990s, corruption has become endemic.<sup>57</sup> Much of the legislation outlawing private economic activities has never been lifted, rendering most market transactions illegal<sup>58</sup> and leaving ordinary North Koreans to eke out a living susceptible to exploitation from officials seeking bribes.<sup>59</sup> Overall, marketization has greatly improved the living standards of the population in comparison to the period of economic collapse and famine of the 1990s.

But such economic changes do not mean that popular rebellion was less likely. On the contrary, as has been observed by theorists, it is often not when economic conditions are at their worst that rebellions occur but when conditions are improving.<sup>60</sup> The same can be seen in the Tunisian case. In the period of Ben Ali's rule (1987–2011), the national GDP quadrupled, wealth in the country increased, life expectancy increased by 10 years, literacy doubled, and the absolute poverty headcount halved.<sup>61</sup> Yet deeper structural problems remained that provoked popular anger and unrest as will be seen below. One

other potential problem in both the North Korean and Tunisian context was the influx of ideas heterodox to the regime.

### *Ideological Change*

Marketization in the DPRK has helped bring about other profound ideological changes to the population. As goods have come in from abroad, so has information about the reality of life beyond the borders of North Korea. Peddlers trading goods smuggled from the PRC also bring in media (movies and TV dramas) depicting life in South Korea and China.<sup>62</sup> This self-imported information about lifestyles beyond the borders of North Korea has been supplemented by increasingly active human rights and religious groups who have found ways to transmit data into the country using balloons carrying literature or USBs or by smuggling.<sup>63</sup> Political commentator Jieun Baek claims that much of this information has revealed to North Koreans what they lack in social, political and economic terms and how inferior life in the DPRK is in comparison to other countries, an implication that will be discussed below.<sup>64</sup> As well as an explosion in awareness about the outside world, the ability of the DPRK authorities to impose ideological training on the population has been reduced since many officials, themselves reliant upon market activities for survival, have no longer been able to devote all their time to ideological education.<sup>65</sup> The indoctrination of North Koreans has been severely curtailed by marketization since many workers are no longer dependent upon attending official workplaces—important sites of political education—in order to receive their ration card.

Research by Smith,<sup>66</sup> Hassig and Oh<sup>67</sup> and Choi<sup>68</sup> appears to indicate that the combination of marketization and new information has resulted in a shift in values and norms of people forced to fend for themselves to survive and a hardening of attitudes of the population towards their rulers. Smith argues that North Koreans are fully aware of their position and their poverty in comparison to the South Koreans and the Chinese.<sup>69</sup> The DPRK population was previously encouraged to see themselves as more fortunate than their neighbors but has realized that in fact the complete opposite is the case.<sup>70</sup> Ordinary people have embraced a new-found right to make decisions based on self-interest while increasingly questioning the principle of self-sacrifice for the greater good of a state which appears incapable of providing for its population.<sup>71</sup> Hassig and Oh argue that ordinary people pay no notice to official ideology and pronouncements and treat officials with barely concealed contempt.<sup>72</sup> The changes brought by marketization has therefore been dangerous for political elites because they have been 'accompanied by the disassociation of the population from the government.'<sup>73</sup>

While the social changes wrought by an influx of new ideas and marketization in the DPRK are profound, they are still a far cry from mass rebellion seen in Tunisia. Lynch<sup>74</sup> argues that a radically new regional information environment had a profound catalytic impact on the Tunisian transition. Although Ben Ali controlled the media and internet strictly, the regime considered Facebook to be innocuous, allowing activists the opportunity to build up connections with a diaspora community of migrant workers in France, providing an outlet for the discussion of issues.<sup>75</sup> This group of Facebook activists, armed with new links and ideas about novel methods of resistance, went onto play significant roles in the Tunisian transition. Discussion and negotiation helped unite young Tunisian workers abroad and activists in Tunisia.<sup>76</sup> A shared sense of regional identity was also formed thanks in part to social media but also to the experience of watching Al-Jazeera, the Arab region's satellite channel. According to Lynch, the Al-Jazeera generation developed a common experience of protest over the decade prior to the Arab Spring—against the US invasion of Iraq and in support of the Al-Aqsa Intifada.<sup>77</sup> This radically new regional information environment helped shape the 2010 Tunisian popular movement with a pan-Arabic rather than a national identity that 'shared heroes and villains, common stakes, and a deeply felt sense of shared destiny.'<sup>78</sup> The North Korean case is very different. The information flows sent into the DPRK by activists and brought in by peddlers have not acted as a unifying ideology, nor have they revealed a shared sense of suffering, common values, or a pan-Korean identity. Instead they have highlighted differences to North Koreans. This information may have increased cynicism, but it has not unified people and brought them onto the streets.

As a result of its reduced ideological control, the DPRK government has generally had an ambivalent attitude towards marketization. On one hand, the regime has tolerated its existence as a mechanism for social stability and the generation of income, but on the other it has periodically attempted to reassert state control over economic activities so it can more fully control the indoctrination of North Koreans, an implication discussed in the next section.<sup>79</sup>

### *Sources of General Discontent*

Despite the many positive economic impacts of marketization, there are still many potential sources of discontent within the country. There is a great deal of poverty and inequality as well as cleavages between different parts of the country. In 2012, the World Health Organisation reported that levels of malnutrition were 'worrysome' but 'acceptable', suggesting that there are still shortages of basic foodstuffs, especially in certain seasons and in particular areas of the

country.<sup>80</sup> Much of the population also suffers from a lack of housing, electricity and clean water, and the shortages appear to be worse in the countryside where transport links are less reliable.<sup>81</sup> Marketization has brought extreme income inequality, and a *nouveau riche* class of entrepreneurs has emerged on the back of private trade in larger cities.<sup>82</sup> Such disparities in wealth are not the only problems, especially for the majority who are unable to buy their way out of compulsory service. There is the onerous requirement of ordinary North Koreans to participate in service on behalf of the state. Soldiers, students and office workers are required to engage in construction projects and also help out with harvests.<sup>83</sup> Such a culture of mobilisation means that an increasingly burdened workforce has to give up family time or opportunities to engage in market activities and spend it in service to the state instead. In addition, for the vast DPRK armed forces, conscripts face the possibility of a decade in military service with few opportunities for leave, and may even fall victim to malnutrition.<sup>84</sup> Corruption amongst state officials and party members is rampant due to the opportunities offered to them by marketization.<sup>85</sup> Since March 2016 increasingly stringent international economic sanctions have been imposed upon the DPRK by the UN Security Council and the Trump Administration in response to a series of missile launches and nuclear tests. It is unclear what impact these sanctions have had on the finances of state and society but UN resolution 2375 outlawing fishing, coal and other imports will probably have hit the activities of those ordinary people engaging in private economic activities particularly hard.<sup>86</sup> The DPRK has also experienced a significant growth in the population from 21 million in 1993 to 24 million in 2008,<sup>87</sup> which has the potential to stretch already limited state resources.

Goldstone argues that many of the same type of issues suggested above contributed to the systemic unstable equilibrium and anger resulting in the overthrow of Ben Ali in Tunisia. The Arab states saw some of the highest population surges of any area in the world. Although the economy had improved and overall poverty levels had dropped in Tunisia, there were severe pockets of poverty in the interior away from the capital. Perhaps the most serious result of the population increase and uneven development was a large surplus of well-educated young people who were unable to find full time employment.<sup>88</sup> Blocked employment opportunities, a lack of political choice, an increasingly coercive state security service, and official corruption helped fuel angry protests that led to the overthrow of Ben Ali. Despite such similarities with Tunisia as demographic change, inequality, uneven economic development and rampant corruption, we have not seen the same scale of popular anger in the DPRK, except during times of market unrest.

The largest explosion of anger in the DPRK in recent years came with the most sustained state attack on private economic activities on November 30, 2009. The government introduced a sudden reevaluation of the North Korean won in an attempt to wipe out the earnings of those who had engaged in private trade. The reforms created mass panic and hyperinflation as market activities were temporarily curtailed.<sup>89,90</sup> Although precise details are sketchy, there is some evidence that the reevaluation also resulted in largescale but disorganized outbursts of discontent in January and February 2010.<sup>91</sup> According to Lankov, this was the greatest public display of anger since a previous attempt to curtail private trade in December 2007—a ban on market trade for women under 50 which reportedly led to riots in Ch'ŏngjin.<sup>92</sup> Both the currency reform and ban was eventually undermined by ordinary people and lower ranking officials, whose survival depended on private trade and the markets gradually reemerged.<sup>93</sup>

It is probably because of the general level of anger that followed the 2007 and 2009 attempts to clamp down on market activities and revive the PDS that there has been no repeat of these policy shifts under Kim Jong Un. Kim Jong Un's administration has ceded the management of companies to individuals, permitted entrepreneurship to develop and shown a greater tolerance of market activities than previously.<sup>94</sup> According to Choi,<sup>95</sup> popular perceptions common amongst many ordinary North Koreans who actively engage in private trading is that the Kim Jong Un administration is no longer attempting to restrict market activities and has tacitly accepted the indispensability of a market system that can provide subsistence that the state cannot. Lankov concurs with this point, arguing that while the Kim Jong Un government will never fully legalize private economic activities completely, it quietly accepts marketization.<sup>96</sup> However, the unrest in markets has not stopped completely under Kim Jong Un, providing further clues to the sources of discontent within the DPRK.

### *Market Unrest Under Kim Jong Un*

There is evidence of market unrest directed against the excessive bribe-taking of officials. Over the past few years South Korean newspapers have carried reports of a number of violent and non-violent protests within North Korean markets. Three incidents were reported in 2011; one in Chongsŏng (North Hamgyŏng Province), another in Sinŭiju, and a final cluster of incidents that allegedly spread between Chŏngju, Ryongch'ŏn and Sŏnch'ŏn (all in North P'yŏngan Province). Three further incidents were reported in 2015 in Hamhŭng (South Hamgyŏng), Ch'ŏngjin and Musan (both North Hamgyŏng).<sup>97</sup> Two non-violent

verbal protests occurred more recently against excessive demands for payment from officials, with incidents happening in Ryanggang province in 2017 and 2018.<sup>98,99</sup> This kind of market unrest is important because it precisely reflects Goldstone's transient cause—protests that can escalate into a popular challenge to state rule. As Michael Kimmel observed, large scale rebellions often start in seemingly insignificant events.<sup>100</sup> The fall of Tunisia's Ben Ali started with the suicide of a market trader, while the fall of Ceaușescu began with the attempted eviction of a pastor in the regional town of Timișoara. The reason why such unrest often leads to wider conflict historically is because of the inherently politicized nature of public and private life under many authoritarian (especially communist) regimes, where even smaller public protests take on a deeper symbolic significance and become a greater threat to the regime.<sup>101</sup>

There are reasons to be skeptical over whether these incidents occurred in the way newspapers have reported them. They were first publicised in newspapers associated with human rights organisations or the South Korean right such as the *Chosun Ilbo*, with a vested interest in promoting North Korean collapse. Many of these reports were first published in South Korea and then broadcast directly into the North to promote dissent.<sup>102,103</sup> Most of the journalists received their data from so-called unidentified informants embedded within the DPRK called *sosikt'ong* (literally: source) who allegedly relay news from local eyewitnesses to South Korean journalists via unregistered Chinese satellite phones. However, there are also reasons to believe market disturbances have indeed been occurring under Kim Jong Un. First, similar outbreaks of disorder were reported in South Korean newspapers in 2006, March and December 2008, December 2009.<sup>104</sup> Second, there are also defector accounts of market disorder in 2006 and 2008.<sup>105</sup> Finally, given the widespread growth in private trade, the importance of markets as a livelihood for ordinary North Korean citizens and the widespread corruption of state officials that has arisen as a consequence of marketization, it is fully plausible that the alleged market disturbances occurred as reported.

The participants in the market unrest appeared to be responding to local abuses of power. George Rudé<sup>106</sup> (1981) has observed of the revolutionary crowd in history, the slogans of participants in protest provide some insight into their motivations. In the 2015 unrest in Ch'ŏngjin, Ministry of Public Security (Anjŏnbu, MPS) agents prevented an elderly vendor from hawking old middle-school textbooks alongside secondhand books. Onlookers complained about the arbitrary nature of the decision and allegedly shouted: "You're all the same—living off the money of those struggling to get by!" Thereupon protestors attacked the agent, who fled.<sup>107</sup> The 2011 unrest in Chongsŏng, North

Hamgyŏng Province and Sinŭiju, North P'yŏngan Province also appear to have been related to disputes over bribe taking.<sup>108,109,110</sup> The most recent incidents in October 2017 and July 2018 did not result in violence, but angry words were exchanged between vendors and officials. During the 2017 incident, an alleged impromptu protest arose in a market in Hyesan, Ryanggang Province, when security agents<sup>111</sup> demanded 'contributions' to prepare for the Party Foundation Day (10.10) and vendors protested shouting: 'How many times is this that you've come (for money)?'<sup>112</sup> In the July 2018 protest in Hyesan (Ryanggang Province) Ministry of People's Security officials were alleged to have conducted house-to-house searches of vendors, confiscating hard currency.<sup>113</sup> This latest incident may well be part of a concerted effort to raise funds for state coffers that have been stretched by the impact of economic sanctions since March 2016. None of the incidents appear to have been attempts by the state to stamp out market activities indefinitely, and the response of protestors has mainly been directed against individual officials rather than the regime. In 2017 and 2018, comments by protestors indicated they believed that their right to trade privately had been tacitly accepted by the Kim Jong Un regime.<sup>114</sup> People involved in this unrest appear to have distinguished between how state officials should be acting according to the regime's current attitudes towards marketization and the reality of how they were in fact acting. It is this reality that has caused anger.

In addition, the issues raised during the unrest concerned economic factors (excessive payouts) rather than regime policy (the elimination of market activities). This is perhaps why such protest is attempted and apparently tolerated in the DPRK—a country with a reputation for crushing all dissent mercilessly. Smith argues that the 1990s economic crisis and resultant marketization has resulted in a separation of economic and political spheres—in other words, officials allowed people greater freedom than in previous periods to engage in economic activities in order to survive, but still curtailed political freedoms to criticize the state.<sup>115</sup> The result is that certain criticisms of officials' actions have been tolerated as long as they were understood to be non-political.<sup>116,117</sup> The grievances of the participants in the market unrest have been directed against individual security agents, particular official actions, and local abuses. The outbreaks appear to show an awareness by the participants in the unrest that there would be some limited regime tolerance of this type of protest.

The North Korean market unrest also appears to have been largely defensive, with participants defending rights and protecting incomes that were threatened. Such actions are not an anomaly, as James Scott has argued:



the great majority of peasant movements historically, far from being affairs of rising expectations, have rather been defensive efforts to preserve customary rights or to restore them once they have been lost.<sup>118</sup>

In other words, North Korean market protesters are not trying to get what they don't have, they are trying to keep what they believe is rightfully theirs. This is significant because it suggests that researchers and political commentators alike have misidentified an important source of discontent in North Korean society. When such defensive grievances are 'widely shared', and also 'widely directed' against the same target, they have the potential to expand into greater national unrest.<sup>119</sup> However, Kim Jong Un has not attempted to clamp down on market activity on the scale of his father in 2005–9, and this may explain why more widespread and destructive unrest has not been directed against the regime.

This situation in the DPRK stands in some contrast to the transitions in Tunisia and Romania. While initial incidents of unrest in the Tunisian rebellion occurred in provincial towns, the participants always sought wider political change—they were not trying to rectify local abuses or defend economic rights, and this can be seen in the slogans. Early protesters in Tunisia shouted: 'The people want to overthrow the regime' or 'leave!'<sup>120</sup> In other words, the demonstrations were responding to a local event but directed their anger against the regime from the outset. In Romania, the participating protesters came from minority religious and ethnic Hungarian groupings who identified allegiance to their respective churches as defenders of their Hungarian culture and rights. These groups saw the decision to evict Pastor Tóké as a direct assault on their collective interests by the state.<sup>121</sup> Richard Hall argues that within two days of the initial protests, the unrest took on a wider anti-regime character, and there was a political motivation from the demonstrators from the outset.<sup>122</sup>

Overall, the corruption of North Korean officials and attempts by the local DPRK authorities to generate revenue by extracting profits from vendors has generated discontent under Kim Jong Un, and market unrest is evidence of this. The grievances remain localised and economic, rather than political challenges to the leadership in Pyongyang. Choi argues that the DPRK government is able to maintain its rule by achieving 'dominance without hegemony.'<sup>123</sup> The state recognizes that marketization has been a stabilising force in the DPRK, and that this is the reason why systematic state attacks on the market in the manner of the 2007 and 2009 crackdowns have never been attempted under Kim Jong Un. The regime knew that such measures would result in fiercer anti-regime sentiment, and that 'its dominance would fall apart' perhaps even tipping the DPRK into unstable social equilibrium.<sup>124</sup>

However, there may be other reasons why catalytic events like these market disturbances failed to escalate into larger unrest. We must also consider the question of mobilization and state responses to protest.

### *Elite Participation and Mobilization*

Accounting for the rapidity of revolutionary mobilisation, Oberschall argues that movements are not formed ‘through the recruitment of large numbers of isolated and solitary individuals’ linked by a common enemy or grievance, they emerge instead from ‘pre-existing associations.’<sup>125</sup> In other words, popular rebellion does not cause people to form *new* anti-government groups. Patterns of prior organizational coherence based on kinship, region, ethnicity, political, work, religious or educational affiliation are vital to the rapid expansion of protest.<sup>126</sup> Groups essential to the escalation of limited unrest into a wider popular rebellion leading to state collapse include elite-led political and military organisations.<sup>127</sup> These theoretical points regarding elite participation and mobilization are well-illustrated by the Tunisian case, in which elite groups—particularly human rights organizations, lawyers, academics and journalists—played a vital part in the challenge to Ben Ali by joining protests despite the regime’s previously harsh treatment of dissidents.<sup>128</sup> Middle-class professional participation in the demonstrations illustrated the broad appeal of the grievances and helped legitimize the protests. In terms of mobilization, it was trade unions, particularly the Tunisian General Labor Union (UGGT) which was central to marshalling a greater cross-section of society against the government. The UGGT had had years of experience of blue- and white-collar labor disputes, and by organizing solidarity strikes in the major cities and the capital played a key part in moving the protests from the periphery to the center of government power.<sup>129</sup>

Compared to Tunisia, where there was a history of group and elite participation in protests, especially in peripheral and marginalized coastal areas, the situation in Kim Jong Un’s DPRK has been very different. Research suggests there is a total absence of any oppositional political elite capable of coordinating a movement from the mass demonstrations. Lankov concludes that there is no ‘second society’ political opposition within the North to coordinate post-collapse Korea in the way that dissident Eastern Europeans helped lead post-Communist rule.<sup>130</sup> Likewise, there are no institutions independent of the state—churches, trade unions, student and intellectual groups—that could have provided the leadership for dissent.<sup>131</sup> Hassig and Oh<sup>132</sup> argue that organized or semi-organized groups working against the regime are unlikely to exist in the

DPRK, and that by the time any such group became known outside the North they would already have been eradicated.<sup>133</sup> This does not mean that there is no intellectual dissent. Smith cites evidence of the plethora of official pronouncements that continually castigate intellectuals for not following the dictates of the party according to previous pronouncements as a manifestation of heterodox thinking.<sup>134</sup> However, evidence suggests that most elite groups within the DPRK are largely co-opted into the state and are 'bound together by a common awareness that they stood to face ruin and reprisals from home and abroad if the regime were to collapse.'<sup>135</sup>

It is not just political elites that are linked by a unifying force to rally to the regime in times of domestic or international threat. Despite internecine factional struggles,<sup>136</sup> military elites also share this characteristic, which may explain the continued loyalty of military units. Terence Lee<sup>137</sup> examines cases in which the military supported authoritarian regimes against mass protests (Tiananmen Square, 1989; Burma, 2007) and cases where the military joined the rebels and collectively overthrew dictatorships (The Philippines, 1986; Indonesia, 1998), arguing that military units stayed loyal in regimes with a greater degree of institutionalized power-sharing.<sup>138</sup> In times of crisis the military help to create and maintain a ruling coalition of political and military elites that generates incentives to keep the coalition committed to the survival of authoritarian rule.<sup>139</sup> In the DPRK, policy delineates the role of the military (rather than the party) in leading the country and securing the regime.<sup>140,141</sup> Military First politics appears to suggest a more power-sharing form of political leadership at present—one in which the role of the military is to secure regime continuity by merging the interests of the Kim dynasty as an institution with those of the military.<sup>142</sup> The military played a central role in ensuring DPRK regime continuity through the greatest economic crisis it has ever faced—namely the late 1990s economic collapse and famine. In other words, under Kim Jong Un there appear to have been no elite-led political or military groups capable of helping to spread the type of market protest from peripheral rural towns and throughout the DPRK.

### *Regime Decision Making*

Another factor that may have inhibited more widespread mobilization from initial market unrest is an overall fear of state repression and improved strategies of the authorities towards the containment of unrest. Decisions made by regimes when faced with protests are vital in revolutionary outcomes. Above all, indiscriminate state violence against collective protest is one critical way by

which initial disturbances can escalate against the regime. Evidence suggests that the DPRK has reconsidered the way it suppresses protest. Testimony from defectors with military experience, indicates that at least until the early 2000s, standard procedure was to dispatch military units, including forces especially trained to suppress internal unrest, to crush all public unrest by shooting ‘participants indiscriminately’ with ‘live ammunition.’<sup>143</sup> Such accounts appear to confirm newspaper reports of brutal and overwhelming use of military force to crush workers’ protests in both Sinŭiju in 1983<sup>144</sup> and in Songrim (Hwanghae Province) in 1998,<sup>145</sup> and the suppression of riots amongst border crossers attempting to enter China to trade in October 1999.<sup>146</sup>

If the testimony of defectors is to be believed, the regime had a zero-tolerance policy towards public manifestations of dissent at least until the late 1990s. However, a shift in the method of suppression of collective protest appears to have begun sometime around the mid-2000s. South Korean newspaper reports indicate that in 2010, DPRK authorities formed units called Special Riot Forces (T’ŭkbyŏl kidonda), which were attached to the MPS, the body charged with monitoring internal dissent.<sup>147</sup> The T’ŭkbyŏl kidonda were created to suppress disturbances in lieu of military forces, and to also engage in unrest prevention activities. Members of the T’ŭkbyŏl kidonda would act as spotters in public places such as markets where unrest might occur, identifying potential troublemakers and bringing them to police stations to nip possible unrest in the bud.<sup>148</sup> Suspected troublemakers brought to police stations were subsequently fined or imprisoned.<sup>149</sup> It may be that the DPRK authorities continue to torture or execute those involved in unrest, but if this is occurring it is beyond the public view, and visible violence against unarmed protestors can impact the spread of protests.

Other data appear to support an overall drop in the use of violence against unrest. Lankov notes that from the early 2000s the DPRK authorities seem to have developed a more restrained approach to the suppression of unrest, especially in markets.<sup>150</sup> Lankov’s assertion is backed by the testimony of one internal informant for *Radio Free Asia*, who claimed that demonstrations occurred in markets ‘frequently’ and that the shootings that occurred at 2011 unrest in Sinŭiju were an anomaly.<sup>151</sup> In addition, after the 2011 Arab Spring, DPRK authorities engaged in high-level meetings in which officials from the PRC briefed DPRK officials on the effective maintenance of public security.<sup>152</sup> After this meeting, the DPRK allegedly began to import riot shields, helmets and tear gas from the PRC (Ibid).

The absence of reported onsite casualties in the market protests in Chŏngju, Ryongch’ŏn and Sŏnch’ŏn in 2011, and Musan, Hamhŭng, and Ch’ŏngjin in 2015;

the consultations with security agencies in the PRC; the use of specially trained forces; the importation of riot gear; the development of new strategies like spotters to preempt collective protests—all this indicates a shift in approach in dealing with collective unrest in the DPRK. The move has been towards preventative measures, fines for troublemakers and more moderate levels of state violence. It is unclear what prompted the regime to move in this direction. It is possible that the move came about in recognition of the market unrest and the economic complaints of protestors. The move may also have been in response to a very public incident of unrest that occurred around 2005 and impacted public order rather than specifically posing an open ideological threat to the regime: a riot at a televised international football match between North Korea and Iran.<sup>153,154</sup>

The aforementioned changes are significant because statistically, demonstrations have a greater chance of spreading if security forces use indiscriminate violence when demonstrators remain non-violent.<sup>155</sup> In such cases, bystanders are more likely to sympathise with the protestors, security forces and civilian bureaucrats are likely to shift their loyalty to the demonstrators and, if news does manage to filter out, international intervention is more likely to turn against the regime.<sup>156</sup> The same thing happened in 2010 in Tunisia when the bloody police suppression of demonstrators protesting the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi in Sidi Bouzid helped to inflame further protests in the Tunisian capital and turn Tunisia's traditional allies in France and the US against the Ben Ali regime.<sup>157</sup> In addition, early on during the Romanian transition, army units dispersed crowds after killing hundreds of demonstrators in Timișoara, but the following day crowds had gathered again. The refusal of the demonstrators to be cowed by state brutality appears to have been key to the army's defection in Timișoara.<sup>158</sup> Within two days of the massacre, demonstrations continued while generals withdrew military units to the barracks fearing troop desertions.<sup>159</sup> The net effect of the regime's choices of action greatly impacted military defection from the regime and caused an exponential increase of mobilization to the rebellion.

If the evidence suggests a shift in responses, DPRK authorities under Kim Jong Un appear to have been avoiding the kind of indiscriminate state violence against collective protest that escalated disturbances in Tunisia and Romania. Instead, they have been using state representatives with local knowledge, who at least in public have employed moderate levels of violence to contain unrest at local levels. This may have impacted the prospects for any escalation of protest in the DPRK. In contrast to the Romanian regime of 1989, the DPRK under Kim Jong Un has demonstrated a certain flexibility in terms of their decision

making about unrest. It is able to tolerate limited local protests unconnected to criticisms of the regime and able to shift its suppression tactics from massacre to prevention and limitation. Such a regime approach may explain why unrest has never escalated beyond the marketplaces in the North under Kim Jong Un.

One final factor that can increase the size of protests is information control. This is particularly relevant in the case of the Romanian transition, where the Ceaușescu regime broke with standard practice to restrict public access to information about unrest. Two years prior to the 1989 disturbances, workers' demonstrations in Brașov had been brutally crushed, and the regime had imposed a total media blackout on the events.<sup>160</sup> However, in December 1989, Ceaușescu's regime sought to police public consumption of the Timișoara disturbances by making public announcements condemning 'traitors' and 'foreign terrorists' both at a local level and on state media.<sup>161</sup> Ceaușescu's ill-fated attempt to put his own spin on regional demonstrations in 1989 ended up increasing the size and spread of unrest.<sup>162</sup> Hall calls this the 'boomerang' effect.<sup>163</sup>

The DPRK, however, has been careful to restrain the spread of information.<sup>164</sup> For example, rather than making announcements on national media, local authorities in the DPRK publicly condemned alleged cases of arson, illegal leafletting and graffiti in 2010 and 2015 to encourage citizens to betray the perpetrators. Meanwhile regional state representatives also attempted to contain news about such events spreading beyond the immediate locality by imposing temporary blanket travel restrictions.<sup>165</sup> Local authorities did not appear to report some cases of unrest at all. For approximately ten days after market clashes in 2011 in Sinŭiju, the authorities allegedly attempted to stem the spread of news about the incidents by restricting regional travel and even attempting a 'crackdown' on mobile phone use.<sup>166</sup> Restricting information flows can deeply impact the scale of mobilisation and the possibility of the type of social media type 'contagion' witnessed during the Tunisian transition.<sup>167</sup>

In the DPRK, the potential for the spread of information via social media outlets is uncertain. The government has worked hard to restrict the free flow of information into and around the country, controlling the telephone network and use of mobile phones and restricting access to the Internet and to social media forums.<sup>168</sup> North Koreans are anything but uninformed, but social media in the DPRK does not have the degree of penetration that Tunisians enjoyed, which may account for the lack of contagion in North Korea.<sup>169</sup> In addition, in the Romanian case, the impact of individual official decisions made by a regime desperate to defend itself by any means within a rapidly changing revolutionary situation had a profound impact upon the rapidity of military defection and rebel mobilisation—and its disastrous decision to publicise protest in national

media is a prime example. However, in the DPRK, there is no evidence that the regime has made any such miscalculations in terms of their media policy when market unrest occurred.

## Conclusion

This article has cited numerous factors to explain why no People's Power rebellion has occurred in the DPRK using Goldstone's theoretical framework and examples of state breakdown in Romania and Tunisia. Goldstone argues that popular rebellions occur at the rare intersection of essential elements: a unifying ideology, unstable social equilibrium, widespread discontent, a favorable international environment, military and political elite participation and contingent or transitional causes such as sudden protests or poor regime decision making when faced with a political challenge.

In the DPRK under Kim Jong Un, continued marketization from below has transformed society as the population engages in private economic activities in order to survive. Marketization has led to changes in the values of ordinary North Koreans, improved conditions, a loosening of the ideological control of the state and to an influx of information about conditions in the outside world. In the Tunisian transition, a radically new information environment shaped by social media, the Al-Jazeera network and an experience of protest helped create a sense of pan-Arab solidarity amongst young Tunisians which was critical in their challenge to the Ben Ali regime. In the DPRK marketization, a loosening of ideological control and greater awareness of the outside world has not led to an explosion of popular anger against the government in Pyongyang. Instead it has resulted in cynical attitudes towards authority. The new information flows into the DPRK have not unified the people into radical action against their rulers; the information has confirmed their continued mistrust of officialdom.

Tunisia in the years leading up to the transition saw rapid economic growth and demographic change, but also unemployment and pockets of poverty severe enough to threaten social stability and cause widespread discontent. The DPRK under Kim Jong Un in many ways faced a similar situation. Positive economic impacts of marketization have been accompanied by extreme disparities in income, poverty, occasional malnutrition, rampant corruption, the onerous duty of conscripted service to the state and demographic growth. However, these problems have not resulted in any popular attempt to overthrow the regime. There is evidence of discontent over market activities, and this market unrest is a potential transient cause of wider rebellion. The market unrest between 2011 and the present have largely been defensive in character, as North Koreans

have been protecting their right to support themselves through the private trading activities they believe have been tacitly sanctioned by the Kim Jong Un government. Most of the anger has been directed by vendors towards state officials demanding bribes or a cash-starved state seeking to extract greater amounts from a lucrative domestic private market. The largest explosions of anger came after major attempts by the state to outlaw market activities and reestablish state control of food supply under Kim Jong Il. The message of the Romanian and Tunisian authorities at the time of their transitions was that there was to be no change in policy and more of the same. In the DPRK, the Kim Jong Un regime's tacit acceptance of marketization offers ordinary people some hope for survival. The authorities have not tried to outlaw market activities outright under Kim Jong Un, and this is the prime reason why there has been no large-scale explosion of popular anger against the regime.

There are some other key differences between the DPRK and the Tunisian and Romanian transitions which help explain the absence of a more serious challenge to the North Korean authorities. Tunisian political elites and groups with a history of activism helped coordinate the expansion of smaller provincial protests into a nationwide challenge; military elites in both Tunisia and Romania defected from the regime, and this was essential to the opposition victory. The DPRK does not have the type of dissident elite or organizations capable of engineering the defection of disenfranchised military or of leading mass protests to victory.

Finally, the decision making of the regime when faced with protests has been both flexible, reflexive and effective in preventing the expansion of unrest. The inflexibility of the Ceaușescu regime to deal with protest other than through extreme violence inflamed unrest, and its decision to publicize dissent proved fatal. The DPRK authorities appear to have been more tolerant of economic complaints as opposed to political protests, and the DPRK regime has developed new strategies for dealing with disorder using counteractive methods targeted at individuals rather than by opening fire on groups of protestors with live ammunition. The DPRK still tightly controls social media and media outlets, and restricts information about market unrest, thereby helping to limit the flow of information that may fuel contagion. This latter point about the flexibility of regime decision making is particularly salient because of a general assumption, shared by Grice that currently the DPRK population is angry enough to overthrow the regime, but is prevented from doing so by state violence.<sup>170</sup> This assumption is misleading, since widespread grievances don't always lead to popular rebellion, and overwhelming violence doesn't always successfully deter



unrest. If my analysis is accurate, then the DPRK authorities under Kim Jong Un appear to understand this.

The popular overthrow of dictators like Romania's Ceaușescu and Tunisia's Ben Ali look inevitable in retrospect, and this is why it may be tempting for researchers, journalists and politicians alike to predict mass rebellions in states like North Korea. But to make such predictions is to ignore the complexity of the processes that lead to revolutionary transitions. The 'paradox of revolutions' as Goldstone observes is that they look obvious in hindsight, but no one ever sees such events coming.<sup>171</sup> North Koreans will not simply come to their senses and overthrow their rulers, no matter how despotic they may be. Neither can ordinary people be *sanctioned* into rising up. The relative stability of Kim Jong Un's North Korea since 2011 should be a reminder of that fact.

## Notes

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4. Terence Lee, *Defect or Defend: Military Responses to Popular Protests in Authoritarian Asia* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press), 6.
5. Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 114, 194.
6. Regimes are defined as 'basic informal and formal rules that determine what interests are represented in the authoritarian leadership group and whether these interests can constrain the dictator.' (Barbara Geddes *et al.*, 'Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set.' *Perspectives on Politics* 12(2) (2014): 313, 331, 314). Regime change can also mean a coup (*Ibid*, 315).
7. Hazel Smith, *North Korea: Markets and Military Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 257.
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9. Yonhap, 'Puk, ch'oeryut'andŭng siwi changbi chungsŏ taeryang kuip' [北, 최류탄 등 시위진압 장비 중서 대량 구입/North Koreans have purchased in bulk tear gas and other demonstration suppression equipment], 2011, quoted in *Daily NK*, June 21, <http://dailynk.com/korean/read.php?cataId=nk09000&num=91133>.
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18. For consistency, I will use the terms 'People's Power rebellion' or 'popular rebellion' and 'mass rebellion' synonymously. Goldstone (2014) and Skocpol (1994) more frequently use the term 'revolution'. 'Demonstrations' or 'street protests' take place when multiple individuals gather simultaneously to protest local or national abuses. 'Unrest' and 'disturbances'—by which I mean food riots, street protests; while 'clashes' between security forces and groups of ordinary people indicate that protest has turned violent.
19. Jack Goldstone, *Revolutions: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014), 15.
20. *Ibid*, 13.
21. *Ibid*, 15.
22. *Ibid*, 17.
23. *Ibid*, 21–22.
24. Jack Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley; Oxford: University of California Press, 1991).
25. Jack Goldstone, *Revolutions: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 19.
26. *Ibid*, 110.
27. *Ibid*, 24–5.
28. Terence Lee, *Defect or Defend: Military Responses to Popular Protests in Authoritarian Asia* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2015), 50.
29. *Ibid*, 18.
30. Jack Goldstone, *Revolutions: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 24.
31. Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 115–116.
32. Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).
33. Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 106.
34. *Ibid*, 108. See Charles Tilly, 'Town and Country in Revolution.' In John Wilson Lewis (ed.), *Peasant Rebellion and Communist Revolution in Asia* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1974), 271–302.
35. Fred Halliday, 'The Islamic Republic of Iran After 30 Years.' (Lecture delivered at The London School of Economics, 23 February 2009).
36. Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 111,112.

37. Gordon Wood, 'The American Revolution.' In Lawrence Kaplan (ed), *Revolutions: A Comparative Study* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 113–148, 129.
38. Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
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41. Relative deprivation is the 'perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities' where expectations are 'the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled' and capabilities are 'the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining' (Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolutions in the Modern World*. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press], 101). North Koreans supposedly see images of South Korea and believe they are rightfully entitled to those goods and conditions of life and rise up (Jieun Baek. *North Korea's Hidden Revolution: How the Information Underground is Transforming a Closed Society*. [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016], 49).
42. Jack Goldstone, *Revolutions: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 24.
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57. Andrei Lankov, 'The Resurgence of a Market Economy in North Korea.' Carnegie Moscow Centre. Moscow: Carnegie Endowment, 2016, 7.
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158. Defection from the regime in this sense includes not only active support for anti-regime demonstrations, but also a failure or refusal to suppress oppositional activity (Lee 2015, 18).
159. Andrew Hall, 'Theories of Collective Action and Revolution: Evidence from the Romanian Transition of December 1989.' *Europe-Asia Studies* 52(6) (2000): 1069-1093, 1082.
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# The Invisibility of Korean Translators in Missionary Translation: The Case of the *Peep of Day* (1833)

**GOEUN LEE** Graduate Student, Academy of Korean Studies

## Abstract

This study attempts to shed light on how missionaries marginalized the role played by local Koreans engaged in the translation of an evangelical tract, *The Peep of Day* (1833), into Korean by comparing the English source text with its Chinese and Korean translations. The subjects of comparison for this exercise were the translators' choice of words from the source text for adaptation, addition and omission. This analysis revealed: 1) That the Chinese translation was the source text for Korean version; 2) Chinese translators were more active in acculturating the tract by adapting, omitting or adding to the source text; and 3) Korean translators were for the most part faithful to the Chinese version. In addition to this comparative analysis, research on the translators themselves has been included in this paper to trace how Protestant Christianity was transmitted to Korea and the dynamics of early missionary work.

Key words: *Peep of Day*, *Xunerzhenyan* 訓兒真言, *Hunajinŏn*, missionary translation, evangelistic tracts

## Introduction

Studying translation is a fascinating yet serious activity, because tracing the intellectual flows as well as the fusion of differing thoughts and languages enables us to understand the dynamics of cultural exchange in a more tangible way. For this reason, the spread of Christianity and the role played by missionaries in it as translators and cultural mediators is an interesting topic. Protestants are acutely concerned with translation due to their emphasis on the primacy of the Bible and their focus on translating its text into local and vernacular languages, a legacy of the Reformation. Thus Susan Bassnett has suggested that “the history of Bible translation is accordingly a history of western culture in microcosm.”<sup>1</sup> However, limiting the scope of this suggestion purely to western culture seems reductive when we consider the impact of missionary translation in East Asia especially in China during the late Qing period of the nineteenth century.

Publications by missionaries in China carried significant weight as Christianity influenced existing religions in East Asia and vice versa. A good example can be traced back to the *True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* 天主實義 and also *Good Words to Admonish the Age* 勸世良言, texts that influenced Hong Xiuquan’s Taiping movement. Besides this influence, Protestant missionaries’ mass publication activities aimed for the public to disseminate Christian knowledge, a development which was made possible by the means of movable cast types and lithographic plates. The advent of new texts and the means to rapidly propagate them was revolutionary in both China and Korea. The idea of knowledge circulation among and to the public was truly a modern phenomenon that had not previously existed in China and Korea.

Similar missionary publications in China had a significant impact on Korean society in late nineteenth century due to the interconnectedness of missionary networks between China and Korea. It was a team of Scottish missionaries residing in Manchuria and Koreans from the north-west who first translated the Bible into vernacular Korean.<sup>2</sup> At that time, they used the Chinese *Wenli* New Testament 新約全書文理譯 (1852) along with Westcott-Hort’s New Testament (1881). Following these pioneers, Protestant missionaries who were sent to Korea formed the Committee for Translating the Bible into Korean Language in 1887. While the translation of both the Old and New Testament was in the process of revision and yet to be completed in 1911, evangelistic tracts which were mostly secondhand translations of Chinese texts played a significant role in proselytizing Protestant Christianity to Korean. In this sense, the early protestant missionaries in Korea enjoyed the advantage of precedents in China because they were able to select from a collection of tracts that had already

been proven effective to Chinese audiences.<sup>3</sup> Some of the tracts were translated into Korean for women and commoners while others were distributed without translation to the literati.<sup>4</sup> These tracts filtered out the one-sided introduction of western theology because they were translated through the eastern cultural and literary background which was possible due to precedents in China.<sup>5</sup>

At this point, we need to raise a simple question: who were the translators? How did they filter out western interpretation of Christianity and acculturate it to the local context? When missionaries sought to translate or write tracts in local languages, either Chinese or Korean, they definitely needed local assistants possessed of literary skills, just as Matteo Ricci worked with Xu Guangqi徐光啟 and Li Zhizao李之藻, Robert Morrison with Liang Fa梁發, and James Legge with Wang Tao王韜.<sup>6</sup> In other words, Chinese evangelistic tracts were usually produced by a process of collaboration between a missionary and one or more locals. When a missionary orally transmitted the message, a Chinese assistant who had competent writing skills would write it down, polish the Chinese style and add final touches.<sup>7</sup>

The Korean case must have been slightly different from the Chinese because such collaboration was hardly possible during the pioneering period of evangelism between the late 1880s and 1890s when Chinese tracts were brought and retranslated into Korean. As was so often pointed out in the writings of pioneer missionaries, there were not many people who were able to communicate with missionaries either in English or in Korean; likewise, there were few missionaries who were able to speak in Korean due to the lack of proper textbooks or teachers for language acquisition. To illustrate, the first bilingual dictionary between English and Korean was written and published by Underwood in 1890, and he had to print it in Yokohama Japan since Korea did not have a suitable printing house for such matter.<sup>8</sup> Considering all these circumstances, Korean translations of Chinese tracts should have relied upon Korean translators literal translation of the Chinese version rather than on collaborative efforts from China.

Nonetheless, the existence of these local translators was usually omitted in missionaries' documents and the locals themselves were unwilling to disclose their names in fear of criticism from family members or neighbors who would view them as betrayers. We should be mindful of the xenophobic atmosphere at that time. For these reasons, locals who participated in translation activities with missionaries were rarely regarded as equal 'translators.' Such a tendency is common across Korea as most of the local Christian publications between 1882 and 1900 have only missionary names on their cover as translators.<sup>9</sup> The invisibility of translators is a phenomenon not uncommon in the publication industry

in general, due to the translator's tendency to translate fluently into the target language and readers' consequent experience of that translation as the 'original.' Besides, the tendency to regard translation as secondary to the original makes the translator transparent.<sup>10</sup> However, what is peculiar in missionary translation is that only the local translators disappear. As the hidden yet decisive roles of local translators must not be overlooked, this paper aims to unveil their influence by analyzing the original English text and each version of translation.

This issue of the invisibility of Korean translators in early Protestant publication practice was previously pointed out by several Korean church historians. For example, Kim Yangsŏn first raised the question saying, "Although evangelistic tracts published in early periods of Korean Christianity were translated by both missionaries and Koreans, only missionaries' names were labelled as translators."<sup>11</sup> According to Kim, the only tract that labelled both missionary and Korean as co-translators was *Kuseron* 救世論 [Discourse on Salvation].<sup>12</sup> Yi Mahnyŏl also argued that Yi Sujŏng's gospel of Mark was revised mostly by Koreans since Underwood and Appenzeller's language capabilities had not yet developed enough even for preaching purposes.<sup>13</sup> According to Yi, Song Tŏkjo was particularly important in translating Underwood's collection of tracts as he had earlier translated Catholic publications.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Yi Tŏkju regarded the first Korean Christians from Uiju (current Hamgyŏng Province in North Korea)<sup>15</sup> who participated in the translation of the Bible with Rev. John Ross as well as those who cooperated with the Bible Translation Committee in Seoul as the "pioneers indigenizing Korean Christianity."<sup>16</sup> They not only taught Korean language to foreign missionaries but also transplanted Christianity into Korean language and culture.<sup>17</sup>

## Research Topic and Method

In order to support my suggestion and to reveal the hidden role of local translators, a comparative analysis of an original text and its translation is useful in order to fully understand the translator's engagement with the texts: the choice of words, addition or omission of the original text. When a translator bridges two different cultures, he or she regularly faces the 'untranslatable.' This occurs due to the linguistic or cultural differences that make establishing equivalence impossible. The translator's role then becomes more apparent as they utilize diverse strategies in order to reconstruct the original message. This is the 'science of translation,' a term suggested by Eugene Nida.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, comparing an original text and its translation is important to understand the translators' influence in bridging these distinctions.



For this aim, I chose the *Peep of Day*, one of the early evangelistic tracts that were translated in both China and Korea in the late 19th century, and compared its Chinese translation *Xunerzhenyan* 訓兒真言 and Korean translation *Hunajinŏn* (훈오진언, The true sayings that train children). The *Peep of Day* was originally written by Mrs. Favell Lee Mortimer (1802–1878) as a Sunday school textbook aiming at four to six-year-old children. With fifty-three chapters, this tract covers a wide variety of topics including one's body, parents, souls, angels and devils all in a style suitable for children. It was first published in London (1833) and became the most popular and widely circulated tract for children in nineteenth-century Britain and America with more than 804,000 copies distributed prior to 1891. Its popularity extended overseas through translation into at least thirty-seven languages and dialects.<sup>19</sup> In China alone, it was rendered into *wenyan*, Mandarin, Cantonese, Fuzhou, Ningbo, Shanghai, Suzhou dialects, and even Braille for the blind.<sup>20</sup>

There were several reasons for choosing the *Peep of Day*, but the most decisive factor was that I was able to get the original text and both Chinese and Korean translations of it. These texts also seemed valuable as they reveal the transmission channel of Protestant Christianity into China and Korea during the late nineteenth century. In addition, at a first glance, the Korean version was very much closer to the Chinese than to the English original text when I compared the list of contents. If it was really translated by a missionary, it must have been natural for the missionary to translate from his or her mother tongue, English; yet *Hunajinŏn* reveals the fact that its source text was *Xunerzhenyan*. Last but not least, the *Peep of Day* would highlight the translators' attempt for indigenization since it was written for children. Compared to strictly literal Bible translation, the translation of evangelistic tracts has much larger room for adaptation, particularly those whose audience is children. All these factors considered, the *Peep of Day* seemed perfectly suited to the paper's research purpose.

## Research Scope and Outline

The scope of the research for this paper was limited to chapter two (Of a Mother's Care) and three (Of a Father's Care) from the *Peep of Day* (1833) because 'parenting' seemed to be the most controversial spot revealing the differences between Western and East Asian tradition, or, Christian and Confucian tradition. Thus, these chapters would be a place where the translators role is highlighted in bridging (or leaving) the gap by adaptation, annotation and even the omission of the source text.

In outline this paper consists of two parts. In part one, the author of the *Peep of Day* and its Chinese and Korean translators are introduced. This introduction is particular concerned with the Korean translator who was more marginalized than the Chinese counterpart, Missionary reports, correspondence and the history of Korean Methodist Church were also examined to give a better sense of who was really involved in the translation process. Part two is a comparative analysis of the *Peep of Day* and its translations undertaken to evaluate the translators' strategy such as adaptation, addition and omission of the original text.

When conducting this research, I aimed never to divide missionaries and local assistants into an 'us' and 'them.' As Said mentioned in *Culture and Imperialism*, what we need is a reference to the connections between both sides, overcoming the confrontational view of imperialism and colonialism.<sup>21</sup> Whether the missionaries had an orientalist or racist perception of the locals or not, no one can deny the fact that there was cooperation between the two sides in the transmission of the new religion. There must have been countless disagreements, negotiations and adaptations within this relational dynamic. Nonetheless, the role of local assistants were marginalized, intentionally or unintentionally, in missionary documents and their interactions remain unknown. It is hoped that this paper might contribute to the resolution of the imbalance.

Table 1 Comparison of bibliographic data

Year of Publication	Peep of Day 1833	Xunerzhenyan 訓兒真言 1865	Hunajinön 훈오진언 1891
Author/Translator	Favell Lee Mortimer (1802-1878)	Huasachi 花撒勒 (Mrs. Sally Holmes, 1841-unknown) / Zhou Wenyuan 周文源 (unknown)	Mary F. Scranton (1832-1909)
Place of Print	London	Shanghai: 上海美華書館	Seoul: 三文出版社 [The Trilingual Press]
Size/Pages	223 pages (including Appendix)	240mm x 140mm, 59 pages <sup>1</sup>	249mm x 142mm, 46 pages
Target Readers	Infants, Children, Sunday School	Mission school students	Girls' mission schools, women, local preachers
Illustration	3rd edition does not have any illustration	O	X

1 While English books were printed on both sides of a sheet of paper having page numbers on each sides, Chinese and Korean books were printed on the front page. This long sheet of paper would be half folded and be bound with thread with a single page number. Therefore, the number of pages is half reduced in Xunerzhenyan and Hunajinön.

## Introduction of the Author and Translators

### *The Author: Favell Lee Mortimer (1802–1878)*

Born in England, Ms. Favell Lee Bevan was a successful author of educational books for children whose father, David Bevan (1780–1841), was one of the co-founders of Barclays Bank. Ms. Bevan was married to Thomas Mortimer in 1841 when she was 39. She oversaw the religious education of children on her father's estates, in Wiltshire and East Barnet and it was from such experience that her interest in educational writings grew. She developed her own method of teaching children to read based on an early kind of 'flash cards' rather than the traditional hornbook. Her teaching notes were collected and appeared as such works as *Peep of Day* and its series was immensely popular: over 500,000 copies of the original edition were issued; it went through numerous English editions; and it was published by the Religious Tract Society in 37 different dialects and languages.<sup>22</sup> She published a number of Sunday school textbooks, world history and geography for children and many of them were translated into Chinese.<sup>23</sup> This paper used the 7th edition reprinted in the U.S. in 1845.

### *Chinese Translators: Mrs. Sally Holmes 花撒勅 and Zhou Wenyan 周文源*

The *Xunerzhenyan* (1882) used in this paper was donated by Rev. Ch'oi Byŏnghŏn to Yonsei University. On its first page is written, “美國花撒勅口譯 蓬萊周文源筆述”, meaning an American Huasachi 花撒勅 verbally translated [from the original] and her Chinese counterpart Zhou Wenyan from Penglai 蓬萊 周文源 dictated in Chinese. This American name Huasachi is a transliteration of Mrs. Sally Holmes, who was born in West Virginia in the U.S. and sent to China by the Southern Baptist Church. According to the Baptist Encyclopedia, Rev. J. L. Holmes and his wife Mrs. Sally Holmes were dispatched to China in 1858 and arrived at Shanghai in 1859.<sup>24</sup> They were pioneers to northern China and expanded the mission board to Shantung in 1860. In the following year, however, Rev. J. L. Holmes was murdered by a Chinese rebel. In 1862, the widowed Mrs. Holmes left Yantai to come to Penglai and did extensive work issuing several editions of *Peep of Day*.<sup>25</sup>

The Chinese translator Zhou Wenyan 周文源 was a respected scholar in the Shantung area. He exerted a crucial influence in determining the final outcome of the tract, especially the stylistic choices.<sup>26</sup> Zhou was a temporary Christian convert employed by Dengzhou mission school to teach classical Chinese. Nonetheless, his faith seemed to have faded away since he succeeded in passing

the *shengyuan* 生員 examination in 1866. He was laid off from mission school for often indulging in Confucian rites and teaching ‘heresy’ to students. Perhaps such behavior was the reason that only Holmes was listed as the translator in all catalogues of Christian literature, although his name appears as the translator in the text.<sup>27</sup>

### *Korean Translators: Mary Fletcher Scranton (1832–1909) with Anonymous Local Assistant*

Mrs. Mary F. Scranton is a well-known figure in Korean Church history, being the first female missionary sent to Korea as well as the founder of Ewha girls’ school. She was born into a Methodist family in 1832 as a daughter of Rev. Erastus Benton, a pastor in Massachusetts.<sup>28</sup> She was married to Dr. William T. Scranton in 1855, had the son and only child, Dr. William B. Scranton, and was widowed in 1872. After Dr. W. B. Scranton completed his college course at Yale, mother and son moved to NY where Dr. Scranton completed the medical school. Mrs. Scranton actively devoted her time to missionary work serving as Conference Secretary of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society. In 1884, Dr. W. B. Scranton became the first appointee of the Methodist Board to Korea, and his mother, Mrs. Scranton, accompanied him. Thus the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society urged her to be their first representative there.<sup>29</sup>

The first party of Methodist missionaries sent to Korea included Mrs. Scranton, her son Dr. W. B. Scranton, his wife and eldest daughter, and Rev. H. G. Appenzeller and wife.<sup>30</sup> Due to period of agitated politics generated by the Kapsin Coup, launched by progressive politicians in December 1884, Korean society was politically unsettled when these missionaries firstly arrived in Japan on their way to Korea. Therefore, only Dr. Scranton departed to reach Korea on the 3rd of May in 1885 while others waited for a better time.<sup>31</sup> Eventually, Mrs. Scranton landed in Chemulpo (present day Inch’ŏn) on June 6th, 1885.

Dr. Scranton next established a hospital in Chŏngdong while his mother Mrs. Scranton devoted herself to evangelical and educational works establishing a girls’ school, which was bestowed its name ‘Ewha [이화, Pear Blossom]’ by the king.<sup>32</sup> She also took the lead in establishing Boguyeogwan 保救女館 (The Office for Protecting and Saving Women, the first woman’s hospital in Korea. In this way, she was dedicated not only to medical work and evangelism, but also to a crusade against illiteracy among women.

Mrs. Scranton was nicknamed as “Great Lady [대부인]” because she adopted many girls and educated them. In order for her to train Korean girls and to raise them to become Korean female leaders, she desperately needed materials

written in Korean vernacular language. This language, being called *õnmun* 言文 [verbal language] or *amk'le* 암클 [female language], had been treated with contempt by the dominant male literati class during the Chosõn period.<sup>33</sup> Nonetheless, missionaries took advantage of this language by producing Christian literature in it and aiming for a female audience in Korea. In her article in the annual report of 1889, Mrs. Scranton highlighted the need for publishing Christian literature in Korea and desperately called for a Chinese translator.

I have asked for a Chinese translator and copyist. In this country your missionaries work at great disadvantage. They were obliged to begin without a Bible, without dictionaries or grammars, without even a leaflet which could be put into the hands of the people. We can get now and then something in Chinese which can be read by a few of the highly educated only. Of course this makes it clear that books must be made or translated. This work has been begun; one member of the Parent Board is devoting all the time which can be spared from his other duties to this branch of work. We are trying in our society also to do the little which we can to help along this line. You, who so thoroughly appreciate the value of the little leaflets you scatter in America, cannot wonder that I am intensely desirous that the women and girls of Korea shall have something to read. A book or a tract can go where we cannot.<sup>34</sup>

It was in this background that *Hunajinõn* was translated into Korean. The purpose of printing such tracts were to use them as educational materials at Ewha School and to distribute them at hospitals and churches, a job conducted by local Bible women.

Her great service and consequent fame was such that Koreans including scholars believed she was the translator of the *Peep of Day*. However, is it plausible that Mrs. Scranton herself translated this tract? One of her fellow missionaries, Ms. Rothweiler left a clue saying, "Evangelistic work of a slightly different nature has been undertaken also. Mrs. Scranton had it ready for the press, and it is now being printed, *Peep of Day*, from which we look for good results."<sup>35</sup> Here, "having it ready for the press" seems ambiguous, but it does not necessarily mean that Mrs. Scranton was the translator. Concerning this issue, Yi Tõkju suggested that Mrs. Scranton translated *Hunajinõn* with the aid from her language teacher.<sup>36</sup> Yet he did not provide any proof to support his suggestion.

After conducting a comparison of the original text and translations of the *Peep of Day*, I concluded that *Hunajinõn* was translated by local(s) since it was revealed that its source text was not the *Peep of Day* but *Xunerzhenyan*. Therefore, it is difficult to believe that Mrs. Scranton was the translator as it has been previously assumed. It was only three to four years after her arrival at Korea when the Korean version was first printed, and she still lacked the Korean language skills to deliver a sermon or a lecture. She was hiring a local language

teacher to act as her deputy in these matters.<sup>37</sup> According to her memoir written in 1896, it was very difficult for her to learn Korean language due to the people's xenophobic reaction to her. Besides, there was neither a proper book nor a teacher for language acquisition, and the so-called interpreters would barely understand a few words.<sup>38</sup> Considering these hardships that Mrs. Scranton went through, learning Chinese as well as Korean would have been impossible. Therefore, it is reasonable enough to conclude that Mrs. Scranton could not have translated *Hunajinŏn* from *Xunerzhenyan*.

In addition, Mrs. Scranton and the family of Dr. Scranton went on a furlough back home from the beginning of 1891, the year when *Hunajinŏn* was first published.<sup>39</sup> According to Dr. Scranton's letter to the director of mission board in the U.S., Mrs. Scranton was recovering from an almost fatal attack of 'La Grippe' (influenza) in November 1890 (*Methodist Episcopal Church Missionary Correspondence 1846-1949*, 937).<sup>40</sup> For this reason, Dr. Scranton requested a furlough back home for his recovering mother. It seems impossible for her to have undertaken the translation of *Hunajinŏn* overcoming these circumstances.

Who, then, translated *Hunajinŏn* from *Xunerzhenyan*? Mrs. Scranton's language teacher might be the most possible candidate, or a Chinese teacher at Paichai School another. Yet there is very little evidence to support this assumption. Given the few sources on local translators, missionaries seem to have had a low estimation of Korean translators even though they played a significant role in translating the Bible or tracts. In addition, both in China and Korea the local collaborators themselves were unwilling to disclose their names as the author or translator fearing that they might be criticized by neighbors or family members who held negative views on westerners.<sup>41</sup> Nonetheless, I was able to gather pieces of information on the following figures who are currently assumed to be the Korean translator.

#### PARK SŪNGMYŎN 박승면 (DATES UNKNOWN): THE LANGUAGE TEACHER OF THE SCRANTONS

Compared to other missionaries, what is peculiar about the Scrantons was that they hardly mentioned their language teacher in their documents. Very little information was available including that the Scrantons learned the Korean language in Japan on their way to Korea from Park Yŏnghyo, a politician of the enlightenment party who had participated in the Kapsin Coup and therefore was in exile in Japan at the time (*Methodist Episcopal Church Missionary Correspondence 1846-1949*).<sup>42</sup> Another clue was discovered in Appenzeller's diary which recorded that Park Sŭngmyŏn, the private language tutor of Dr. Scranton, was baptized on January 13, 1888 at a congregation

led by Appenzeller.<sup>43</sup> It is probable that Dr. Scranton and his mother Mrs. M. F. Scranton shared a language tutor as they had in Japan, given the lack of language tutors available at that time. The introduction of Drusilla Yi to Mrs. M. F. Scranton, which will be explained below, also reveals the fact that Mrs. Scranton's language tutor was a man, who happened to be the husband of Yi's friend and introduced her to Mrs. Scranton.<sup>44</sup> As it was a usual practice of missionaries to work with their language tutors in translation, Park could have been the translator.

YU CH'IGYŎM 유치겸 (DATES UNKNOWN): A CHINESE TEACHER AT PAICHAİ SCHOOL

Yu Ch'igyŏm worked at Paichai school as a Chinese teacher. At the same time, he was one of the two local preachers licensed on November 25, 1888 in the pioneering congregation of the Methodist church which was unable to draw any salary to him. Therefore Yu taught Chinese in the school and preached every other Sunday, alternating with Appenzeller.<sup>45</sup> This characteristic nominates Yu as another candidate for the local translator.

YI KYŎNGSUK 이경숙 (1851-1930): A TEACHER AT EWHA GIRLS' SCHOOL

Yi was born into a poor family of the literati class in South Ch'ungch'ŏng province and got married early but unfortunately, her marriage turned out to be a failure as her husband abandoned her. She had to come to Seoul (then Hanyang) and barely made a living by doing chores. Seeing such a misery in her life, Yi's friend, whose husband was a language teacher to Mrs. Scranton, introduced her to this "Great Lady" Scranton. Later, Yi converted to Christianity, was bestowed the name 'Drusilla Yi' upon her baptism.<sup>46</sup> At the age of thirty nine, she became a foster daughter to Mrs. Scranton serving as her private assistant and a teacher at Ewha Girls' School to teach Korean vernacular language since April 1890.<sup>47</sup> When Mrs. Scranton returned from her sabbatical leave and established Sangdong Church in 1897, Yi left Ewha School and accompanied Mrs. Scranton on her evangelical trips to the countryside selling Christian tracts. Considering the fact that *Hunajinŏn* was written for women and children, that Drusilla Yi had devoted herself to Mrs. Scranton's evangelical mission, it is plausible that Yi participated in the translation of *Hunajinŏn*. Given the condition of women at that time, however, she seems the least plausible.

Among these figures, Yu Ch'igyŏm seems most likely to have been the translator because he was capable of reading classical Chinese and most widely engaged in missionary enterprises including the Methodist church and Paichai school, and possibly the Trilingual Press. In order to support this suggestion, the network of the early Korean Methodist church should be elaborated. The first

edition of *Hunajinŏn* was printed by the Trilingual Press located in Chŏngdong where the pioneering missionary compound was along with mission schools and embassies. The First Methodist Church, Paichai School and Ewha Girls' School stood next to Töksu Palace, which would become the palace of the Taehan Empire (1897–1910). Appenzeller was the chief director of Paichai School as an educator and of the First Methodist Church as a pastor. In the yard of this church was Dr. Scranton's small hospital, and Mrs. Scranton was operating Ewha Girls' School next to these buildings. The Trilingual Press was initially set up in the basement of Paichai School in 1888 in order to provide teaching materials to the schools and to produce evangelistic publications for the churches in Korea.<sup>48</sup> Considering this dense network among the First Methodist church, Trilingual Press and Paichai school, as well as the fact that he was the only person involved in all these three missionary enterprises, it is very likely that Yu translated *Hunajinŏn*.

## A Comparison of the Original Text and its Translations (Chinese and Korean)

As it has been previously noted, a translator bridges cultural gaps between a source text and a target text by utilizing proper strategies to give equivalent effect. When the translator comes across a strange idea or expression that does not exist in the target language, he or she must create a new expression or borrow the most appropriate one from the target language. A translator's addition or omission to the original text serves as another key to understanding the translation process. Omission occurs when the original text seems inappropriate to the target culture; addition happens when the readers are unfamiliar to the original contents and need further explanation. These strategies in the translation process are particularly important to understand the cultural (knowledge) transfer of Christianity to East Asia and its impact upon China and Korea. In this regard, we can assess the translator's influence in adaptation or indigenization. In the case of *Peep of Day*, the translators in China and Korea must have experienced a considerable gap while linking the two different cultures.

### *Adaptation: Choice of Words and Expressions*

As a result of the comparison between the different translations, it was discovered that Chinese translators' attempt to acculturate *Peep of Day* was much stronger than Korean counterpart. The text's Korean translator was



mostly reliant on the Chinese translation and many vocabularies were transliterated. Examples are ch'ōndang 天堂 (Heaven), ch'ōnsa 天使 (angel), magwi 魔鬼 (devil) and Yaso 耶蘇 (Jesus). This is a reminder of the fact that important Christian vocabularies in the Korean Bible, such as bogŭm 福音 (the Gospel), serye 洗禮 (baptism) and toksaengja 獨生子 (the only Son) were also adopted from The Chinese Delegates' Version Bible. Nonetheless, when it comes to the title of God, the two translations varied.

#### THE TITLE OF GOD

As the Christian monolithic understanding of “God” was very different from East Asian notions of deity, the locals had difficulty in accepting missionaries assertions that God was superior to their existing spiritual, political and family authorities.<sup>49</sup> “People are incognizant of their Heavenly Father who takes care of themselves while they are grateful to their parents or the king.” Such remarks are easily found not only in *Xunerzhenyan* but also in the preceding Roman Catholic writings such as *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven* 天主實義. The problem was that the Christian concept of a supernatural God that precedes one's parents and even the king was a serious threat to the existing Confucian social order. It was due to this hazard in the nature of Christianity that previous Catholic converts in East Asia faced fierce persecutions.

Not only that, but there was a risk of syncretism in deciding the title of God. It is well known that Matteo Ricci interpreted ‘Tian 天’ as ‘Shangdi 上帝’ in Chinese tradition and attempted to link this deity to the Christian God insisting that *Tian 天* referred to “One Greatness [一 + 大].”<sup>50</sup> Protestant missionaries had to make a decision whether to adopt Ricci's syncretic interpretation or to create their own. As a result, missionaries in China and Korea had much discussion on deciding the term to refer to the biblical God.

The debate focused on the title of God in China had been growing since late 1840s, as found in the articles of *Chinese Repository*. The issue finally broke out among protestant missionaries during preparation for the publication of *the Delegates' Version Bible* [New Testament translation completed in 1850] and owing to a division among the members, the committee concerned with it separated into two. While British Bible Society and British missionaries advocated ‘上帝’ as the corresponding word for God, American Bible Society and American missionaries insisted using ‘神.’ As a result of this conflict, the Committee for Bible Translation was divided and the Bible was published with two editions: 神版 (*Shén* edition) by the American Bible Society and 上帝版 (*Shàngdì* edition) by the British Bible Society, respectively.<sup>51</sup> This explains why *Shén 神* appears as the title of God in *Xunerzhenyan*, a tract translated by an

American missionary and published by the American Presbyterian Mission Press.

Similar questions surrounding the title of God were also posed by missionaries in Korea<sup>52</sup> and this issue also went through a long discussion and experiments during 1894–1903; as a result of missionaries' efforts for indigenization as well as Korean church leaders' acceptance of the imagined primitive monotheism in ancient China and Korea the issue was settled with the invention of *Hananim* as the monotheistic God.<sup>53</sup> Therefore evangelistic tracts published before that period varied in their terms for God. As for *Hunajinŏn*, God is mainly described as *Hananim* [하느님] with variants such as *Hanül abanim* [하늘아바님, Heavenly Father], *Hanüle kyesin abanim* [하늘에게신아바님, Father in heaven], *Ilwibuch'in* [일위부친], *Hanüle kyesin Ilwibuch'in* [하늘에게신일위부친]. Among these, *Ilwibuch'in* was the only transliteration from Chinese. *Xunerzhenyan* mainly describes the God as “Shen神” with variants including 天上那位眞神, 天父, 一位父親在天堂, and 一位父親在天上. Although their meaning is all similar, it is important that Korean translators did not just transliterate the term as ‘*Ch'ŏnbu*’ but translated it into Korean vernacular language ‘하느님’.

One peculiarity appearing in Korean translation was that translators did not use *taedu* writing.<sup>54</sup> According to Yi, early Korean evangelistic tracts such as *Yesu syŏnggyo yoryŏng* (예수성교요령) and *Yesu syŏnggyo mundap* (예수성교문답) were written with *taedu* style and this fact revealed the influence of Korean translators upon the translation.<sup>55</sup> In this regards, the case of *Hunajinŏn* (1891) and *Xunerzhenyan* (1882) are exceptional.

#### THE USE OF INDIGENOUS EXPRESSIONS

When the English original text was compared with Chinese and Korean translations, the author was able to discover adoptions of local terms. For example, ‘heaven’ was translated as *ch'ŏndang* 天堂 which carries a Taoist meaning; a ‘house’ as *bang*房 [room, Ch.房 *fang*, meaning both a house and a room], a ‘bed’ as *yo* 요 [mattress, Ch.炕 *kàng*] and *ibul* 이불 [blanket, Ch.被 *bèi*, Chinese bed with a heating facility]. Another case is the term ‘bread’ being translated as *mantou* 饅頭 (steamed bun) in the Chinese translation, a term common in northern China and peculiar to Chinese culture.<sup>56</sup> Besides, while the original text urged its readers “to count [the blessings that God has given us] over,” Chinese and Korean translations translated it as “it is proper for you to write [those blessings] down in detail and not forget.” This might be a reflection of the Chinese and Korean emphasis on literature rather than verbal communication. Interestingly, Chinese and Korean translators interpreted “love” as “*eunjeong* 恩情 or *eunhye*

恩惠” to refer to the love offered by both God and parents, instead of its literal equivalence *ai* 愛. Below is the example:

天父待你有這樣大恩情.

하늘아바님이너를위하사이곳치큰은혜를주시니

(translation: Your Heavenly Father has this great love for you)

你應該仔細想一想. 不要忘記了.

너-맛당히즈세히기록하야짓말지니라

(translation: You must write it down in detail, think it over and not forget.)

### *Translators' Addition to the Original Text*

As a result of comparing chapters two and three in both translations, the author discovered several additions to the original text including: a mother's discipline for her children; how fathers make living in China and Korea; and an emphasis on disasters and illnesses. This adjustment point to the cultural and environmental differences between western and eastern parenting, including women's social status and domain. In order to have a more holistic understanding of this, a brief explanation of practices and structures of Chinese and Korean family life and particularly the condition of women at this time might be.

Women in an East Asia dominated by Confucian value systems were placed in a subordinate position under men whichever socio-economic class they belonged to. They were mistreated, unwelcome from birth and in many cases no more than slaves. Missionaries in China and Korea from the period provide ample observations of these tendencies. The condition of woman in China had always been inferior to that of man, even before considering customs such as foot binding. In addition, infanticide was observed in most parts of China not because of disregard or neglect but because of poverty, and the victims were almost invariably girls.<sup>57</sup> Early Protestant missionaries' observations in Korea also support this view. A Korean woman was not allowed to see the face of any man other than their husband.<sup>58</sup> She was a prisoner within the four walls of the court of the women's quarters.<sup>59</sup> Aside from this Chinese and Korean women traditionally married at an early age, between 12 to 16 and had to move to the house of her family-in-law under the control of her mother-in-law.

To understand parenting in China and Korea, the social stratum should not be forgotten because parents' treatment of their children varied depending on their class. While most parents were very indulgent to their children, those who were essentially slaves had took little care of them because they knew they would be removed from the family.<sup>60</sup> Ladies from higher social class would hire a female servant to take care of her baby who would carry the baby on her

back.<sup>61</sup> Considering all these facts, it is understandable that translators adjusted the original contents to the target readers by adding or omitting, to suit their cultural background and social customs.

#### OF MOTHERS' DISCIPLINE

Chapter two of the original *Peep of Day* described a mother as loving and caring for her children and there was no sign of discipline. Contrary to this, both Chinese and Korean translations surprisingly added mothers' discipline as her loving action, therefore her children must be thankful for her getting angry or physically punishing them. Besides this, God in heaven is presented as the subject of filial piety superior to one's mother. The following is an example:

你曉得你母親待你好, 有時他生氣, 或者要打你,  
 너-복히너의모친이너를잘디접흐는줄아느니때로혹너를노히시며너를씨리시니  
 (Translation: You know that your mother treats you well. Sometimes she gets angry and beats you.)<sup>62</sup>

是不是待你好, 也是待你好, 是恐怕你不能學個好人啊,  
 이너를잘디접흐이아니냐이네가능히도흔사름을비호지못홀가념려히심이니  
 (Translation: Isn't this for your benefit? She does so, worrying that you might be unable to learn good examples.)

你應該想念你母親, 這許多恩情, 常常孝敬他  
 너-맛당히너의모친의이허다흔은정을심각하여홍상효도호고공경홀거시오  
 (Translation: You must bear in mind her immeasurable loving grace for you, and always be filial to her and respect her.)

但是天上那位真神, 不論你在甚麼地方. 甚麼時候. 他都保護你。  
 또하늘에계신하느님은너잇는어느디방과어느때던지모도너를보호호시느니  
 (Your God in heaven always protects you wherever you are and whenever the time is.)

他待你的恩情. 實在比你母親更大.  
 이너를디접흐시는은혜가너의모친보다더욱크시니  
 (This is His loving grace for you. This love is greater than that of your mother.)

所以你應該跪下, 謝謝天父的恩情. 求天父可憐你。  
 이러므로너-맛당히하늘아바님의은혜를감사하며또너를불쌍히녁이심을구하라  
 (Therefore, you must be thankful for the loving grace of your Heavenly Father. Ask your Heavenly Father to take pity on you.)

This change seems to imply two possibilities: either that Chinese and Korean mothers were too indulgent to their children and the missionary wanted to emphasize a need for discipline, or that discipline and physical punishment was an ordinary custom in China and Korea. Among these two probabilities, the former seems more reasonable because Mrs. Noble, a missionary to Korea,

described in her journal that she felt the need for a Korean mother she had met to train her tyrant boy, thus she talked to them on the government of children, and she was pleased to see the result, a mother punishing her child.<sup>63</sup> Besides this, another missionary also mentioned that Korean children were not trained to obey very well although they show a great outward respect to their parents.<sup>64</sup> Thus it is conjectured that missionaries inserted such a sentence to instruct Chinese and Korean readers on the need for discipline.

#### OF FATHERS' WAY OF MAKING LIVING

In chapter three of both translations, a father's way of making living is illustrated differently from the original text. The father in the original text is basically a farmer earning money by sowing, threshing corn and shepherding in the field. Unlike the original, the father depicted in Chinese and Korean translations is not only a farmer but also a craftsman and merchant earning money by the dexterity of his hands, going through hardships here and there, doing business across the sea and the river. The following is such description of a father from both Chinese and Korean translations:

你父親那裏來的這些錢呢,  
 너의부친은어디서돈을가져왔는뇨  
 (Translation: Where did your father get his money from?)<sup>65</sup>

是他種庄稼，風裏雨裏，熱汗直流掙的，  
 甸장에곡식을심어바람이불때나비올때나더운땀을흘니고엿은바-오  
 (Translation: He got money from sowing seed into the field, whether it is rainy or windy, sweating heavily.)

是他要手藝，這裏那裏，千辛萬苦掙的，  
 손직조를써여기더기천신만고하야엇은바-오  
 (He got money by his deftness of hands, visiting here and there, with indescribable hardships.)

是他做買賣，南邊北邊，漂江過海掙的，  
 장스틀하야남편북편에강에쓰고바다를지나엇은바-니라  
 (He got money by buying and selling, wandering south and north directions and crossing the sea and the river.)

他掙的錢，拿來交給你母親說，要給小孩兒置衣服穿，買東西喫  
 그엇은바돈을가지고와너의모친을주며끓으디으히를위하야옷술지어넉히고음식을  
 사먹이라하느니라  
 (With these hardships, he got his money to give your mother, to give you clothes and food.)

## EMPHASIS ON DISASTER AND ILLNESS

It was observed that Chinese and Korean translators often put an emphasis on disasters and illnesses in their prayers, which does not exist in the original text. For example:

(original) You can pray to God to keep him alive.

所以你應該籲下求神, 保佑你父親無災無病

하느님의 너의 부친을 위하야 직앙과 병이 업슴을 구하라

Reasons for losing one's life are of course varied throughout history but in China and Korea at that time the main cause of death appeared to have been disaster and illness. Considering the volatile political situation and social instability in both China and Korea in latter half of the 19th century, such as the disastrous famine in 1850 Shanghai and 1870s northern China which greatly distressed the land and people, the historical context seems to have influenced the Chinese translation. In addition, the treatment of illness at that time was impractical. According to missionaries' observation in the early 20th century, Korean mothers would blame 'evil spirit' as a cause for illness and sought after the practices of a shaman or cure-all-folk remedies.<sup>66</sup> One observer records, "it is rather surprising that many people maintain their lives until they reach adulthood; I'm not surprised to see too many people dying here." Such a desperate need to overcome illness or disaster must have influenced both translators to put an emphasis on this type of hardship.

*Translators' Omission of the Original Text*

## LOVING AND CARING BEHAVIOR BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN

In the original text of *Peep of Day*, a mother's tender and loving behavior was depicted as follows:

Your kind mother dressed your poor little body in neat clothes, and laid you in a cradle. When you cried, she gave you food, and hushed you to sleep in her arms. She showed you pretty things to make you smile. She held you up, and showed you how to move your feet. She taught you to speak, and she often kissed you, and called you sweet names.<sup>67</sup>

Compared to the original text, such descriptions were omitted in Chinese and Korean translations which do not describe a mother in such tender manner. As I have mentioned before, the social context, the position of women in the social stratum and diverse manners of childrearing seem to have influenced this translation. Such contraindicative parent-child relationship was also

highlighted in fathers' behaviors. The father in the original text is depicted as loving and caring toward his child as follows:

While he is ploughing, he often thinks of you, and hopes that he shall find you a good child when he comes home. You are glad to see him, I know. Sometimes you run to meet him, you set a chair by the fire, and then you climb upon his knee. Sometimes he is too tired to speak to you. Then you wait till he has had his supper ..... He lets you sit upon one of his chairs, or upon a little stool by his nice warm fire; and he gives you some of his breakfast, dinner, and supper.<sup>68</sup>

Contrary to the British and American family, Chinese and Korean family structures and practices the hierarchical order based on the Confucian Three Bonds and Five Relationships 三綱五倫 and children were required to show submissive attitude to their parents. Thus the relationship between father and children in China and Korea was (and still is to some degree) defined by filial piety in which a child (mostly a son) manifests the utmost reverence to the parents, endeavors to give them the utmost pleasure, and feels the greatest anxiety when they become ill.<sup>69</sup> This would have hindered the amiable relationship between parents and children depicted in the original text. Furthermore in Korea, especially among the higher social class, family members would sit at different tables according to age or gender. A missionary who worked in Korea in the 1890s left the following observation:

Unlike a family circle in the West, Korean families ... do not gather around one table to have meals. The head of a family quietly eats his own dishes in his room and all male members above seven-year-old eat separately in each of their room. Daughters have their meals in the inner house along with women ... what they eat is men's leftover.<sup>70</sup>

In this sense, a father sharing his meal with his children depicted in the original text would have been unacceptable in Korea: this might have been the reason that such descriptions were omitted in Chinese and Korean translations.

#### SENTENCES WRITTEN WITH 'GOD' AS THE SUBJECT

The original *Peep of Day* illustrates God as if he were a human being with an emphasis on his sovereignty over mankind as the Creator of the world. However, Chinese and Korean translators omitted such sentences. The reason might have been that such description of an omnipotent deity was unfamiliar to Chinese and Korean readers. In chapters two and three of the *Peep of Day*, there were in total seven sentences written with 'God' as the subject; nonetheless, they were all omitted in Chinese and Korean translations. Table 2 shows those omissions.

Table 2 Omitted sentences written with 'God' as the subject

Ch.2	God sent you to a person who took great care of you when you were a baby.
	Then God made your little body, and he sent you to your mother, who loved you as soon as she saw you.
	It was God who made your mother love you so much, and made her so kind to you.
	God sent you to a dear mother, instead of putting you in the fields, where no one would have seen you, or taken care of you.
	God thinks of you every moment. If he were to forget you, your breath would stop.
	Would God hear your little thanks?—Yes, God would hear and be pleased.
Ch.3	Perhaps your father may die, but God can keep him alive.

## SENTENCES WRITTEN IN QUESTION AND ANSWER STYLE

Evangelical tracts published in the 1880s were commonly written in Q&A style. The best example of this might be *Zhang Yuan liangyou xianglun* 張袁兩友相論 [Two Friends]. This style of writing had a significant impact on Korean newspapers and novels in the early modern period.<sup>71</sup> *Hunajinŏn* was not an

Table 3 Omitted sentences written with question and answer

Ch.2	Was your body always as big as it is now?—No.
	What were you called when your body was very small?—A baby.
	Can babies talk, or talk, or feed themselves, or dress themselves?—No.
	But God sent you to a person who took great care of you when you were a baby. Who was it? Your dear mother ...
	Is your mother kind to you still?—Yes, she is.
	Can your mother keep you alive?—No.
	Do you ever thank your mother for her kindness?—Yes.
	Will you not thank God who gave you a mother, and keeps you alive?
Ch.3	Why does he bear all this (ploughing in the cold rain and heat)?—That you may have plenty of food, and be fat and rosy.
	Who made your father love you at first?—It was God.
	If your father were to die, what should you do? You would then be a fatherless child.
	Could your father die?—O yes; many little children have no father.
	But if God were to let your father die, you would still have one father left. Whom do I mean? what do you say in your prayer?—"Our Father who art in heaven."



exception, since every chapter begins with a question. However, the text did not include all the question and answer the style material from the original text: some elements were translated but some were not (cf. Tables 3 and 4).

Then why did the translators selectively choose among the sentences from the question and answer section? The reason might have been the purpose of the book and the way it was to be read. As the *Peep of Day* was written for Sunday schools, it had a pedagogical purpose. This was the same in China and Korea because the two missionaries, Mrs. Holmes and Mrs. Scranton, both engaged in education for children and they also used their translation as a textbook at school. For this purpose, Mrs. Holmes and Zhou retained all the direct addresses to a group of little children [小孩兒啊], and it was the same in the Korean version [오 히들아].<sup>72</sup> The book was also intended to be read aloud by a teacher in a classroom. It is therefore understandable that some sentences were preferred or omitted, to better suit the listener. However, what is important is that such selection and omission of Chinese and Korean versions were exactly the same, as this proves that Korean version was translated from the Chinese one.

Table 4 Remaining sentences written with question and answer

Ch.2	Do you love your mother?—Yes. 我曉得你親他, 也應該親他 지금너-너의모친을스랑하느뇨스랑하느니
	But who gave you a mother?—It was God who sent you to a kind mother. 是誰給你這位母親, 教他這樣掛念你的冷熱, 掛念你的飢飽呢, 是神啊 누-네게너의모친을주어하여꿈이긋지너의차고더움을싱각하며너의주리고비부름을싱각하게하엿 느뇨하느님이시니
Ch.3	Who is it that dresses you and feeds you?—Your dear mother. 小孩兒啊, 誰做衣服給你穿, 做飯給你喫呢, 是你母親, 오 히들아누- 가의복을지어너를넙히며밥을지어너를먹이느뇨이너의모친이니
	But how does your mother get money to buy the clothes, and the food?—Father brings it home. 你母親那裏來的這布疋, 這種食呢, 是你父親給他的. 너의모친은어디서돈과량식을가져왔느뇨너의부친이주신바-니라
	How does your father get money?—He works in the field. 你父親那裏來的這些錢呢, 是他種庄稼, 風裏雨裏, 熱汗直流掙的.... 너의부친은어디서돈을가져왔느뇨년장에곡식을심어바람불때나비올때나더운몸을흘니고엇은바- 오....
	Can your heavenly Father die?—No, never. 你的天父能死不能, 不能死.[也不會死] 너의하늘아바님은능히죽으시느뇨죽지아니하시느니라
	Does he love you?—Yes. 他愛不愛你, 愛你. 너를스랑하시느뇨스랑하시느니라

## Conclusion

In this paper, I proposed an alternative view on missionary translations that are often misunderstood as products of missionary authorship. Translation is notorious as a relatively neglected practice and translators are in a marginal position in the publishing industry, but why did only the locals become invisible in missionary translation? Without their understanding of local tradition and customs, not to mention the literary skills, how would it have been possible to transmit the new systems of belief into readable texts? With this question in mind, I decided to counter existing consensus by unveiling the hidden role played by local translators who still remain anonymous. For this purpose, the *Peep of Day*, an English evangelistic tract that was translated and published in both China and Korea, was chosen to be comparatively analyzed focusing on word choice for adaptation, addition and omission of the original text. The scope of this comparison was limited to the two chapters on parenting as it was expected they would reveal cultural differences and such untranslatable aspects would magnify the translators' engagement to the original text. The paper has other limitations. First, its research scope did not incorporate the whole range of the tract. Second, I was unable to clarify the Korean translator. Third, further research should be conducted to analyze the usage and influence of this tract among the local Christians in China and Korea. Last but not least, the connection of this tract with the Chinese Delegates' Bible (Wenli) and the Korean Bible translated by John Ross group in their vocabulary choice might be studied in the future.

As a result of this research and comparison, the previous assumption that Mrs. Mary F. Scranton translated this evangelistic tract into Korean is disputed by the paper as it was revealed that Chinese version was the source text for the Korean one. The author's research on Mrs. M. F. Scranton also supports this demonstrating that she struggled a lot to acquire Korean language with scarce materials. Another discovery was that Chinese and Korean translators adopted slightly different translation strategies. The Chinese translators, Mrs. Holmes and Zhōu Wényuán, were more open and active in acculturating the original text for the benefit of Chinese readers. They actively sought after dynamic equivalences for new vocabularies that did not exist in Chinese language, omitted some sentences that were inappropriate to Chinese culture, and added some explanations or emphasis when necessary. Unlike this, Korean translators' translation strategy was literal, not making significant changes from the Chinese version and transliterating many vocabularies, except the title of God. The reason for this passive attitude might have been Koreans' conservative stance towards Chinese literature, which is described as *suribujak* 述而不作 (Copy without

creating); or, it can be said that Korean(s) were more conservative because they had not yet developed a mature understanding on Christianity.

This paper is significant because it has contributed to a more just understanding of the dynamics of early missionary work and the transmission of Protestant Christianity to Korea. It has highlighted not only the existence of local translators but also the process of acculturation of Protestant Christianity which involved selecting new vocabularies, adding or omitting the original text.

## Notes

1. Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2014), 56.
2. In Manchuria, John Ross and a group of Koreans (Yi ūngchan, Paek Hongjun and Sō Sangryun) translated the Gospel of Luke and John into Korean and published in Shenyang in 1882. Their translation was based on *The Delegates' Version* (1854), also called as Wenli Bible (文理譯聖書). These were *Yesusyōnggyo nugabogūm chyōnsō* (예수성교누가복음전서) and *Yesusyōnggyo yoannabogūm chyōnsō* (예수성교요안나복음전서). In Japan, a Korean literati Yi Sujōng translated the gospel of Mark, *Sinyak magajyōn bogūmsō ōnhae* (1885) and annotated the Chinese Bible with Korean transliteration, *Hyōntohanhan sinyakjōnsō* 懸吐漢韓新約聖書 (1884).
3. Sungdeuk Oak, "The Indigenization of Christianity in Korea: North American Missionaries' Attitudes Towards Korean Religions, 1884-1910." Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2002.
4. A list of Chinese tracts translated into Korean as well as those used in Korea without translation can be found In Oak (2013), 322-325.
5. Sungdeuk Oak, "Ch'ogi hanguk bukkamrigyo ui sōn'gyo sinhakgwa chōngch'aek (초기 국복감리교의 신학과 정책)." *Hangukgidokkyowa yōksa* (한국기독교와 역사), 11 (1999): 7-40, 25.
6. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012), 82,100.
7. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012): Sunbang Oh, *Sipgusegi dongasia ui bōnyōkkwa gidokkyo munsō sōngyo* (19세기동아시아번역과 기독교 문서선교) (Seoul: Sungsil University Press 2015): Sungdeuk Oak, "Ch'ogi hanguk bukkamrigyo ui sōn'gyo sinhakgwa chōngch'aek (국복감리교의 정책)." *Hangukgidokkyowa yōksa* (한국기독교와 역사), 11 (1999): 7-40.
8. Here is the list of Korean-English (or vice versa) dictionaries published by missionaries: H. G. Underwood, "韓英字典한영자전 (Korean-English Dictionary)"1890, J. Scott, *English-Corean Dictionary* (1891), J. S. Gale, *한영이중어사전 (Korean-English Bilingual Dictionary)*, 1897, 1911, 1931, G. H. Jonson, "英韓字典영한자전 (English-Korean Dictionary)," 1914, H. H. Underwood, "英鮮字典영선자전 (English-Korean Dictionary),"1925.
9. Hyoūn Ch'oe, 'Kūndae kidokkyoch'ulpanbōnyōksa yōngu (근대 기독교출판번역사 구): *Bōnyōkhak yōngu* (번역학 연구), 17, 2 (2016): 191-212.
10. Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (London: Routledge, 2008), 1, 31.
11. Yangson Kim quoted in Enok Cho, 'Ch'ogi hangūl jōndomunsō e natanan gidokkyo ihae (초기 한글 전도 서에 나타난 기독교 이해).' MA diss., Methodist Theological University, 2016.

12. The following was written on its copyright page: This book was co-translated by S. A. Moffet and Ch'oe Myŏng-o.
13. Taehan sŏngsŏgonghoi (대한성서공회), ed. *Taehan sŏngsŏ gonghoesa (I)* (대한성서 사) (Seoul: Taehansŏngsŏ gonghoe, 1994).
14. Ibid.
15. Korean members of the so-called John Ross team include the following: Yi Ūngchan, Ch'oe Sŏnggyun, Paek Hongjun, Sŏ Sangryun, Kim Jin'gi and Yi Sŏngha.
16. Koreans assistants for the committee included: Hong Jun, Chŏng Tongmyŏng, Cho Sŏnggyu, Kim Chŏngsam, Kim Myŏngjun, Mun Gŏngho, Song Tŏkjo, Song Sunyong, Yi Ch'angjik and Yi Sŭngdu.
17. Tŏkju Yi, *Ch'ogi han'guk kidokkyosa yŏngu* (초기 한국기독교사 연구) (Seoul: Hanguk kidokkyosa yŏnguso, 1995).
18. Eugene Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1964).
19. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012).
20. Ibid.
21. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York, NY: Knopf, 1993).
22. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012).
23. A list of Mrs. Mortimer's books published in China can be found in John P. Lai's book (2012), 291–293.
24. William Cathcart, ed. *The Baptist Encyclopedia* (Philadelphia: Everts, 1881).
25. Ibid.
26. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012).
27. Ibid.
28. Kidokkyodaehangamrihoe yŏksawiwŏnhoe (기독교대한감리회 역사위원회) ed. *Hanguk kamrigyo immulsajŏn* (한국 감리교 인물사전). Seoul: Kidokkyodaehangamrihoe, 2002.
29. Hillman, Mary, "Mrs. M. F. Scranton," *Korea Mission Field*, 6, 1, 1910, 12.
30. Ibid.
31. *Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York, NY: Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church), 235–236.
32. Yi, Kyŏngsuk, Tŏkju Yi, Ellen Swanson. *Hanguk ūl saranghan Mary Scranton* (한국을 사랑한 메리 스 랜턴) (Seoul: Ewha yeojadaehakgyo chulpanbu, 2010).
33. Ibid, 94.
34. *Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Seoul: Hangukidokkyo yŏksayŏnguso, 1889), 66.
35. *Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Seoul: Hangukidokkyo yŏksayŏnguso, 1891), 66.
36. Tŏkju Yi, *Skŭraentŏn: Őmŏniwa adŭl ui sŏn'gyo iyagi* (스크랜턴: 어머니와 아들의 선교 이야기) (Seoul: Gongok, 2014).
37. Ibid, 21, 22.
38. Taehan sŏngsŏgonghoi (대한성서공회), ed. *Taehan sŏngsŏ gonghoesa (I)* (대한성서공 사) (Seoul: Taehan sŏngsŏ gonghoe, 1994), 192.
39. William B. Scranton's report: "We arrived in Seoul on our return from the United States, Saturday, May 21, of this year (1892)... When I left Korea a year and a half ago, I assure you truly, with a sad and not a glad heart ...." *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Korea Mission*, 1892, p. 560.

40. *Methodist Episcopal Church Missionary Correspondence 1846–1949* (Korea). vol. 3 (Seoul: Hangukidokkyo yöksayönguso, 2010), 937.
41. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012), 100.
42. *Methodist Episcopal Church Missionary Correspondence 1846–1949* (Korea). vol. 3 (Seoul: Hangukidokkyo yöksayönguso, 2010).
43. Manyöl Yi ed, *Apenjellö: Han'guge on ch'öt sön'gyosa* (아펜젤러: 한국에 온 첫 선 사) (Seoul: Yeonse daehakgyo chulpanbu, 1985), 317.
44. Kidokkyodaehangamrihoe yöksawiwönhoe (기독교대한감리회 역사위원회) ed. *Hanguk kamrigyo inmulsajön* (한국 감리교 인물사전) (Seoul: Kidokkyodaehangamrihoe, 2002), 330.
45. *Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Korea Mission, 1884–1943* (Seoul: Hangukidokkyo yöksayönguso, 1993), 291.
46. Kidokkyodaehangamrihoe yöksawiwönhoe (기독교대한감리회 역사위원회) ed. *Hanguk kamrigyo inmulsajön* (한국 감리교 인물사전) (Seoul: Kidokkyodaehangamrihoe, 2002), 330–331.
47. Mattie Noble, *Victorious lives of Early Christians in Korea* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1927), 16.
48. Hangukidokkyo yöksahakhoe (한국기독교 역사학회) ed. *Hangukidokkyo ui yöksa (I)* (한국기독교의 사) (Seoul: Kidokkyomunsa, 2009), 160–161.
49. Sungdeuk Oak, “The Indigenization of Christianity in Korea: North American Missionaries’ Attitudes Towards Korean Religions, 1884–1910.” Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2002.
50. “更思之，如以天解上帝，得之矣。天者一大耳。”《天主實義》上卷 第2篇：解釋世人錯認天主。 “If one thinks more deeply on the matter and explains the Sovereign on High in terms of Heaven, then you may do as you suggest, because Heaven basically means “one great.” From Matteo Ricci, *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven [T'ienchu Shih]*, translated by Douglas Lancashire and Peter Ku Kuo-chen, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1985, 127.
51. Kangho Song, *Chunggugö sönggyöng gwa bönyögui yöksa* (중국어 성경과 번역의 사) (Seoul: Morison, 2007), 153.
52. Pioneer Protestant missionaries in Korea would use Hananim, Sangje上帝 and Tianju天主 interchangeably from 1877 to 1893, influenced by John Ross's translation of the Bible. Being aware of the Chinese term question, Ross intentionally avoided using Shen神 and preferred Sangje but he emphasized the importance of local dialect. Therefore he wanted to translate Sangje into Hananim, a superior shamanistic deity commonly understood by the locals. However, his position also possessed the risk of syncretism so there was much debate on using this term among the missionaries in Korea. For a detailed information, see Oak (2013), pp. 50–62.
53. Sungdeuk Oak, “The Indigenization of Christianity in Korea: North American Missionaries’ Attitudes Towards Korean Religions, 1884–1910.” Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2002.
54. *Taedu* 擡頭 literally means ‘raising one’s head’. This is an honorific way of writing in Chinese and Korean traditional literature to enlarge some words (similar to drop capping) or to leave a blank space before the title of a king or a deity.
55. Tökju Yi, *Ch’ogi han’guk kidokkyosa yöngu* (초기 한국기독교사 연구), Seoul: Hanguk kidokkyosa yönguso, 1995).
56. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012), 169.
57. James Legge, *The Religions of China: Confucianism and Taoism Described and Compared with Christianity* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1880), 111.

58. *Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1885* (New York, NY: Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1885), 236.
59. Gifford 2017, 61.
60. *Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church 1886* (New York, NY: Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1886), 6.
61. The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea ed, *The Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble, 1892–1934* (Seoul: Hangukgidokkyo yöksayönguso, 2003), 63.
62. English translation by the author.
63. The Institute of the History of Christianity in Korea ed, *The Journals of Mattie Wilcox Noble, 1892–1934* (Seoul: Hangukgidokkyo yöksayönguso, 2003), 63.
64. Daniel Gifford, *Everyday Life in Korea; A Collection of Studies and Stories* (Victoria: Trieste, 2017), 65.
65. English translation by the author.
66. Ellose Wagner, *Hanguk ui adongsaenghwal* (한국의 아동생활), trans. Shin Pokryong (Seoul: Chipmundang, 1999), 45.
67. Favell Mortimer, *The Peep of Day* (New York: John S. Taylor & Co., 1845), 20–21.
68. *Ibid.*, 25.
69. James Legge, *The Religions of China: Confucianism and Taoism Described and Compared with Christianity* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1880), 72.
70. Ellose Wagner, *Hanguk ui adongsaenghwal* (한국의 아동생활), trans. Shin Pokryong (Seoul: Chipmundang, 1999), 35.
71. Enok Cho, ‘Ch’ögi hangül jöndomunsö e natanan gidokkyo ihae (초기 한글 전도문서에 나타난 기독교 이해).’ MA diss., Methodist Theological University, 2016, 515.
72. John Lai, *Negotiating Religious Gaps: The Enterprise of Translating Christian Tracts by Protestant Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China* (Sankt Augustin: Institute Monumenta Serica, 2012), 163.

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# The Rise and Fall of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra

**PROFESSOR PEKKA KORHONEN** University of Jyväskylä

**WERNER KOIDL** Independent Scholar, Vienna

## Abstract

The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was a major North Korean ensemble in 2009–2013. It was established by Kim Jong Il (Kim Chŏng'il, 김정일) and was composed of young musicians and singers of both genders, several of them having studied in foreign higher educational institutions in countries like Austria, Italy, Russia and China. Its members represented the core class of the North Korean society. It was ostensibly meant to display the high quality of North Korean art and engage at this level also in international cultural diplomacy, both in terms of physical visits, and in terms of DVD and internet publishing. In addition to domestic concerts, the Ŭnhasu Orchestra performed with visiting Russian artists, and gave a concert in Paris in 2012. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra exemplifies also the problems with regime transition in North Korea. It was so closely tied with the Kim Jong Il regime that the change at the end of 2011 to the Kim Jong Un (Kim Chŏng'un, 김정은) regime did not proceed altogether smoothly. In August 2013 it was disbanded rather abruptly, causing an international uproar, and signalling the beginning of a wave of other purges leading up to the highest leadership levels. The article attempts to shed light on the nature of the Orchestra as a North Korean cultural phenomenon and the reasons for its sudden ending, trying to dispel some of the disinformation surrounding the event.

## Introduction

At the time of writing, it is now almost five years since the famous North Korean ensemble Ŭnhasu Orchestra was destroyed in August 2013. This article is an attempt to make a historical interpretation of what the orchestra was, what was its role in the North Korean society, and why was it terminated so abruptly. We also attempt to shed light on the practical aspects of the power transition from Kim Jong Il (Kim Chŏng'il, 김정일) to Kim Jong Un (Kim Chŏng'un, 김정은). As our purpose has been to understand the Ŭnhasu Orchestra in its entirety, our narrative follows the plot that the philosopher of history, Hayden White, has named “tragedy”,<sup>1</sup> following the art theoretician Northrop Frye.<sup>2</sup> It interprets the background and beginning, the rise to eminence, and the ultimate fall of the Orchestra in the changed political environment.

A society ages, loses its revolutionary zeal, and stabilizes. North Korea has a predominantly urban population with a low fertility rate (2.0),<sup>3</sup> which is a demographic factor that greatly increases social stability.<sup>4</sup> It has a political system specifically geared towards securing continuity,<sup>5</sup> and an economy that is poor but functioning.<sup>6</sup> Children are born, and parents, who can afford it, want to give their children a good education. Some of this training occurs in the arts and cultural sector, which creates demand for workplaces for them. This generational mechanism may be one factor behind the short lived but high class North Korean ensemble called Ŭnhasu kwanhyŏn aktan (은하수관현악단), literally meaning “Milky Way Orchestra”, though usually known by the name Ŭnhasu Orchestra. It was reportedly established in 2009.<sup>7</sup> Its earliest roots go to a group of young female singers called Ŭnhasu, a subsection of the Pochonbo Electronic Ensemble, first mentioned by the KCNA in 8 February 2008.<sup>8</sup> The earliest recorded performance of Ŭnhasu is even earlier, uploaded to YouTube in 23 December 2007. The uploader was hidden behind the pseudonym “soffkj4y”. He/she was active during 2007–2010, publishing altogether 172 short music pieces of North Korean music. In 23 December 2007 he/she uploaded during that single day 63 different videos, signalling the beginning of an operation of international cultural diplomacy in YouTube. Modern understanding of cultural diplomacy is usually based on Joseph Nye’s complicated concept of soft power, which presupposes large amounts of multi-level interactions between states,<sup>9</sup> but in the case of North Korea a simpler 1950s understanding of it—as exchanges of artistic, athletic and scientific personnel, as well as their products, for better mutual understanding and alleviation of tensions—suffices. Along with tourism, North Korea’s external image is largely limited to rare visits and publishing on the internet.<sup>10</sup>

The educational sector is also important here, because we are here dealing with highly educated professionals. Universities constitute essential nuclei in transnational epistemic communities.<sup>11</sup> Their transnational character enables a smooth movement of people across national boundaries in search of intellectual exchanges, necessary for attaining levels of performance of an international standard. In the cultural field the international movement of established artists, ensembles and related people is important, but enabling the movement of students during their formative years means an important investment for the future skill levels of a nation. In a recent interview the Vice Rector of the Kim Wŏngyun Pyongyang University of Music (KWGUM),<sup>12</sup> Rim Haeyŏng proudly announced that his university is at the world level in terms of its musical education, but that it also has extensive connections with ensembles and universities in a large number of countries.<sup>13</sup> Music is a national prestige project in North Korea, and exchanges are essential for keeping up with international trends.

We can therefore take a look at the biographies of a few members of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra. Various educational details have been disclosed regarding conductors, musicians and singers, because they have studied and performed abroad. Apparently, North Korean art leadership decided in the 2000s to send a fair number of promising youth to study abroad, which a few years later resulted in a pool of internationally trained artists. Ŭnhasu Orchestra was then established around this nucleus. Kim Jong Il's children belong to this same cohort of North Korean youth with international familiarities.<sup>14</sup> Youth trained in domestic high educational institutions form a much larger segment of this cohort, but not necessarily much different in outlook: professionally skilled, with elite consciousness, and apparently loyal to the rule of Kim Jong Il. When the regime changed at the end of 2011, they continued being loyal to the system itself, but did not necessarily look too steeply upwards towards the young new leader. He was like one of them, which may be one of the causes for the subsequent troubles in 2013.

The source material of this research is composed of small pieces of biographical information extracted from various European musical events, news in North Korean media, and videos published in YouTube. Many of these videos were wiped out during 2017, when the international tension around North Korea was at its highest. However, we have deemed it best to refer also to these videos, because we expect that little by little they will reappear in various sites, becoming accessible again.

## Illuminative Biographies

One interesting case is Ri Myöngil. He was the main conductor of the Ūnhasu Orchestra, working with it in every single published concert from the beginning till the end. He was born in 1978, making him a bit over 30 years old during that time. In spite of being Kim Jong Il's most favoured top ensemble in North Korea during its brief existence, the Ūnhasu Orchestra was mainly composed of young artists. Most musicians and singers were in their 20s.

Ri Myöngil is an artist of whose family background we have information. He is the grandson of Ri Sūnggi (1905–1996), who studied chemistry at Kyoto Imperial University and in 1939 was a member of the group that invented the synthetic fibre *Vinalon*.<sup>15</sup> After 1950 he became a central figure in setting up the North Korean chemical industry. In the late 1940s North Korea, with assistance from the Soviet Union, was successful in attracting scientists, artists and other professionals from the South, where many faced either neglect or harassment. Charles Armstrong estimates their number as “perhaps hundreds”; no exact figures exist.<sup>16</sup> As the director of the North Korean Atomic Energy Research Institute from 1965 onwards he was influential also in the first phases of the development of the North Korean nuclear programme. During 1962–1990 he was a member of the Supreme People's Assembly.<sup>17</sup> The grandfather was thus undeniably among the elite figures of Pyongyang society.

Rather than industry, the grandson Ri Myöngil devoted himself to the cultural field. High culture is an attractive field in all societies, but in a totalitarian type of system it may have an additional attraction. As Sheila Fitzpatrick comments on the children of the high Soviet leadership in the Stalin period, they received good academic education but stayed usually out of politics.<sup>18</sup> It was the best possible combination of high social standing with lowered threat of being targeted politically. Lacking any interview or statistical data on the subject in North Korea we have no exact way of knowing, but we suppose that a similar kind of psychology has worked also in North Korea in a number of elite families, especially if they already were in an academic field. Ri Myöngil studied piano at the KWGUM, graduating at the age of 20, continuing then to study conducting. Later he was sent to Austria to further studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, majoring in conducting. One of the authors was able to watch and listen to his final exam before graduation, which meant conducting the Radio-Symphonieorchester Wien at the Wiener Musikverein in 2006.<sup>19</sup> The famous concert hall is located in the inner city of Vienna, was built in 1870, and is said to have one of the best acoustics in the world. Ri then returned to North

Korea, and when the Ŭnhasu Orchestra was established in 2009 he started to work as its main conductor.

Yun Bŏmju was another conductor of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra. At first, he visited concerts irregularly until at the beginning of 2012 he became a regular conductor. He was born in 1975. He as well studied at the KWGUM, and also he was sent to Austria for further studies. He studied conducting and composing at the same University of Music and Performing Arts, graduating in 2007. His graduation thesis written in German on composition can be found in the library of the university; for some reason Ri's cannot.<sup>20</sup> His final exam in conducting took place in 25 June 2007 at the RadioKulturhaus Wien, where he conducted Bedřich Smetana's "My Homeland" with the Hungarian Savaria Symphony Orchestra. Both the location and the orchestra are a shade lower than what Ri Myŏngil received for his exam. Perhaps the university professors considered Ri to be a bit better conductor at that stage. During Kim Jong Il's time Yun Bŏmju was subordinate to Ri in Ŭnhasu Orchestra, but during Kim Jong Un's rule Yun seems to have been evaluated higher. In May 2013 he was awarded the title of People's Artist. After the demise of the ensemble he soon reappeared as one of the conductors of the State Merited Chorus, and in February 2018 he conducted the Samjjiŏn Orchestra in Gangneung [Kangnŏng] and Seoul. His career has proceeded well. Ri has disappeared without a trace and has not been observed in public since July 2013.

Another well-known case is People's Artist Mun Kyong Jin [Mun Gyŏngchin], who acted as the concert master of Ŭnhasu Orchestra. He has left a trail in the internet because he participated in several violin competitions in various countries. Mun Gyŏngchin was born in 1981 as the son of a musician. He received his pre-school education at the Pyongyang Taedongmun Kindergarten, which is specialized in violin and kayagum education for small children. It is located in central Pyongyang, which points to good family connections.<sup>21</sup> In 2000 at the age of 19 he graduated from the KWGUM. In a public letter to Kim Jong Il he thanked the supreme leader for enabling his university studies.<sup>22</sup> References to the leader were a formality, but his foreign studies obviously required the approval of the supreme director of arts, because the DPRK invested much money on him. During 2000–2005 he played violin at the Mansudae Art Troupe, but he is also said to have studied in China for some time.<sup>23</sup> He received the second prize at the twelfth "2.16 Individual Performing Arts Competition" in Pyongyang in 2002. In 2005 he was sent again to study abroad, this time to the Moscow State Conservatory. He studied at the postgraduate level but was not enrolled in a degree programme. While in Moscow, Mun participated in a number of international competitions. His greatest success came immediately

in July 2005, when he received the first prize at the Canetti International Violin Competition held in Miskolc, Hungary. The event was duly noted in DPRK media. To be a winner in an international competition was great national news there, as it confirmed North Korea's official self-understanding of its international rank.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, in spite of receiving the first prize, Mun actually was not the winner of the concourse. The winner's title was Grand Prix, which went to the Russian violinist Lena Semenova, and even the first prize was divided between Mun and Russian violinist Pavel Milyukov.<sup>25</sup> Being one of the two second bests is not the same as winning, but there is no reason to downplay the achievement either. It was a good result in a tough international competition, and certainly proved that Mun had both talent and a good education.

He participated also in other competitions. In December 2005 in Moscow he won the second prize at the Third Paganini Violin Competition. We can see from the records that also in the Fourth Competition in 2006 there was a participant from North Korea, but as he/she did not win a prize, we do not know the name.<sup>26</sup> As it is unlikely that Mun would have participated a second time in the same competition, another North Korean violinist probably was at that time in Moscow. In 2006 Mun won the third prize at the Fourth Yampolski violin competition in Moscow, and a prize, though no number given, at the Astana Merey competition in Astana, Kazakhstan. In February 2007 he won the second prize at the Third Moscow International David Oistrakh Violin Competition.<sup>27</sup> In June 2007 he participated in the first round of the renowned International Tchaikovsky Competition Moscow, but his name was no more seen in the second round, which means that he dropped out.<sup>28</sup> This event notwithstanding, his success in international competitions was consistently fairly good. As his participation in international competitions ended in June 2007, we can assume that he returned to Pyongyang. In 2009 Mun Gyöngchin became 28 years old, had a fair amount of international experience behind him, and already in the first Ūnhasu Orchestra concert he was placed in the position of the first violin.

During the early years of the current millennium Italy was a favourite destination for North Korean singer students, most of them females. The movement went both ways, as also many Italian singers visited North Korea, such as the soprano Patrizia Greco, who taught in Pyongyang during 2003–2004,<sup>29</sup> while shorter visits were made by countertenor Mario Bassani in 2004,<sup>30</sup> mezzo-soprano Alessia Sparacio also in 2004,<sup>31</sup> and the whole Roma Barocca Ensemble likewise in 2004.<sup>32</sup> Several North Korean singers studied in Italy; their names appear below in the form they were written in Italian media:

- 2003 Paek Mi Yong
- 2004 Park Mi Yong, both names most likely referring to Paek Miyöng, for two years or twice, later performing in the Ŭnhasu Orchestra
- 2004 Sok Ji Min
- 2004 Kim Ki Yong, a middle-aged male singer, later in the State Merited Chorus; his son became a singer in Ŭnhasu Orchestra, and the father also visited once.
- 2004 Ri Hyang Suk, later in the Ŭnhasu Orchestra
- 2006 Ri Myong Gum
- 2006 Hwang Un Mi, later in the Ŭnhasu Orchestra

Of these singers we have most information about Hwang Ŭnmi, the leading mezzo-soprano of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra. Her information comes from the hand-out in Paris in March 2012, even though she did not perform there; no singers went with the orchestra to Paris. She was born in 1984. At the age of 22 she was sent to Italy to study in Rome in Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, one of the oldest institutions for musical education in the world. In May 2006 she participated in the 13th Giuseppe di Stefano International Vocal Concours held in Trapani in Sicily, winning the first prize there in the section for contraltos. This achievement was duly noted in North Korean media.<sup>33</sup> It was an important prize, because it included an invitation to perform during the same autumn in Mozart's opera "Cosi fan tutte" at the Opera of Trapani. The same invitation went also to other winners. Although it was only a student performance, it was a real opera production directed by Michał Znaniecki. Hwang Ŭnmi sang the part of Dorabella, and she was one of the few whose performance was especially praised by the art critic Gigi Scalici in his evaluation of the production.<sup>34</sup> To our best knowledge, she is the only North Korean opera singer who has participated in a complete opera production in Western Europe. She graduated in 2008, apparently returned to Pyongyang, and in 2009, at the age of 25, started to work at the Ŭnhasu Orchestra. International experience, in addition to talent, clearly had an effect, as she was from the start till the end one of the most shining stars of the ensemble.

The biography of Ri Sol Ju (Ri Sölchu, 리설주), the spouse of the current supreme leader, provides a glimpse on the system of elite children's musical education in Pyongyang. There has been a tremendous amount of gossip around her since 2012.<sup>35</sup> Source criticism is difficult, because sources that can be considered reliable are few. The original source of all family information on Ri Sol Ju is a short Japanese report from September 2012. It does not cite any sources, but nor has the information ever been disputed convincingly. She is said to have been born in Ch'öngjin in the eastern coast, but the family

is supposed to have moved to Pyongyang soon after. Her family consisted of a university professor father and a medical doctor mother.<sup>36</sup>

The most accurate information is presented in the South Korean journal *Minjok21*, whose reporters personally met Ri in 2007. *Minjok21* gives her birth year as 1988. In 1992 or 1993 she entered a facility specialized in musical education called the Kyōngsang Kindergarten in the Central district in Pyongyang. In 1994, she proceeded to the Ch'angjōn Primary School, which lies in the same area in Central Pyongyang. In 1999 she moved to Kūmsōng Number 2 Middle School, which at that time was affiliated with the KWGUM, and is nowadays part of the university. Ri Sol Ju visited in afternoons the Pyongyang School Children's Palace and the Mangyōngdae School Children's Palace, which likewise offer musical education.<sup>37</sup>

Ri Sol Ju travelled often abroad. In 2002 at the age of 14 she visited Fukuoka in Japan as a member of the North Korean team participating in a UNESCO children's art festival. In 2003 she participated in Kosōng County in Kangwōn province in an inter-Korean tree planting ceremony organized by the Red Cross, and in the following year she participated in Mount Kūmgang in an inter-Korean teacher's conference as a student companion. In 2005 she moved to the Kūmsōng Institute. It was a high school divided into a musical instrument education programme and a singing program, and is likewise now a section of the KWGUM. Ri continued her specialization in singing, like about 150 other girls. This number attests to the popularity of singing as a favourite education for the daughters of Pyongyang elite families. There are also other similar institutions specialized in musical education for them. North Korea produces lots of young singing ladies, many of whom used to go to work in North Korean restaurants abroad. In September she participated in inter-Korean cultural events during the 2005 Asian Athletics Championship in Incheon in South Korea. She performed on stage with her classmates Ri Kyōng and Kim Suhyang, both of whom later became singers in the Ŭnhasu Orchestra.<sup>38</sup>

In March 2008 Ri Sol Ju and several of her classmates were sent to study at universities in Beijing. Ri studied at the China Conservatory of Music (中国音乐学院),<sup>39</sup> which specializes in traditional Chinese music. She is supposed to have returned to Pyongyang in late 2008 or early 2009. Besides music, she studied also Chinese in Beijing. *Minjok21* suggests that she travelled at this time in Europe, at least in Germany, perhaps also in some other countries.<sup>40</sup> During her formative years Ri Sol Ju thus was able to receive an excellent cultural and artistic education in prestigious Pyongyang institutions, and get first hand international experience of Japan, South Korea and China.<sup>41</sup> She clearly belongs to the privileged core of the North Korean society.



*Minjok21* published a group photo of Ri with some of her classmates, taken in 11 May 2007. From this photo we know that not only Ri, but also many of her classmates made a career in singing: Yu Pyönnim (Wangjaesan Art Troupe/Ŭnhasu Orchestra), Kim Suhyang (Ŭnhasu Orchestra), Kang Yönhüi (Ŭnhasu Orchestra), and Ri Kyöng (Moranbong/Ŭnhasu Orchestra). Moranbong here does not mean the Moranbong Band established in 2012, but a small lady chorus, which started as a project with the Pochonbo Electronic Ensemble. After the Ŭnhasu Orchestra was established in 2009, Moranbong started to perform with it. Ri Sol Ju was placed usually within the Moranbong group, but she sang also solos. Her first appearance at the stage took place as a member of a roughly 270-member choir in the May Day concert in 2010.<sup>42</sup> In 11 September 2010, at the age of 22, Ri debuted at the front stage,<sup>43</sup> and in 4 February 2011 she made her last published singing performance.<sup>44</sup> Her public career as a soloist lasted only six months. 2009 is often mentioned in international media as the year of marriage, but *Minjok21* tells that at that time she was only chosen as Kim Jong Un's future spouse. South Korean lip readers claim that Kim Jong Il recommended her to his son.<sup>45</sup> The actual wedding is supposed to have taken place after Ri Sol Ju's singing career ended. The songs she performed in her farewell concert, "I Cannot Tell Yet" and "Elegant Person", in a lightly flirting style with the saxophone players, suit much better an unmarried girl than a wife, which makes us support *Minjok21's* interpretation. After marriage, family life and occasional state level public appearances have characterized her career.

These short biographies may not be those of average Ŭnhasu Orchestra artists. Only people who by luck, skill or connections were able to do something remarkable abroad had their personal information published there. On the other hand, many Ri Sol Ju's classmates, of whom we know only their names, went through the same educational institutions, visited foreign countries, and joined prestigious orchestras. As a cohort they had similar experiences. With a high probability they all belonged to the highest core class with a good *songbun* [söngbun].<sup>46</sup> Connection between social class and loyalty to the regime can be seen in the fact that although many of these people spent long periods abroad, they probably did this with state funding, and never defected. Defections among top level North Korean musical artists are unheard of. The state took good care of its musicians, and they in turn have displayed constant loyalty to it.

Because education in music was widely offered, and because the trained artists were children of important families, a push effect from the families and from the educational institutions for expanding opportunities for these children apparently existed. From the point of view of employment policies, the Ŭnhasu Orchestra was a new work place. Supreme decisions were of course also needed.

It has been pointed out that after Kim Jong Il's stroke in 2008, there emerged in 2009 a plethora of new projects, from dams and factories to musical ensembles, the Samjiyŏn Band and the Ŭnhasu Orchestra being some of the prime results.<sup>47</sup> The necessity of launching new undertakings became tangible, if the leader wanted to observe the results during his remaining years among the mortals.

## Orchestra of the Century

The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was established on 30 May 2009. From the start its concept was international and inclusive in terms of cooperation with other musical entities. Its first concert in 8 September 2009 is a good example. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra did not have a choir of its own. In most concerts there was a choir, but it was loaned from other ensembles, or was composed of KWGUM students. In the first concert on 8 September the choir was loaned from the State Merited Chorus of the Korean People's Army. Its members wore civilian suits. This is the only time they have been observed performing in civilian costume, attesting to the high culture image of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra. Large choirs were typical of the Kim Jong Il era aesthetic style; the sound of a great amount of voices singing in perfect unison, symbolizing mass unity, was an essential element in musical performances.

This was not all; other supporting ensembles in the inaugural concert were the Orchestra of the 21st Century of Russia, as well as the State Academic Unaccompanied Chorus Named after Yurlov, also from Russia. These ensembles had been brought to Pyongyang by their conductor Pavel Ovsyannikov, the retired director of the Presidential Orchestra of the Russian Federation in the Kremlin. His cooperation with North Korea dates from Kim Jong Il's visit to Moscow in 2001. Kim had been so impressed by the performance of the Presidential Orchestra that he invited the conductor to visit Pyongyang already in 2002.<sup>48</sup> These visits were repeated during the following years, with Ovsyannikov training Korean ensembles. He was by no means the only Russian who had a strong influence on North Korean musical tastes. The celebrated folk singer Lyudmila Zykina is said to have been close both to Kim Jong Il and Kim Il Sung (Kim Ilsŏng, 김일성). She is reported as having visited North Korea six times.<sup>49</sup> Another visiting Russian celebrity was Alla Pugachova, who performed in Pyongyang in 1989. Andrei Lankov has a comment on the concert, with information obtained from a local artist:

Tickets were sold by speculators for \$100! Can you imagine what \$100 was in Pyongyang in the late eighties? This was crazy money, it could sustain a whole family for several months. We were all waiting for a miracle and saw

something mind blowing. Well, the music, the melodies. And the sound—the volume seemed unusual and created a very special atmosphere, which we were not accustomed to. And the demeanour on stage—gestures, free movements. All this was unusual and bright, something one would like to emulate. The next day, everyone in the city began to sing the songs performed in the concert. Especially “Million scarlet roses”. All Pyongyang was talking about Pugachova only—and on musicians this concert made an especially huge impression.<sup>50</sup>

This is of course two decades before the establishment of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra, but it shows that North Korean society was enthusiastic about foreign cultural influences. The concert video itself is highly interesting, because Pugachova’s immediate effect could clearly be discerned in the audience.<sup>51</sup> There always existed an uneasy balance between domestic and foreign art forms. Control of the society with the help of the *juche* [chuch’e] ideology presupposed strong emphasis on domestic art, even though that category is in all societies artificial. In practice North Korea imported a large number of cultural elements from abroad. Necessity for this is emphasized in both *On the Art of Music* and *On the Art of the Cinema* credited to Kim Jong Il:

Establishing the Juche orientation in music does not mean ignoring and rejecting foreign things indiscriminately. For the rapid development of music in our country, we should adopt good things from foreign music.<sup>52</sup>

The quotation does not contain a clear prescription of what to do with foreign inspirations, but the door was left, if not totally open, at least ajar for importing foreign elements of art where needed. Ŭnhasu Orchestra was probably the most internationally trained and internationally minded orchestra that North Korea thus far has seen. When it made its debut in 8 September 2009, the musicians and singers apparently had been trained for a week by Ovsyannikov and his entourage, who had arrived at Pyongyang already in 1 September.<sup>53</sup> The cultural influences went politely both ways, because the Russians learned North Korean songs.<sup>54</sup> In the joint concert most songs performed were North Korean and Soviet Union compositions, but there were also a number of Italian, French and British classical music pieces. All in all, the first Ŭnhasu Orchestra concert was resolutely an international phenomenon, showing how North Korean artists performed with high skill together with their Russian guests.

In purely North Korean concerts domestic songs dominated. However, even though the audience typically consisted of Kim Jong Il, other high leadership, and party cadres, the atmosphere was not especially solemn or uptight. Members of the orchestra appeared happy and full of confidence. Perhaps a song that might adequately catch the atmosphere of this early period was “20th

century recollections” performed by Hwang Ŭnmi as a solo in the October 2009 concert.<sup>55</sup> The lyrics were written by Yun Dugŭn, and the melody was composed by An Chŏngho in 2002.

### **20th century recollections**

The new century brings up memories.  
 What was our pride of the 20th century?  
 At the glittering grounds of sunrise in Mangyŏngdae  
 we greeted the sunrise of Jong Il Peak.  
 Ah, living under the care of the Leader  
 was the honor and pride of the 20th century.

In the days of the new century, we should not forget  
 what were the victories of the 20th century.  
 Defending the flower of the Leader, socialism,  
 together with the General.  
 Ah, with the guns of Songun we achieved  
 the victories and glories of the 20th century.

The General’s century will brightly come.

The lyrics describe well the ideological and psychological situation. The title is a reference to Kim Il Sung’s memoirs *With the Century*.<sup>56</sup> Most of the songs performed by the Ŭnhasu Orchestra, and all the other ensembles as well, were eulogies for the leaders. It was not always necessary to use their names; they could as well be identified by their titles. Leader (*suryŏng*) always referred to Kim Il Sung, while General (*changgun*) referred to Kim Jong Il, except in very old songs. As Rüdiger Frank has commented, one of the images of Kim Jong Il was the moon, which reflected the light of his father. The father was the sun, the originator, who established the state and gave it a direction to pursue. The son built up his legitimacy on being the prophet for his father, who knew best how to carry on the national project.<sup>57</sup> We can see that structure in the lyrics, as the father is always mentioned before the son. Mangyŏngdae was the birthplace of Kim Il Sung, while Jong Il Peak in the Paektu Mountain was named in honor of Kim Jong Il, who was supposed to have been born in a log cabin below it. As the birth date was 16 February 1942 according to North Korean biography, the song appears to have been made for his 60-year celebrations. As his father had lived up to the age of 82, in 2002 Kim Jong Il probably expected to guide the country some two or three decades more. Thus the new century was called “General’s Century”. The young members of the Orchestra had lived their adult life during it. They were the ones whose task it was to achieve “victories and glories” in the General’s century, and by all appearances, they were willing and ready to do

exactly that. They were a privileged group of North Korean elite youth, and it appears that they answered for the support and trust placed on them by happy loyalty.

The appreciation appears to have been mutual. Kim Jong Il was satisfied with his creation. The Korean Central News Agency reported in 27 and 28 July 2011 that Kim Jong Il awarded practically all of the nearly one hundred personnel of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra a large number of honorary recognitions, medals and presents, so that probably no one was overlooked. The century metaphor was employed also here as the explanation for the avalanche of honors. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was said to embody the creation of “music of the new century”.<sup>58</sup> The Milky Way Orchestra was thus the cultural manifestation of the Kim Jong Il Century, and as the century was still young, the future of its artists seemed bright.

On the basis of the research material, Kim Jong Il appears as the chief patron of the orchestra. It is probable that there existed also more intricate patron-client relationships between individual higher-level administrators and musicians, as described by Sheila Fitzpatrick in her *Everyday Stalinism* in the case of Soviet Union.<sup>59</sup> These relationships tend to be mutually advantageous. A person in a powerful position gathers people with a cultural aura around himself, because they give lustre to his standing, while in a situation of economic scarcity the artists can utilize help from above for smoothing out everyday life and enabling advances in their careers. Much of the larger society also seems to be based on patron-client relationships. Jang Jin-sung [Chang Chinsŏng] in his account of his life in North Korea refers to them.<sup>60</sup> When reasons for Jang Song Taek’s [Chang Sŏngt’aek’s] execution were announced to the public in 2013, he was accused of having built a personal “kingdom” of such relations.<sup>61</sup> Labor relations in enterprises are essentially based on the same system of personal loyalties.<sup>62</sup> Unfortunately, we do not have any specific knowledge of the private networks of Ŭnhasu Orchestra. We can only make a general comment of the prevalence of such relationships.

## Characteristics of the Orchestra

The Orchestra was composed of rather heterogeneous elements. One aspect was gender balance, where it was a trail blazer. A special event that may have had influence on this took place in 26 February 2008, when the New York Philharmonic Orchestra gave a concert in Pyongyang. The conductor, Lorin Maazel, tells this kind of story of the visit:

At 11 AM it was my turn. I was invited to conduct the National Orchestra of Korea. I walked on stage and found before me some 80 black suited men all bedecked with ties. The only women—two harpists—set back against the wall.<sup>63</sup>

The American guests were themselves a perfect example of a world-famous orchestra with a fairly equal gender balance. We do not know what followed in Pyongyang after the visit of the 280 Americans, but at least we could observe future Ŭnhasu Orchestra members in the audience, such as the violinists Mun Gyōngchin and Chōng Sōnyōng.<sup>64</sup> The gender balance of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra did not become exactly equal, being in the case of musicians about 20 percent female, while females always formed the majority of singers.<sup>65</sup> However, also the Viennese musical scene, with which both conductors were familiar, was only moving towards increasing female participation in orchestras. Ŭnhasu Orchestra clearly belonged to the global trend of correcting gender imbalances in concert music.

Another heterogeneous element was its instrumental composition, which allowed it to perform various types of musical styles. Its nucleus was formed by the classical elements of a philharmonic orchestra, which created the basic sound world. The Orchestra also regularly used traditional Korean instruments. The *changsaenap*—an oboe-type instrument—and the percussion instrument *kkwaenggwari* were used from the beginning. Later *kayagūm* and *sohaegūm* were introduced and became important elements of the Orchestra. The *changgo* drum, the *okryugūm*—a modern North Korean string instrument—as well as various Korean lutes and flutes were also occasionally seen. This element reflects the nationalist *chuch'e* aspect of North Korean music. In 1961 there was started a programme to improve traditional Korean instruments.<sup>66</sup> The state musical politics needed western instruments, because they emitted deeper and wider sound, suitable for rousing propagandistic songs, but the *chuch'e* ideology demanded nationalism. The solution was to improve traditional instruments so that their sound timbres were retained but tuned differently in order to fit with western type orchestras. For instance, the traditional *saenap* is tuned in the pentatonic scale (only the tones of the black keys of the piano), but the *changsaenap* is tuned in the diatonic scale (all the tones of the white and black keys of the piano). In the case of *changsaenap* the improvement process was fulfilled around 1970.<sup>67</sup> This combination allowed North Korean orchestras to employ fully the powerful sound of western instruments, while adding symbolic Korean sound as a spice. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was a perfect example of this kind of ideological nationalist/internationalist amalgamation.

There were also more surprising instruments. The classical timpani were accompanied by a modern drum set used by pop orchestras. There was also an

electric guitar, an electric bass, a synthesizer, as well as a six-member saxophone section. Occasionally also a harmonica was used. In spite of electric guitar solos, the Ŭnhasu Orchestra never actually played rock music, but big band jazz was a staple element in its concerts. The instrumental composition of the band thus meant that it was able to play a large variety of different musical styles, from classical North Korean and Western music pieces and traditional Korean songs to popular tunes with catchy melodies, and finally jazz. Invariably all concerts during the happiest period contained one to three jazz numbers. This heterogeneity of instruments fit well with its style.

The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was intended to play popular music. Although the musicians had received education also in classical music, they did not perform one-hour long symphonies in three parts. Even the State Symphony Orchestra seldom performs that kind of music. The Orchestra played music that was entertaining and easy to listen to, even though its highly trained singers sang their arias professionally, and much of the outlook of the ensemble was that of a classical orchestra. The key difference was the length of the numbers performed. Systematically, they were all from two to four minutes long. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was meant to entertain, but with a certain high-class ambience. It combined prestigious concert music elements with a popular style of performing. The repertoire was usually composed so that different styles followed each other in rapid succession, only one to two songs performed in one specific style, the mood then changing to something else. This made the concerts always lively and surprising. One can note also a curious rule: unlike in European style concerts, where the audience is given an important role in applauding, whistling and shouting in terms of approval or sometimes disapproval of the orchestra, this interactive element was missing when Kim Jong Il was present. The rule was waived, though, when Russians or other foreigners were on stage. There could be applause when Kim Jong Il was not present, even in the case of a totally North Korean audience, though the orchestra took no notice of that, and moved rapidly to the next song. When Kim Jong Il was present, only at the very end of the concert did the Orchestra “notice” the audience, bowing and applauding back to them. This rule of rapid proceeding was apparently meant for keeping the interest of an impatient popular music connoisseur high, while discarding unnecessary elements that lengthened the performances.

At the time of the birth of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra the worst years of hunger were already a decade past. However slowly, the North Korean economy was moving towards a functioning stage, though now through private initiative, no more relying completely on the state distribution system.<sup>68</sup> Kim Il Sung era songs depicting abundant agricultural produce, such as “Birds fly in in a year

of abundant harvest” (1960) and “Let’s be proud in front of the whole world of the full harvest of an abundant year” (1977) returned to the repertoires of ensembles. Such songs had disappeared from publicity during the 1990s, as they too clearly would have pointed out the failure of the state to provide for the sustenance of its citizens.<sup>69</sup> Now these old songs could be performed again, which signalled the return of sufficient amounts of food for a large segment of the North Korean society. However, new songs on the theme of abundant harvests were not made until 2014, when the Ŭnhasu Orchestra no longer existed.<sup>70</sup>

The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was created as a conspicuously civilian looking group, symbolizing the return of relative prosperity and trust towards better times during the General’s century. Of course, it was very much a high-class Pyongyang phenomenon. There is no information of prefectural tours, or of factory visits to entertain the laborers. Concerts took place in Pyongyang in front of Kim Jong Il and other high leadership, though of course in the audience there could be various kinds of people, including representatives of administrative sectors from the prefectures. The only recorded visit to a “work place” occurred in May 2010, but that location was the KWGUM at the Taedonggang District in Pyongyang. Most ensemble members had studied there, and from there it continued to recruit new talent. The only known concert that did not take place in Pyongyang was given in Paris in March 2012.

## High Noon

One of the tasks of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra was to perform during important national holidays, and something interesting happened in the April 2010 Day of the Sun celebrations. We have video evidence of two concerts with the same repertoire given at that time, namely a private recording of a Korean Central TV broadcast of the 15 April concert, as well as a DVD version of the 17 April concert. 15 April is the official birthday of Kim Il Sung. It is the most important national holiday in North Korea. The concerts took place in the Ryukyŏng Jŏng Chuyŏng Gymnasium, which is the biggest sports and concert hall in Pyongyang, built by the South Korean Hyundai Corporation during the Sunshine policy years, and used for important concerts directed at mass audiences. It is not known exactly how many spectators can occupy it at one time, but a rough estimate is 15000. The location attests to the important position where the Ŭnhasu Orchestra had risen less than a year after its inauguration.

The interesting difference between these concerts may appear as an insignificant detail, but it is indicative of cultural tensions within the North Korean



society. In the 15 April concert the female soloists were wearing Western evening dresses, as they had always done, displaying a fair amount of charming feminine skin and jewellery. In the 17 April concert they all were wearing *chosŏnot*, the traditional Korean female costume. It covers most of the body, effectively hiding the physical shape, covering everything excepting the face, neck and hands. From this date onwards, the Western evening dress was totally banned, and no female Ŭnhasu Orchestra soloist ever wore one in published concerts. Also, jewellery disappeared from the necks and ears, though facial make-up remained. There was no corresponding change in the male soloist attire: they continued to wear tuxedo as before. All orchestra members, males and females, wore military dress for the first time in the history of the orchestra. These different styles and changes imply that there was a deep cultural balancing process going on about the way the Ŭnhasu Orchestra symbolized North Korean national identity.

As studies of gender and nationalism have shown, the female body and the degree of its public visibility are highly controlled aspects of national culture in all societies, Korea being no exception. Kim Taeyon's observations on South Korean treatment of the outlook of females attests to the importance of this issue even in a highly modernized affluent society.<sup>71</sup> North Korea is much more conservative.<sup>72</sup> The military dress is an honorary attire, and the musicians' change of costume in the Kim Il Sung memorial day attests to that. Females have traditionally been seen as representatives of the home, which makes them anchors of national self-identity and symbols of resistance against infiltrations of foreign, especially Western, culture. Apparently, the revealing Western evening dresses of the female soloists stood out as ideologically unacceptable, in such an important national day, when the Orchestra now had emerged from smaller concert halls to perform in front of mass audiences. Nevertheless, the change in attire did not mean any noticeable difference in the musical style. The vocalists sang jazz tunes in perfectly the same way in evening dresses and in *chosŏnot*. Jazz with profuse saxophone and electric guitar solos apparently fit without hitches with Kim Il Sung birthday celebrations, as long as the conspicuous female attire was correct. This kind of cultural negotiation processes tend to be rather complex.

This episode leads us to contemplating on what kind of art the Ŭnhasu Orchestra was developing. The French philosopher Jacques Rancière's conception of the forms of art regimes, especially the ethical and poetic ones, may be helpful here in pinpointing the quality. In an ethical regime all arts, in the plural, are seen as serving the educational ethos of the state, teaching the citizens its teleological goals, and their proper roles in the grand national

scheme. Elements that are not ethical in this nationalistic sense, such as beauty for beauty's sake, are not necessary and can be banished. This is what happened with the Western evening dresses, even though also the *chosŏnot* is undeniably beautiful. The art regime of socialist realism is of this type, but so were religious paintings in Medieval Europe, or music in the service of war propaganda in any modern state. The purpose of ethical arts is to serve the collective. A poetic art regime is different: art, as a singular, is seen as an essential element in fulfilling human life. Art is an autonomous form of existence separate from the state.<sup>73</sup> The concept of fine art, referring to objects of art enjoyed solely because they are “art”, explicates the poetic regime, but the regime is not limited to elite circles. It exists equally in all kinds of art as a specific form of doing, where we have artistic creation and innovation. Artistic creation is hard to define in an exact manner, but it is the quality of doing whereby a new and inspiring element is added to the product. This is actually a rather bourgeois way of understanding art. Its goal is positive subjective experience, not collective education. To be able to thrive, a poetic regime needs moderately high levels of relative wealth, peace and security, but where such conditions appear, they suggest that changes are taking place in the society. The heterogeneity of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra brought with it cultural tensions, which is an indication that we deal with an unstable balance between different art regimes. The North Korean state is without doubt basically a regime relying on ethical art, and it has been that since its beginning, but the Ŭnhasu Orchestra displayed also definite poetic characteristics, such as the highly trained opera and jazz elements, and well-arranged numbers. In this sense, with hindsight, the late Kim Jong Il regime can actually be considered in the field of arts relatively liberal—no quotation marks needed—compared with the first five years of the current Kim Jong Un regime.

This can be exemplified with a composition that can be considered the signature song of the ensemble. This song is “3000 Li of Vinalon”, a new composition in 2010, again by An Chŏngho, with lyrics by Yun Dugŭn. The cooperation of this duo produced many North Korean musical masterpieces. Vinalon is the chemical fibre that the chief conductor Ri Myŏngil's grandfather Ri Sŭnggi brought with him from Kyoto Imperial University. In North Korea it was claimed as a domestic invention, and eventually it became the most important synthetic fibre produced in the country and used in various kinds of clothing and other industrial products. Kim Jong Il wore clothes made of Vinalon whenever he appeared in public in cold weather. He is wearing it also in his bronze statue in Mansudae. Vinalon can be regarded as one of the ultimate industrial metonymies of the *chuch'e* idea: a domestically invented fibre from domestic raw materials, domestically produced, used in clothing only in North Korea,

and everyone wearing it. 2010 was another rally year for its use, with a new factory established, and apparently the song was created for supporting that campaign. 3000 li is a metaphor for whole Korea, as the peninsula is roughly 1200 km or 3000 Korean li long; both North and South Korea use the metaphor in their respective national anthems. The name “3000 Li of Vinalon” implies that all Koreans should wear clothing made of the fibre. Thus, in addition to being an industrial rally song, it was simultaneously also a song ideologizing Korean unification from the North Korean perspective. All this industrial and political content of the song might not suggest a specific artistic pearl, but it is actually an exquisitely beautiful composition. An Chŏngho clearly created art in the poetic sense here, and the Ŭnhasu Orchestra carried this aspect to full bloom.

The song was performed as an ordinary vocal version with full lyrics only twice, first when it was inaugurated in the May Day Concert in 2010, and again in the May Day concert in 2012, but in that formula it was not exceptional. For the concert series celebrating the 62nd anniversary of the founding of the DPRK in 2010 it was given a totally new arrangement. Two new female musicians were introduced, Cho Okchu with *kayagŭm* and Nam Unha playing *sohaegŭm*, both in brightly coloured *chosŏnot*. In Kim Jong Il’s *On the Art of Music* there is an instruction: “We must [...] develop the form of kayagum solo and ensemble.”<sup>74</sup> The Ŭnhasu Orchestra was fulfilling that instruction to the letter. The *kayagŭm* and *sohaegŭm* emit sounds that appear traditional, though they are typical improved versions of traditional instruments. For instance, the modern *sohaegŭm* has four strings, and it is played with a violin bow.<sup>75</sup>

The song was performed with Cho and Nam as soloists, with the support of the whole orchestra, the choir participating only at the very end, singing the two last lines, which signified that the General was working to spread Vinalon throughout the whole Korea. The rest of the lyrics were dropped out. This meant that most of the performance was pure music, and the soloists with the backing of the orchestra meticulously spread out all the fine aspects of the melody. The balance became perhaps 90 percent poetic art and 10 percent ethical art—though the numerals of course are only metonyms, as art cannot be measured mathematically. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra performed the song several times afterwards with slight variations. It entered the repertoire of Kim Jong Il memorial concerts during spring 2012, and it was likewise one of the highlights of Ŭnhasu Orchestra’s concert in Paris in 14 March 2012.<sup>76</sup> The French audience probably thought that it heard something traditionally Korean, though actually it was in many senses ultra-modern North Korean music, an amalgamation of *chuch’e* with the West. Also the South Korean art critic Bae Ihngyo considers the arrangement very good.<sup>77</sup> The last time it was heard was in the 15 April 2013

concert, while its length had over the three years grown from two minutes in 2010 to five minutes in 2013. This attests to the growing importance of the melody in the Ŭnhasu Orchestra repertoire.

## Exit of the Patron

Kim Jong Il unexpectedly had his final heart attack in 17 December 2011. The death of the main benefactor was of course a serious blow to Ŭnhasu Orchestra. Their concert was thus not given on New Year's Eve, as is usual, but in 1 January. Ŭnhasu Orchestra concerts had usually been gatherings of high state and party officials and other Pyongyang cream, but also that was changed, and ordinary looking people of all ages filled the rows of the large East Pyongyang Grand Theatre. No video of the whole concert has been published, only a 5-minute news reel,<sup>78</sup> but seven more concerts were given in the same location during 5–11 January, and one of these has been published.<sup>79</sup> Public emotional handling of the death of the leader was necessary, and the Ŭnhasu Orchestra was the central ensemble to deal with the situation.

An equally important task was legitimating the leadership change, and the Orchestra fulfilled its role also on this score. Most of the songs performed were compositions made during Kim Jong Il's reign. The background screen showed pictures of the father with young Kim Jong Il. After this Paek Sungnan narrated with her virtuoso style memorial words for the deceased, the video displaying scenes of the funeral procession. At the end Kim Jong Il was metaphorically resurrected and was shown on the screen perfectly alive with his son Kim Jong Un, while Paek Sungnan declared that from now on he will lead the country. The scene ended with the Ŭnhasu Orchestra performing two lines of the first song made especially for Kim Jong Un when he had been established as the crown prince in 2009, namely "Footsteps" by the composer and poet Ri Chongo:

The steps resonate loudly  
Leading us to a glittering future

The video displayed old and tired Kim Jong Il sitting on a chair in the background, while the young and energetic Kim Jong Un was shown in the front, already in the commanding position where leaders invariably were depicted. The same message of leadership change was pouring out from all outlets; the Ŭnhasu Orchestra did its part with musical and visual means.

Other memorial concerts followed. A week-long series of concerts were held in February around the time of Kim Jong Il's birthday in the Ryukyŏng Jŏng Chuyŏng Gymnasium. It can be estimated that well over one hundred

thousand people heard Ŭnhasu Orchestra live at this period, and much more via television. However, the memorial mood in North Korea subsided fast after February. The old leader was dead, and the nation moved on. Traditional festive day concerts by the Orchestra, such as the International Women's Day in 8 March, the 80th Anniversary of the Korean People's Army in 25 April, May Day, and the 66th anniversary of the Korean Children's Union in 6 June all had their own themes. Songs related with Kim Jong Il were performed, but they were in no central role. Yet, the Ŭnhasu Orchestra had not forgotten its creator. In 19 June, ostensibly celebrating the 48th Anniversary of Kim Jong Il starting to work at the Worker's Party of Korea, the Ŭnhasu Orchestra gave a memorial concert of its own for the deceased leader. It was dedicated solely to him. This took place in the small Ŭnhasu Theatre given to the Orchestra by Kim Jong Il in 2011; actually, the venue is the renovated former concert hall of the KWGUM, from where the university had moved to a new location. The KCNA never mentioned anything about the concert, and the audience appeared to be people in ordinary clothing, with no important state or party officials attending. The event simply appeared to be Ŭnhasu Orchestra's own semi-private memorial concert for the memory of its protector.<sup>80</sup>

Kim Jong Un occasionally visited Ŭnhasu Orchestra concerts, though his wife Ri Sol Ju has been observed only once. That took place in 30 August 2012, in a concert for youth organizations. The legitimacy building process chosen by the leadership demanded that Kim Jong Un should physically appear among various kinds of social groups, such as the military, workers, female organizations, children, etc., and concerts were an excellent venue for this. He became a performing star on his own right, cameras following the processions of his entrances and exits, as well as his moods during the performances. This was totally different from his father, who was never displayed during concerts. Like all other ensembles, also the Ŭnhasu Orchestra started to perform new songs made for Kim Jong Un, such as "Our Leader Loved by the People". It was the favourite ending number in concerts during summer and autumn 2012. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra performed it as enthusiastically as any other ensemble. Another one was "Let's Advance Towards the Final Victory." It seems to have been written between 15 April 2012, when Kim Jong Un gave a speech using the expression, and 26 June 2012 when the notes and lyrics were published in Rodong Sinmun.<sup>81</sup>

The fall of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra started in autumn 2012. It was visible in many ways during the 10 October concert for the 67th Anniversary of the Workers' Party of Korea. The choir was missing, as well as a number of musicians. The shooting and editing of the concert video was amateurish,

and the KCNA report of the concert was off-handed. Personnel and technical resources clearly were drawn out of the Orchestra. The concert took place in the People's Theatre, which is a good concert hall, but the point is that a new ensemble was performing at the same time at the big Ryukyŏng Jŏng Chuyŏng Gymnasium, where also Kim Jong Un appeared in the audience. This competing ensemble was the Moranbong Band, which now visibly had become the most favoured group. It was established in March 2012 by Kim Jong Un,<sup>82</sup> apparently to perform the kind of music that fit better with his musical tastes, which understandably pointed more towards pop than opera. He was 40 years younger than his father. Several Moranbong Band members can actually be seen in the second row in the audience of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra concert in 8 March 2012; perhaps they were sent to observe how an established top ensemble conducts itself on stage.<sup>83</sup> At that time the Ŭnhasu Orchestra still was at the height of its career, soon leaving to an important cultural diplomacy mission to Paris, where it performed in 14 March together with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France under the direction of the South Korean conductor Chung Myung-Whun. In Paris itself the concert was a success, leading to profuse applause, and the orchestra returned home as heroes, but its practical diplomatic results were close to zero. It had been initiated and planned during Kim Jong Il's reign, but by spring 2012 North Korea was manifestly moving ahead with its missile and nuclear programmes, and concert diplomacy was not followed by corresponding international good-will gestures by the new leadership.<sup>84</sup>

## A Joint Concert with the Moranbong Band

Studies on North Korea are continuously building up a jigsaw puzzle. The metaphor is not new, but nevertheless fitting. Such puzzles would be difficult even if there was enough empirical information on what is taking place within the regime, but the difficulty is heightened because North Korea invariably provides a researcher only a few of the pieces. We do not know what exactly happened during the last year of the existence of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra, but we think that we are at least able to say something about the relationship between the Orchestra and the new leader. This endeavour can possibly also shed some new light on the early years of the Kim Jong Un reign.

There is no doubt that Kim Jong Un appreciated the skills of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra. We also know that he had been attending several concerts with his father, at least from the 6 October 2010 concert onwards, because his name began to appear at the list of venerable guests as the vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of Korea.<sup>85</sup> He can have

been in the audience also earlier, but because his formal rank was too low, he was not mentioned. On 10 May 2013 it was announced that Yun Bŏmju, the other regular conductor, would be awarded the title of People's Artist by the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly.<sup>86</sup> The force behind this sudden decision seems not to be the Presidium, but Kim Jong Un himself, who attended the Ŭnhasu Orchestra's May Day concert. He is said to have praised the performance of a certain song as "admirable," and that after his endorsement the song had become very popular among the people.<sup>87</sup> That is reason enough to award an honorary title.

The North Korean news media is actually confused on whether he attended or not. In the first report of the concert the KCNA does not mention him. The audience was said to have consisted of representatives of industrial establishments, labor innovators and administrators of the economic sector.<sup>88</sup> In the concert video there is no trace of Kim Jong Un, and it is unthinkable that he would have been edited out: he was the highest star performer of any concert. Thus, it appears that there had been two concerts: the first one more private for Kim Jong Un and his entourage, then another public one for the labor sector people.

Also, what can be seen on the concert video points towards this kind of interpretation. The song in question was "Peace Is on Our Bayonets." It was composed in 1993 by Ri Chongo, with lyrics by Chŏng Ŭnok. The conductor Yun Bŏmju had presented a new, dramatic arrangement of the song, with Hwang Ŭnmi in vocals, performing with her beautifully passionate style. After the song was finished, there was not only profuse applause from the audience, but also shouts, which was exceptional. Then, without any apparent reason, the Orchestra performed the song again.<sup>89</sup> This leads one to suspect that Kim Jong Un had requested the song to be performed twice during the private concert, and that the audience had been informed about the honor. It was an excellent performance. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra performed it in the same way in all of its final concerts, and after it had been disbanded, Yun Bŏmju became a conductor of the State Merited Chorus, and with it performed the song once again in the 10 October 2013 joint concert with the Moranbong Band.<sup>90</sup>

If we look carefully at the repertoire and the use of the video screen of Ŭnhasu Orchestra concerts since winter 2012–2013, we can notice that unlike the Moranbong Band, it did not position itself as a Kim Jong Un supporting orchestra, but rather as an orchestra supporting Kim Jong Il's memory. A case in point is the December 2012 concerts celebrating the successful launch of the Ŭnha-9 rocket taking the Kwangmyŏngsŏng 3-2 satellite to circle the earth. The Moranbong Band gave its concert in honor of the scientists and technicians on

21 December, making it a narrative of the successful leadership of Kim Jong Un. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra gave its concert to the same people in the following day but made it into a narrative of North Korean industrial prowess under the guidance of the party and Kim Jong Il. Kim Jong Un appeared occasionally on the screen but he was in a side role. The final screen displayed photos of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il.<sup>91</sup>

The new songs created in North Korea during 2012–2013 basically fell into two categories: songs for the sacred memory of Kim Jong Il, and songs celebrating the new happy rule of Kim Jong Un. The Moranbong Band performed both types of songs, but the Ŭnhasu Orchestra leaned clearly towards the Kim Jong Il memorial songs. This does not imply any opposition to Kim Jong Un. Perhaps we can rather describe the approach of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra as academic: if the theme was a rocket, then it sang about industry. If the theme was Kim Jong Il, then whole attention was poured on the late leader. If a concert took place in the International Women's Day, the songs were about women, mothers and family. If on a Korean War anniversary, the spectators were served a musical narrative of the events, but nothing about Kim Jong Un, because he had not been born at that time. Kim Jong Un simply was placed on the periphery of the mental horizon. Ŭnhasu Orchestra's approach to its work was artistically and academically absolutely sound, but perhaps not politically.

One hard and dramatic fact is that in 8 May 2013 the KCNA, as well as practically all North Korean newspapers, announced that in 27 July, on the 60th Anniversary of the Ending of the Korean War, there would be a joint concert by the Ŭnhasu Orchestra and the Moranbong Band.<sup>92</sup> This was declared by the leader himself when he visited the rehearsals of the former. This combination would of course have made a lot of sense. It was an important anniversary, worth putting together his father's top ensemble and his own favourite one to celebrate it. The idea was not only to have a good concert domestically, but to impress the rest of the world. Kim Jong Un reportedly said:

[...] it is necessary to make good preparations for it and once again demonstrate before the whole world their reputation as art troupes loved by the people [...]<sup>93</sup>

He himself seems to have placed much importance and his own energy on the joint concert, because he personally went to give minute instructions to the orchestra. As the KCNA reports:

After watching them, he gave important instructions for the preparations of celebration performance ranging from its orientation to its ideological stand, numbers and arrangement.



The ideological stand is of course important, but an even more interesting piece of information is that Kim Jong Un himself dictated songs for the repertoire and lectured for established music professionals on how the songs should be performed.

Another important fact is that this concert never took place. On 27 July there indeed were simultaneous jubilee concerts by the Ŭnhasu Orchestra and the Moranbong Band, but in separate locations. The Ŭnhasu Orchestra concert took place in the large Ryukyŏng Jŏng Chuyŏng Gymnasium, which obviously had been reserved for the joint concert. The Moranbong Band concert took place in the small Mokran House, which is the banquet hall of the Worker's Party of Korea. Kim Jong Un attended only this small concert. In other words, he had made a plan for a grandiose national event, and somehow this plan was destroyed.

We can speculate that there might have been some resistance on the part of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra to very close hands-on guidance by Kim Jong Un, which he reportedly did with the Moranbong Band.<sup>94</sup> Kim Jong Il had been a seasoned chaperone of the art production of North Korea since the 1960s, had established several opera and light music ensembles, had in his name a pile of articles and books on the subject—whomever had written them—and reportedly even played violin himself. Especially in his late years he apparently also saw it best to leave much of the actual creation of art to the artists themselves, as exemplified by the high content of poetic art in the music of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra. Compared with him, the son was an amateur without musical education, and his meddling might not have been unquestioningly received by manifestly professional artists, conscious of their skills, belonging to the same generational cohort, and proud of their recent international success in Paris. Music has a tendency to strengthen social bonding leading to communities with a strong group mentality.<sup>95</sup> At the same time, resources were clearly drawn out of the Orchestra, indicated by disappearing personnel and technical expertise. Ŭnhasu Orchestra's retreat to a mental horizon, where legitimating Kim Jong Un's rule played only a minor role during the last nine months of its existence, could be an expression of this. In Key Shelemay's concepts, the Orchestra transformed from a descent community to a moderate dissent community because the environment around it changed.<sup>96</sup> As a result some sort of frustration, distrust, or suspicion towards the Orchestra might have developed during summer 2013.

More intricate patron-client relations between individual Orchestra members and Kim Jong Il period powerful figures, still largely in their positions at that time, probably also played a role. A further fact is that the Ŭnhasu Orchestra purge in August opened the scene to an autumn of living dangerously

for the whole North Korean political elite, culminating in December in the purge and execution of Chang Sōngt'aek together with an unknown number of his “group”, “faction”, “base”, “followers” or “elements”, as they were called in the official announcement of the event.<sup>97</sup>

## What Happened?

In 29 August 2013 an international news storm was started by the South Korean newspaper *Chosun Ilbo*. Based on a rumour transmitted via an anonymous informant in China, it reported that in 17 August the 1990s hit singer Hyōn Songwōl and Ŭnhasu Orchestra's violinist Mun Gyōngchin, who was titled as the “head” of the ensemble, had been arrested, and that a dozen artists had been executed by machine guns in 20 August. The article also hinted at a sexual relationship between Hyōn Songwōl and Kim Jong Un, and that the reason for the execution of the artists was pornographic video tapes produced by them and sold in North Korea and China. There was also a mention of the alleged possession of Bibles. It was further said that members of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra, Wangjaesan Light Music Band and Moranbong Band, as well as the families of the victims had been forced to witness the executions, and that the families had afterwards been dragged to prison camps.<sup>98</sup> The report is clearly based on a rumour, where lots of speculation and unrelated facts were mixed up. The muddle went around the world in news media, where more gruesome details were added, and the number of executed people grew to “dozens.” As an example, a typically sleazy article was published by the British *The Telegraph*, which is not even supposed to be a sensationalist newspaper.<sup>99</sup>

We have also other narratives. The North Korean deputy ambassador to London, T'aek Yong Ho [T'aek Yōngho], who defected to South Korea in 2016, gave in spring 2017 a series of interviews for the Arirang News. In one of them he told that the Ŭnhasu Orchestra member families had been given apartments in a high-rise building in front of a major metro station, which implies central Pyongyang. In August 2013 they were all evicted from their homes and their property was confiscated, with furniture and TV sets thrown out of the windows by soldiers.<sup>100</sup> T'aek obviously was not an eye witness to the event, and thus this also appears to be a Pyongyang rumour. As a seasoned diplomat T'aek clearly told things that he supposed his South Korean and American audiences would like to hear. His story has a suspicious detail about a rush hour in the metro near 12 a clock midnight, while the Arirang News video utterly confuses Ŭnhasu Orchestra with the Moranbong Band and State Merited Chorus. Everything in this video clearly is not believable. Nevertheless, we might well believe that Kim

Jong Il had indeed given a building for the families of the Orchestra, and that they were indeed evicted from there as one operation while the Orchestra was disbanded.

Something drastic certainly happened. There were no more Ŭnhasu Orchestra concerts, and it became impossible to buy its CDs and DVDs. They disappeared from all music shops in North Korea, as well as from the music shelves of North Korean export-import companies in China. If you asked in these shops for items by any other North Korean ensemble, the shop attendants would duly search for the products, but enquiries of Ŭnhasu Orchestra music were invariably met by a blank “no.” Everything had been removed from the shops.

What about the executions? No North Korean news media has ever mentioned anything related with the event. We have, however, an informant, who for understandable reasons chooses to remain anonymous, but who has given three names of artists that actually were executed. They are the concert master Mun Gyŏngchin (also mentioned in the Chosun Ilbo report), a female star violinist Chŏng Sŏnyŏng, and a star bass singer Kim Gyŏngho, son of the State Merited Chorus bass Kim Giyŏng. This is again a Pyongyang rumour, but it is a simple cool statement, without any gruesome details. Many other Ŭnhasu Orchestra members have been subsequently sighted in other North Korean ensembles, but these three people have never been seen, even though they were undeniably skilled artists. Also, Kim Giyŏng disappeared from the State Merited Chorus for three years, but he returned in 2016 in good condition as an honored solo vocalist. If there was any “dragging of family members to prison camps”, that rumor either was not true, or it was a short affair.

The implication of the Moranbong Band administrative leader Hyŏn Songwŏl in the whole affairs appears to be completely baseless. She has been observed in 2014, 2015, and 2018 in North Korean, Chinese, and South Korean media in perfectly normal condition. Her implication is probably based on a mistake of names. The original rumour was transmitted by phone from North Korea to China, via how many people we do not know, and over the chain the relatively unknown violinist’s name Chŏng Sŏnyŏng can easily have been mixed with the well-known name of Hyŏn Songwŏl.

There has been no evidence of anything pornographic related with the Orchestra. If anything of the sort had been distributed commercially, the sensation hungry media certainly would have dug it out during the past five years. Also, the cueing towards Bibles is unbelievable; the Orchestra members were representatives of the regime. However, there may well have been something related with religion, as we have to understand the regime as

religiously grounded, where anything blasphemous towards the highest leader would be a grave offence.<sup>101</sup> It would be “lewd”, without a sexual implication. The Japanese journalist Ishimaru Jiro made an investigation of the event during autumn 2013. His argument that the case most likely involved smuggled South Korean and Japanese documentaries and blasphemous videos of Kim Jong Un appears plausible.<sup>102</sup>

The history of the Ŭnhasu Orchestra is interesting in its own right. It sheds light on the third-generation life of the North Korean elite, with many progeny gravitating towards the cultural field. It attests to the international and artistic aspirations of the late Kim Jong Il regime. It also tells that the unexpectedly rapid transition of power to the son was much more difficult than presented in North Korean media. One part of the state machinery quickly started to eulogize him, but another part carried on like before, or engaged in passive resistance, as the Ŭnhasu Orchestra did after its resources became diverted elsewhere since autumn 2012. The most indicative case is the aborted 27 July 2013 concert, which was a blow on Kim Jong Un’s prestige. It is the first and only known case of a cancelled event concerning him which had been clearly announced beforehand in North Korean media. Since then, everything has been announced only after the event. The building up of Kim Jong Un’s power base and making it functional at all levels of society took several years. Crushing the Ŭnhasu Orchestra, in an apparently emotional manner, was one of the stepping stones along this process.

## Notes

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# The Role of the Mongolian People's Republic in the Korean War

**DR. PROFESSOR D. ULAMBAYAR**

University of the Humanities, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia<sup>1</sup>

Key words: Diplomatic relations, Korean War, Mongolian assistance, UN, Kuomintang's China, hero horses, CIA report

## Introduction

Since the 1990s, when previously classified and top secret Russian archival documents on the Korean War became open and accessible, it has become clear for post-communist countries that Kim Il Sung, Stalin and Mao Zedong were the primary organizers of the war. It is now equally certain that tensions arising from Soviet and American struggle generated the origins of the Korean War, namely the Soviet Union's occupation of the northern half of the Korean peninsula and the United States' occupation of the southern half to the 38th parallel after 1945 as well as the emerging bipolar world order of international relations and Cold War.

Newly available Russian archival documents produced much in the way of new energies and opportunities for international study and research into the Korean War.<sup>2</sup> However, within this research few documents connected to Mongolia have so far been found, and little specific research has yet been done regarding why and how Mongolia participated in the Korean War. At the same time, it is becoming today more evident that both Soviet guidance and U.S. information reports (evaluated and unevaluated) regarding Mongolia were far different from the situation and developments of that period. New examples of this tendency are documents declassified in the early 2000s and released

publicly from the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in December 2016 which contain inaccurate information. The original, uncorrupted sources about why, how and to what degree the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR) became a participant in the Korean War are in fact in documents held within the Mongolian Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. These archives contain multiple documents in relation to North Korea.

Prior to the 1990s Mongolian scholars Dr. B. Lkhamsuren,<sup>3</sup> Dr. B. Ligden,<sup>4</sup> Dr. Sh. Sandag,<sup>5</sup> junior scholar J. Sukhee,<sup>6</sup> and A. A. Osipov<sup>7</sup> mention briefly in their writings the history of relations between the MPR and the DPRK during the Korean War. Since the 1990s the Korean War has also briefly been touched upon in the writings of B. Lkhamsuren,<sup>8</sup> D. Ulambayar (the author of this paper),<sup>9</sup> Ts. Batbayar,<sup>10</sup> J. Battur,<sup>11</sup> K. Demberel,<sup>12</sup> Balázs Szalontai,<sup>13</sup> Sergey Radchenko<sup>14</sup> and Li Narangoa.<sup>15</sup> There have also been significant collections of documents about the two countries and a collection of memoirs published in 2007<sup>16</sup> and 2008.<sup>17</sup>

The author intends within this paper to discuss particularly about *why, how and to what degree* Mongolia participated in the Korean War, the rumors and realities of the war and its consequences for the MPR's membership in the United Nations. The MPR was the second socialist country following the Soviet Union (the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics) to recognize the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and establish diplomatic ties. That was part of the initial stage of socialist system formation comprising the Soviet Union, nations in Eastern Europe, the MPR, the PRC (People's Republic of China) and the DPRK. Accordingly between the MPR and the DPRK fraternal friendship and a framework of cooperation based on the principles of proletarian and socialist internationalism had been developed.<sup>18</sup> In light of and as part of this framework, The Korean War has left its deep traces in the history of the MPR's external diplomatic environment and state sovereignty.

## Establishment of Diplomatic Relations: Intensive Proposals of the DPRK

Diplomatic relations between the Mongolian People's Republic and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were established on 15 October 1948 following DPRK's Foreign Minister Pak Hon-yong's (박헌영, 朴憲永) proposal on 8 October 1948 to establish diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries.<sup>19</sup> The Mongolian government supported the proposal and the two sides exchanged verbal notes to that effect.<sup>20</sup>

In a note of response from Kh. Choibalsan, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the MPR it is mentioned:

After the Soviet Union, the Government of the MPR decided to establish diplomatic and economic ties with the DPRK. The Government of the MPR congratulates the North Korean nation for its establishment of the DPRK and its Government, and received satisfactorily the DPRK's Government proposal to establish between our states diplomatic and economic ties. Herewith we express wishes for successful progress to friendly relations between MPR and DPRK aiming for prosperity of our countries respecting national liberation and for friendship and security of worldwide nations.<sup>21</sup>

At the request of the DPRK's Ambassador to Moscow Chu Yong-ha<sup>22</sup> (Ju Yong-ha) meetings were held with the MPR's Ambassador to Moscow N. Yadamjav and proposals were issued on 10 May 1950 stating that: "on the grounds of tight relations the DPRK is willing to exchange ambassadors with fraternal MPR"... and on 26 May 1950 intending "to establish embassies on both sides". Soon after these proposals it was announced that "Government of the MPR welcomes with pleasure the issue of establishing mutual Diplomatic Representatives on Embassy status."<sup>23</sup> This urgency on the DPRK's side might have been connected with the necessity to establish foreign diplomatic representatives in large numbers in Pyongyang prior to the outbreak of war.<sup>24</sup>

Ambassador J. Sambuu accompanied by Counsellor and First secretary Kh. Sanjmyatav, Second secretary L. Purev, left Ulaanbaatar on 1 August 1950, and passing through Manchuria arrived in Pyongyang on 8 August. The first Mongolian Ambassador to the DPRK J. Sambuu<sup>25</sup> presented his Letters of Credentials to the President of the Supreme People's Congress for the DPRK Kim Tu-bong on 11 August 1950.<sup>26</sup> J. Sambuu, was an experienced diplomat, who, in 1937–1946, in particular during the most difficult times of World War II was working as an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the MPR to the Soviet Union. This experience and the fact that he was responsible for urgently organizing assistance to the Soviet Red Army were the reasons for appointing him Ambassador to the DPRK. The Mongolian Embassy, similar to the Soviet Embassy, was opened in Moranbong or Moran Hill, and following the capture of Pyongyang was moved to Sinuiju on the border between DPRK and PRC. S. Ravdan, as Ambassador and Colonel General in Pyongyang in 1952–1955, was subjected to a U.S. airstrike and received a heavy injury in his ear.<sup>27</sup> Due to these airstrikes, over the course of the war, the Embassy of Mongolia to the DPRK was moved four times.

In Ulaanbaatar, the DPRK's first Ambassador Kim Yong-jin (Kim Yeong-chin) and other diplomats including the third secretary and two attachés were

welcomed by B. Ochirbat, Head of Protocol Department, MFA, and B. Durvuljin, Head of Eastern Department, MFA at the Mongolian and Soviet border.<sup>28</sup> On 23 April 1951 Ambassador Kim Yong-jin was received by N. Lkhamsuren, Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the meeting Yu. K. Prikhodov, Ambassador of the USSR to the MPR and Ji Yatai Ambassador of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the MPR were also present.<sup>29</sup>

The First Ambassador of the DPRK Kim Yong-jin presented his Letters of Credentials to Chairman of the State Lower Khural (Lower House or Parliament) of MPR G. Bumtsend on 24 April 1951.<sup>30</sup> Ambassador Kim Yong-jin was a member of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, educated in the Soviet Union, possibly at the KUTV, or Communist University of the Toilers of the East. He was an attaché in the Embassy of the DPRK in Moscow, according to information available in the archives. The presentations of these credentials were held during the most difficult initial period of the Korean War.

At the time of the founding of the PRC in October 1949, the MPR had already established diplomatic relations with the DPRK but until 1950 both sides communicated only on the occasion of each other's national days by sending mutual celebratory notes. It could be said therefore that the Korean War activated the relations of two countries. The ambassadors of Bulgaria and Romania in Beijing were also in charge of Pyongyang and Hanoi, but the Embassies of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary were located in Pyongyang.

## The MPR Firmly Stood on the Side of the DPRK During the Korean War: Decisions and Assistance

It was believed in the MPR that the DPRK was waging a patriotic war of self-defense and aiming to reunify the Korean peninsula. With the involvement of the United States and peacekeepers from the United Nations, according to North Korea, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries the war became a patriotic war against American Imperialism. At that time the Mongolian Government was of the same view.

In the final stages of World War II Mongolia took part in the liberation war against Japanese militarism as the Soviet Union's political and military ally. As the second socialist country that recognized the DPRK, Mongolia sided firmly with the latter and provided it with substantial material and moral support. It may be questioned whether Mongolia's reason for supporting the DPRK in this war was actually an independent decision or made under pressure or insistence from the Soviet Union, namely from J. V. Stalin. This paper will demonstrate that besides Soviet involvement, decisions for assistance from Mongolia were made

in framework of fraternal friendship and in accordance with Mongolia's internationalist sense responsibility and the interests of world communist system.

In the afternoon of 25 June 1950, Yu. K. Prikhodov,<sup>31</sup> the Ambassador of the Soviet Union to Mongolia, came to the Central Committee of the MPRP (Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party) and informed the Committee about sudden aggression on the DPRK from Rhee Syngman's puppet government in conjunction with American imperialism. Yu. K. Prikhodov was an influential politician who had formerly worked as staff at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and was also an advisor in the Central Committee of the MPRP.

In this urgent meeting participated Kh. Choibalsan (Marshal, Prime Minister), Yu. Tsedenbal (General Secretary of the MPRP), G. Bumtsend (Chairman of the Presidium for the State Lower Khural), B. Lamjav (Deputy Prime Minister), S. Luvsan (Deputy Prime and Trade Minister), N. Lkhamsuren (Minister of Foreign Affairs), B. Lkhamsuren (General Secretary to MFA) and Prikhodov Yu. K. (USSR Ambassador to the MPR).<sup>32</sup>

From Moscow, on the evening of 25 June 1950 Kh. Yadamjav,<sup>33</sup> Ambassador of the MPR to the Soviet Union, according to the statement of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Union had also given information about the joint aggression of American imperialism and Seoul's puppet regime on the fraternal DPRK.<sup>34</sup> Later in 1956–1959, Kh. Yadamjav was assigned as an ambassador to the DPRK.

During the meetings of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the MPRP, and mainly at the behest of Marshal Kh. Choibalsan, decisions on foreign policy were made. Information sources were based solely upon secret information received through the Politburo of the CC of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and via the Embassy of the USSR to Ulaanbaatar.

Stalin, using his authority, misled the leaders of other socialist countries about the real causes of the Korean War. Before the war Mongolians had just a general understanding that the Koreans had been under Japan's colonization, at the end of the WWII had been divided in two parts and it had been the DPRK's choice to follow the socialist path. At the time Mongolia and other socialist countries had a very general understanding about the origins and goals of the Korean War. Coupled with this Mongolian leaders believed that steadfast support for DPRK would be most significant for ensuring solidarity and closeness in the world socialist system.

Not long after the Korean War started, the MPR's Prime Minister Kh. Choibalsan<sup>35</sup> sent on 12 July 1950 a message to the leader of North Korea Kim Il Sung in which he underlined that "The Mongolian people are closely following the heroic struggle of the freedom loving Korean people against the armed aggression of the traitorous clique of Rhee Syng-man and American imperialism

so as to fully liberate its country. The Mongolian people strongly believe that the day of full liberation of the democratic DPRK is near and wishes it further success and speedy victory.”<sup>36</sup> Contrary to one potential reading of this message, Mongolian archival documents confirm that in the meetings of the Politburo of Central Committee of the MPRP and Special Commission between 1950–1953 there was no consideration, plans or decisions about sending troops into North Korea.

During the 1950–53 Korean War and the post-war reconstruction years the Central Committee of the MPRP and the Council of Ministers of the MPR considered officially on a number of occasions the issue of providing assistance to the North Korean people and took decisions to provide the Korean People’s army with horses, livestock, warm clothes, food as well as aid and assistance in the post-war reconstruction. ‘A Special Commission of a movement to assist the North Korean people’ was established and headed by deputy Prime Minister by B. Lamjav.<sup>37</sup> B. Lamjav had formerly led the 4th and 5th convoy of assistance of the MPR to the Soviet Red Army in March and November 1943 during the heat of WWII. Badamyn Lkhamsuren,<sup>38</sup> General Secretary to Ministry of Foreign Affairs was appointed as Secretary of that Commission. His experience formerly as an advisor in Department of international affairs of the Central Committee of the MPRP would perhaps become important. During that time in the Central Committee of the MPRP were there two Lkhamsuren. Namtaishir Lkhamsuren, served as Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs (1946–1951), Deputy of Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs (1951–1954), member of Politburo of the Central Committee of the MPRP (1954–1957), Secretary for Ideology in Central Committee and member of the Lower House.

Here the paper emphasises that the MPR did not make decisions on assistance to North Korea at the very outset of the Korean War. Instead when United States led military forces liberated Seoul in 25 September 1950, overrode the 38th parallel on 8 October, and captured Pyongyang on 19 October 1950 (The United States started to bomb, with napalm bombs,<sup>39</sup> unceasingly from B-29’s North Korea’s villages and ordinary people), Ulaanbaatar took no initial action. On 25 October when the PRC’s liberation army of “volunteers” named the Peng Dehuai intervened in the Korean War, and the situation became dangerous, the Politburo of Central Committee of the MPRP met, and made the resolution on 1 December of 1950 “The Assistance in the heroic struggle of Korean Nation against American imperialism.”

In this period 43,923 horses, 9,094 cows, 79,965 sheep and goats (30 percent male and 70 percent female), 17,462 warm clothes, including traditional fur sheepskin coats, 10,000 pairs of felt boots, 20,030 pairs of cotton pants and shirt,



4,500 over-coats, 50,000 pieces of sheepskin, 1,000 pairs of leather boots and other items were sent as material assistance. As for foodstuffs, 2,248.7 tons of meat, 30 tons of butter, 65 tons of meat fat, 99,1 tons of various kinds of sausages, 97,3 tons of pastry, 1,209.7 tons of wheat, 160,8 tons of rice, 200 tons of flour, 26,5 thousand liters of spirits (alcoholic beverages) were sent.<sup>40</sup>

The Special Commission informed Ambassador J. Sambuu that the first convoy of assistance formed of 14 train carriages was being dispatched from Ulaanbaatar station on 26 December 1950. The items were then transferred at the first Manchurian railway station (Manzhouli满洲里站) to be sent on to Mukden (current Shenyang railway station沈阳站). Ulaanbaatar instructed the diplomats of the Mongolian Embassy in the PRC to receive the items and to officially convey them to the DPRK side.

Ambassador J. Sambuu on 9 February 1951 sent a verbal note to the DPRK's Foreign Minister Pak Hon-yong in which he informed that in response to North Korean leader Kim Il Sung's request of purchasing 7,000 geldings (horses) for the army's use, the Mongolian side was preparing to provide the said number of horses as assistance to North Korea. He also informed him that the Mongolian Special commission had chosen 7,000 horses in Choibalsan aimak (East province) and that by the end of February 1951 it would be delivering them on foot to the Manchurian rail station and transferring them to the Korean side. In his verbal response note of 21 February 1951 Foreign Minister Pak Hon-yong underlined that Kim Il Sung and the DPRK Government were deeply grateful for the Mongolian Government's decision to transfer to the Korean side the 7,000 horses and that by the end of February or beginning of March the Korean side would receive the horses from Manzhouli railway station. On 6 March 1951 Comrade Kh. Choibalsan sent a personal letter to Kim Il Sung reassuring him that the 7,000 horses had been selected and would be transferred to the Korean side in the time period agreed.<sup>41</sup> The official ceremony transferring the first batch of assistance of the Mongolian people was held on 5 March 1951 in Pyongyang at a meeting with the Korean public. There Ambassador J. Sambuu made a statement and presented the 2,700,000 tugrik's (Mongolian currency) worth of assistance raised by the Mongolian people to the Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party and the Chairman of the DPRK's Commission in charge of receiving the assistance.<sup>42</sup>

According to the Special Commission's report of the 31 March 1951 regarding the work done to present horses to the Korean people's army, the Commission prepared 7,370 mares, of which 7,165 were chosen. Also 213 horses were added, so the total number reached 7,378 which were then officially transferred to the Korean side. This number included 1090 from Ministry of Defense, 1,200 horses

from the Ministry of Interior, 3,165 from people's collectives, 1,465 from various other organizations and other from peoples. The delegation led by deputy Prime Minister B. Lamjav met with the Korean delegation led by Hong Myeong-hui, deputy Prime Minister of DPRK at the Manchurian rail station and officially transferred the horses to the Korean side and signed a protocol thereon. On 25 March 1951 Kim Il Sung sent a letter of gratitude to Marshal Kh. Choibalsan in which the former acknowledged receipt of the horses in time. He underlined that the horses were in perfect condition and that the horses would soon be used at the war front. The content of the letter of gratitude and receipt of the horses sent by Kim Il Sung was communicated specifically to the members of the Presidium for the State Lower Khural as well as members of the Central Committee of the MPRP.<sup>43</sup>

## Visits of Mongolian Government Delegation to the DPRK and Kim Il Sung's First Visit to the MPR

In the fall of 1951 the Mongolian delegation headed by Ch. Surenjav,<sup>44</sup> Secretary of the Central Committee of the MPRP, B. Lkhamsuren, Secretary-General to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Secretary of the Commission to organize the movement to assist the Korean people, and J. Jamyan (who later became lieutenant general)<sup>45</sup> visited the DPRK for the first time on the occasion of the 3rd anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries and handed to the Korean side the third batch of assistance materials.<sup>46</sup> The Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, the Government and the people of Korea warmly greeted the delegation and appraised the assistance of the Mongolian people highly. The delegation visited the Korean troops fighting at the war's front lines and were acquainted with the actual situation on the front. There were many information and photo stands under the heading "Assistance provided by the Mongolian People's Republic." The Mongolian people also sent thousands of letters and telegraphs to those fighting at the war front. Since it was impossible to translate all letters, many were sent directly in the Mongolian language. Sentences reading "American Imperialism—hands off Korea" and "The Korean people shall prevail" were taken from the letters, reprinted by thousands and pasted on present boxes as well as on the cars and train carriages to be sent to Korea.<sup>47</sup>

B. Lkhamsuren, J. Jamyan have remarked in their memoirs that North Korean soldiers talked about the Mongolian horses, known as "Mongolian volunteers," and they were used in roadless places or where roads were bad or almost non-existent, or places with marshes, rivers, hills and mountains where

artillery and other military equipment had to be transported. That is why the stands carried photos of individual horses and each was given "hero horse" titles.<sup>48</sup>

Members of the Mongolian Special commission went to aimak (provinces) to pick horses, sheep and other livestock, herd them over the Mongolian border to the station in Manchuria and would then board them on trains to be sent to Korea. In order to acclimatize them to the Korean weather conditions and breed them there, mares with foal as well as cows for breeding were also sent.

The US Central Intelligence Agency took an interest in all types of socialist aid to North Korea, including from Mongolia. However, these reports were often inaccurate. One newly released CIA information report describes the potential of Mongolian horses in Korea in the following way:

Mongolian horses would be inefficient and unsuitable in North Korea because they would have difficulty adapting themselves. These horses, used to grazing on the vast tracts of Outer Mongolia, would find it hard to acquire a taste for the husks of millet and rice they would get in Korea. A number of them would probably die of malnutrition before they became used to the new feed. After the salty water found in most of Mongolia, the horses would find the Korean water unpalatable and would be adversely affected. The climate would make them sick. They are used to the cold of Mongolia but not the heat and humidity of Korea. Furthermore, horses raised on the prairie or gently rolling land such as that found in most of Mongolia, generally have weak hoofs. Many of them would fall lame in mountainous terrain with its rocks and pebbles.<sup>49</sup>

The text also comments using information from an opposing opinion that the horses sent as gift for the Korean people proved to be a great use in the mountainous front. The horses were useful enough to the North Koreans, however, to merit discussion in the subsequent years at important moments in bilateral relations. Both in the speeches at the friendship gathering organized in Ulaanbaatar during the official visit of North Korean Leader Kim Il Sung in July 1956,<sup>50</sup> and at the friendship meeting organized in Pyongyang during the official meeting of Premier Minister Yu. Tsendenbal of the MPR between October and November in 1956 to the DPRK, Kim expressed gratitude to the Mongolian Government, its people's assistance, and his especially high appreciation of the energy of Mongolian horses.<sup>51</sup>

Journalist Ryu Gyoung-chang in his article entitled "The Great Assistance of Mongolian People"<sup>52</sup> published in 11 July 1952 in *Rodong Sinmun*, and in the letter from 26 June 1952 from the postal address 256 of North Korean National Army sent from soldier Hyun Chang-yun with title "To Mongolian People" both indicated a certain fascination with the Mongolian horses.<sup>53</sup>

Mongolian horses were also praised by the US Marine Corps. One Mongolian mare had made its way to Seoul and was ultimately sold to a Lieutenant Eric Pedersen in October 1952. According to an extensive recounting of this horse's heroism written for an American audience, the horse, which its new owner named 'Reckless' was put to use on the front lines of the Korean War, carrying "more than 150 rounds of 75 mm recoilless ammunition ... from the dump to firing positions on Hill 120, and once served as a shield for four Marines working their way up the slope." Having been impressed into an anti-tank company of the US Marines, 'Reckless' reportedly made 51 solo trips to resupply front line units in a single day of fighting at the Battle of Outpost Vegas (near Panmunjom).<sup>54</sup>

Horses were an important part of Mongolian aid to North Korea during the war, but gifts and decorations also played a role in binding the two countries together. On 20 December 1952 Foreign Minister N. Lkhamsuren<sup>55</sup> received the DPRK's Ambassador Kim Yeong-jin and asked the approval of the Korean side to send at New Year the next convoy of assistance as well as to confer to the outstanding leaders of the Korean Workers' Party, the DPRK and the army the highest orders and medals of the MPR and to that end to send a delegation headed by Ch. Surenjav. The Foreign Minister underlined that Prime Minister Yu. Tsedenbal<sup>56</sup> was sending to Kim Il Sung a fully furnished Mongolian *ger* (nomadic dwelling) as his personal gift.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, between 30 December 1952 and 19 January 1953 the Mongolian Government delegation headed by Ch. Surenjav, MPR's deputy Prime Minister visited the DPRK for the second time to transmit a New Year's train-load of assistance to the Korean side and to confer Mongolian decorations (orders and medals) to the leadership of the Korean Workers' Party, the DPRK and the Korean army.

The leader of the DPRK Kim Il Sung twice personally met with the Mongolian delegation headed by Ch. Surenjav. Though Kim Il Sung discussed bilateral relations, he also talked frankly about the internal situation in the DPRK, the war, the situations within the Korean Workers' Party and the army, which underlined the political importance of the visit.

During the meeting Ch. Surenjav conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Yu. Tsedenbal and his personal letter addressed to Kim Il Sung. He also mentioned that as a symbol of friendship between the two countries Yu. Tsedenbal had sent Kim Il Sung a fully furnished Mongolian *ger* and a knife and chop stick set for personal use. North Koreans fighting at the front and toiling behind the front, as well as North Korean leaders, were decorated with Mongolian awards. These included 700 tons of meat, 1,000 tons of wheat, 12.5 tons of spirits (alcoholic beverages), 50 tons of various sausages, 30 tons of meat fat, 45,000 pieces of sheepskin, 10,000 pairs of cotton pants and shirt, 10,000

pairs of children's clothes, 10 Mongolian *gers*, 1,390 tons of veterinary medicine and equipment.<sup>58</sup>

Ch. Surenjav also informed of the decision of the Mongolian side to reward with high decorations of the MPR, the leaders of the Korean Workers' Party and the DPRK government, as well as those fighting at the front and those workers toiling behind the front. Ch. Surenjav read out the decision to confer upon Kim Il Sung the Order of Sukhbaatar and presented to him the order.<sup>59</sup> In response, Kim Il Sung highly appraised the gift of the Mongolian people, especially the horses sent to the war front and the food highly needed for the soldiers. He highly appraised the role of the Mongolian horses and said that they could be called Mongolian "volunteers." In response to Ch. Surenjav's request to visit the front, Kim Il Sung said that the entire country was a war front and that the delegation could go and visit the 4th division and the Nampo military unit.<sup>60</sup>

Kim Il Sung also emphasized: "The basis of our people's spiritual strength is the support of the democratic camp (i.e. of the socialist countries). The democratic countries headed by the USSR are providing much assistance. The volunteers of Great China, the most populous country in the world, are fighting side by side with us. ... Now the Korean Workers' Party has over 1 million membership ... Our main objective is to further strengthen the people's army, people's government and the united front". Kim Il Sung mentioned also to the Mongolian delegation about situation in the South, including the Rhee Syngman puppet government's massacres of South Korean communists.

At the end of his statement Kim Il Sung highly appraised the assistance of the Mongolian people saying that the Mongolian people is providing great assistance to the Korean people that are suffering from aggression and incursions and he quoted a Korean saying that "widows feel the pains of other widows." When he was told that a Mongolian *ger* (traditional home) was ready to be mounted in the garden of the premises of the Central Committee and presented to the Korean side, he said that due to his tight work schedule he would not be able to personally receive the *ger* and madam Pak Chong-ae, Secretary of the Central Committee, the WPK would receive the *ger* on his behalf.<sup>61</sup>

Threefold assistance was extended by the Mongolian delegation to the DPRK Government representative. The total amount of the assistance was, by the costs of that time, 23,365,000 Mongolian tugriks.<sup>62</sup> According to exchange rate of that time this was approximately US\$ 1,298,000. From 1950–1960 1 ruble was equal to 4,5 tugriks. In 1952 the volume of foreign trade between MPR and Soviet Union was 105,0 million rubles.<sup>63</sup> In 1950–1960 1 U.S. dollar was equal to 4 rubles.<sup>64</sup> In 1950 MRP's Gross Social Product was 1,327 billion tugriks, national income was 879,3 million tugriks.<sup>65</sup>

Besides the above, in 1952–59 Mongolia received and cared for 197 orphans (115 boys and 82 girls) and eight teachers in Ulaanbaatar. Thirty students studied and graduated at the National University of Mongolia and its institutes and returned back home. When living and studying for 8 years in Mongolia, these children lived in Sharga Mori't dacha (mountain) in summer and in winter in Zaisan hill, just outside of Ulaanbaatar. In total Mongolia spent 8,544,400 tugriks for that purpose.<sup>66</sup>

The Korean side, valuing highly the assistance provided by the Mongolian people presented the DPRK decorations to tens of Mongolian citizens that were very actively working to organize the assistance. In his message sent to the Government of Mongolia on 10 January 1953, in his capacity as Premier of Cabinet Ministers of the DPRK, Kim Il Sung wrote: “The Mongolian people have been and still are providing selfless assistance from the very first day of the war of the Korean people against American aggressors, for its independence and sovereignty, as well as to defend peace and joyous life of the people of the world. The material assistance and enormous moral support that the brotherly Mongolian people is providing to us is the manifestation of its love and solidarity with the Korean people.”<sup>67</sup> In January 1953 the Mongolian side also evaluated highly the consistent struggle of 288 selected citizens of the DPRK for the independence of the Korean people and decorated them with orders and medals.<sup>68</sup>

In summary these visits and activities would certainly suggest that during this period, based on proletarian socialist internationalist principles a kind of new relations in the form of fraternal relationship were emerging and being practiced among Soviet lead socialist countries.

At the end of visits to Eastern Europe from 16 to 19 July 1957 the delegation headed by Kim Il Sung, Premier of Cabinet of Ministers of the DPRK, paid the first official visit to the MPR. In the delegation group were Pak Chong-ae, Vice-Chairwoman of the Central Committee, Workers' Party of Korea, Nam Il, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ri Chung-ok, Chairman of the Planning Commission, and Hong Dong-cheol, second Ambassador of the DPRK to the MPR. During the visit views were exchanged on bilateral cooperation and the international situation, including the Korean peninsula, an eight paragraph protocol on cooperation in the cultural field between the MPR and the DPRK was signed and a Joint Statement on the Negotiations made, where “herewith notice with appreciation that the fraternal friendship and cooperation between Mongolian and Korean nations strengthened through the joint struggle for our countries freedom and independence are broadening and fastening year after year ... both sides noticed that two Governments stand firm on their decisions for

steadfast pursuing of peaceful and friendly cooperation policy on the basis of Five principles for peaceful co-existence praised by Bandung Conference and confirmed that the necessary precondition for Korea's Unification are the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Korea and holding talks represented by delegations from North and South Korea ... Governments of the MPR and the PRC believe that the PRC could gain the proper role in United Nations in most near future. The governments of two states accuse the activities of Chiang Kai-shek's cruel group for hindering the MPR's membership in United Nations as sovereign state aiming for peace. As a sign of people's willingness the MPR Government has decided to raise an assistance in 1956–57 with a high number of livestock and the best agricultural products for supporting animal husbandry and promoting people's livelihood. The DPRK's Government delegation appreciated the material assistance given during the Korean people's patriotic War and during war reconstruction, and agreed to make bilateral trade between two countries beginning 1957.”<sup>69</sup>

## Mongolian Participation and Observation of the Panmunjom Armistice Agreement

As the USSR Council of Ministers resolution of 19 March 1953 (document#112) reveals, ending the war in Korea was also a high priority for the post-Stalin leadership in Moscow; in the midst of the great anxiety and confusion following Stalin's death, the new leadership drafted and approved this major foreign policy decision in only two weeks. The evidence thus suggests that Stalin's desire to continue the war in Korea was a major factor in the prolongation of the war; immediately after his death the three communist allies (USSR, DPRK and PRC) took decisive steps to reach an armistice agreement.<sup>70</sup>

The timing of the Council of Ministers' resolution also suggests that it was Stalin's death rather than threats from the United States to use nuclear weapons that finally brought a breakthrough in the armistice negotiations. The Eisenhower Administration later asserted that it finally broke the stalemate at Panmunjom by virtue of its “unmistakable warning” to Beijing that it would use nuclear weapons against China if an armistice were not-reached—a claim that had great influence on American strategic thinking after 1953. However, Eisenhower's threats to use nuclear weapons were made in May 1953, two months after the Soviet government resolved to bring the war to an end. The Russian documents thus provide important new evidence for the debate over “nuclear diplomacy.”

For the MPR as a member of world communist system, participation in the armistice agreement, besides its significance to socialist ideology was itself the matter of success and reputation.

From 22 July to 4 August 1953 for the first time Mongolian observers, Ts. Namsrai,<sup>71</sup> correspondent of “*Unen*” (The Truth) daily newspaper and T. Purevjal,<sup>72</sup> First Secretary of the MPR’s Embassy in Beijing participated in the historic international ceremony of signing of the ceasefire agreement in Panmunjom by the representatives of the DPRK, Kim Il Sung and Nam Il, the PRC, Peng Dehuai and the US/UN representatives. As arranged by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Division Mongolian observers along with press representatives from the USSR, Poland, Austria, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and the GDR having transited in Beijing, Mukden, Andong and Pyongyang arrived Kaesong city on the morning of 27th of July. The Mongolian delegation participated as observers in all the events of the ceremony.

On 30 July the press observers travelled from Kaesong to Pyongyang. The next day they went to the City Hall where they were briefed on the plans for the reconstruction of the city. That evening they attended a ceremonial meeting and a concert. On 1 August they were shown the general condition of the city, the main street to be reconstructed and some other planned construction works. The Mongolian delegation then returned to Beijing on 4 August via Andong and Mukden (Shenyang).<sup>73</sup>

In his message sent to the Premier of Cabinet of Ministers of the DPRK on 28 July 1953, the Prime Minister of the MPR Yu. Tsendenbal underlined that “The Mongolian people and the Government of the MPR that have always supported the Korean people’s struggle for its independence, were sincerely happy and underlined with deep satisfaction that the war was over in Korea and that the victory was on the side of the heroic Korean people, the great volunteers of the Chinese people and the peace and democratic forces.”<sup>74</sup>

The April 1954 Geneva Conference on Korean issues did not reach a common consensus, therefore the armistice agreement dated on 27 July 1953 serves still as the fundamental document determining the legal status of South and North relations extending into the twenty-first century.

## The Central Intelligence Agency Unevaluated Information Reports Regarding Mongolia During the Korean War

In January 2017 the American CIA released to the public 11 million archival documents in its CREST online database. In this electronic records search tool can be found numerous documents about MPR, in information reports regarding



Mongolia during the Korean War can also be found. Prior to this, in March 2004, Mongolian historians, together with the U.S. historians,<sup>75</sup> have organized an international seminar in Ulaanbaatar entitled "Mongolia and the Cold War", to which a number of materials connected with information and analysis of the CIA in 1950s were brought, among them a few pieces connected to the Korean War and Mongolia's involvement in it.

In the new online database are found numerous CIA information reports regarding MPR's troops, its assistances including horses and analyses on strength of Mongolian military forces.<sup>76</sup> Today more than half a century later we have an opportunity to understand what rumors and realities, truths and untruths stand behind the big picture of the Korean war at different moments in time. For example one truth is that according to archival sources and from the memoirs of Mongolian officials troops of the Mongolian People's Republic did not take part in the Korean War.

In the CIA reports some are marked as unevaluated information, and in some reports comments give opposing explanations, and also others include sources of information, which conflict with each other and overall give no real information of Mongolian participation in the Korean War.

The Information report dated 19 July 1951 states "Between 7 and 10 June 1951 one Outer Mongolian cavalry division passed through Harbin on its way to North Korea. The division contained over 12,000 men with tanks, mechanized equipment and over 2000 horses."<sup>77</sup>

The Information report from 21 September 1952 mentioned that as in late January 1952, the strength and nationality of foreign troops aiding North Korea as following: 47 Chinese Communist divisions, 5 Mongolian divisions, 1 Czechoslovakian medical battalion and 3000 Soviet advisers.<sup>78</sup>

Thus in the CIA's information piece of 13 February 1953<sup>79</sup> there was an analysis based on its own sources entitled "*Proposed plan for the use of Mongolian troops in Korea*". The analysis read that in order to end the Korean War on terms favorable North Korean terms, Kim Il Sung thought that Mongolian troops needed to be brought into the Korean theater. It underlined that such a plan had long been discussed by China and the MPR and by China and the USSR. The analysis continued that preparations for bringing Mongolian troops into Korea had almost been completed by the time Ho Kai's group<sup>80</sup> visited the MPR and Moscow in December 1952, although the final decision was to be taken based on the results China-MPR negotiations.<sup>81</sup>

According to the above material, if the USSR would have agreed to the use of Mongolian troops in the Korean War, it would have served as the basis for the USSR's active intervention in the Korean War. The MPR would have supplied

five or six divisions, where below the report the source comments that ... five divisions would represent 85 percent of the MPR's fighting power and the source believes it unlikely that Mongol troops will be sent to Korea, although a token force of about 10,000 might be sent for propaganda purposes. The USSR itself would have sent at least three mechanized divisions from its member republics of the Central Asia. The North Korean government did not believe the USSR would approve such a plan unless there was an all-out United Nations offensive. However, the North Korean government planned to request the USSR send an advance party of Mongolian troops and a staff to the North Korean-Chinese Communist operations headquarters.<sup>82</sup>

The Information report from 13 February 1953 analyses the strength of the Mongolian People's Republic Army and possibilities for sending its troops to the Korean Front: "In September and October 1952 articles appearing in the Hong Kong and Japanese press reported that the MPR had agreed to send five divisions to the Korean front. Estimates of the total strength of the MPR army varied from 120,000 to 200,000. These figures are high in proportion to the total population of one million.<sup>83</sup> The population of the MPR in 1950 according to Mongolian statistical data was 758.0 thousand."<sup>84</sup>

As noted in the CIA's information piece of 13 June 1951, military forces of the PRC's Inner Mongolian cavalry and Outer Mongolian armed forces were present on the Korean peninsula. The Mongols from both groups get on well together, but much less well with members of non-Mongolian military forces. On the other hand the Mongolian military strictly followed the advice of their Soviet instructors. It pointed out that between 5,000 to 10,000 Mongolian troops were based on the Korean peninsula.<sup>85</sup> According to French intelligence documents copied from Chinese archives in Shanghai, those referenced by A. Stolypine,<sup>86</sup> advisors of the Mongolian people's army were working in the North Korean army, and though the Mongolians had drawn up a plan to push forward to Busan, since the entry into the war of Chinese volunteers they returned to Mongolia.<sup>87</sup> The source used by A. Stolypine is the same as the unevaluated information of the CIA.

The talks on the Korean War armistice started in July 1951, lasted for 2 years and ended with the signing of the armistice agreement in July 1953 in Panmunjom. It is possible that Kim Il Sung made various proposals to Chinese and Soviet sides as how to quickly end the Korean War on favorable conditions for the North Korean side. One of such proposal could have been to use a specific number of Mongolian and Soviet Central Asian troops that would serve as pressure on the United States to quickly end the war. It is believed that to that end a delegation headed by Ho Kai visited Ulaanbaatar and Moscow in

December 1952. It is no doubt that the final decision would have been taken by Moscow. Since Moscow at that time was closely following the events not only in Asia but also in Europe, it is possible that it did not support that proposal since it did not want to aggravate further the Korean War in case it led to a wider world war.<sup>88</sup>

According to Mongolian archival documents Mongolia did not send troops in the Korean War, but also did not send troops to the USSR during the World War II. The majority of information from the CIA regarding Mongolia during the Korean War is not entirely reliable. The CIA's information could well have derived from propaganda information broadcast by Pyongyang radio, deliberately delivered intelligence disinformation, and also disinformation from Taipei. Some CIA commentary made on their own reports about Mongolian military information also confirm the inappropriateness of information they collected. In the documents of Mongolian Central Archives of Foreign Affairs no evidence has been found attesting to the participation of the MPR horse cavalry. Instead according to Li Narangoa, only Inner Mongolian horse cavalry joined the Chinese military division.<sup>89</sup>

## The Positions of the United States and China's Republic Regarding the Role of Mongolia in the Korean War and Membership of Mongolia at the UN

Since Communist China's entry into Korean War Chiang Kai-shek had fully supported the United States led United Nations military actions. Thus its representative in the UN Security Council, not only continuously provoked disputes, raising the issue at Council and saying that even troops of Outer Mongolia, that had been forcefully detached from Chinese territory, have been sent to North Korea, deliberately falsifying the facts and events. At that time the United States was witnessing strong anti-communist campaigns, including McCarthy's suggesting that China had been lost to the communists.

On bilateral basis it is evident that due to the Baitag Bogd clashes<sup>90</sup> in 1946–49 the MPR and the Republic of China were not able to exchange ambassadors. In October 1949 MPR cancelled its diplomatic relations with the Republic of China (Kuomintang of China or Taiwan) and established diplomatic relations with the PRC. In 24 February 1953 the Chinese Nationalist government (ROC) abrogated the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed on 14 August in 1945 with the Soviet Union. That treaty had a provision that the government of the Republic of China recognized the MPR. Thus deputy Permanent Representative

of the Republic of China to the United Nations Tsiang Jiang Tinfu (蔣廷黻) has pointed out that Outer Mongolia was an artificial state created by the USSR so that it could dominate China and Korea, and that Outer Mongolia's troops were involved in the Korean War.<sup>91</sup>

At the beginning of 1960s, when Mongolia was working to join the United Nations and establish diplomatic relations with the United States, Chiang Kai-shek's Republic of China tried to vigorously influence U.S. policy, asserting the following to the administration in Washington DC. That since the United States had informed the government of the Republic of China of its negotiations to establish diplomatic relations with Outer Mongolia, the government of the Republic of China believed that it needed to explain its consistent position regarding Outer Mongolia. Second Outer Mongolia was a puppet state that did not qualify to be an independent sovereign State. The independence of Outer Mongolia was just a creation of the Yalta secret agreement. Thirdly, the Pei-ta-shan incident (known in Mongolia as Baitag Bogd border incident), was but Outer Mongolian troops' aggressive incursions into Xinjiang on the instructions from the Soviets. Fourth when the Korean War started Mongolia was an aggressor that sent its troops, assisted communist Korea and was hostile to the United Nations. Fifth All these demonstrated that Outer Mongolia was not only not an independent state, but in fact was an instrument of Soviet foreign aggression. And finally the Republic of China sincerely wished that the US government would realize the dangerous nature of the issue and would be mindful of the consequences of such a policy.

It was also an interesting diplomatic occasion amongst the various controversies between the major powers during the Cold War that the membership issue of both MPR and South Korea at the UN arose at the same moment, and were both declined at the same moment. In the 1955 Fall session of General Assembly of United Nations Security Council, where the Council discussed the Canada's proposal on membership for 18 countries including MPR and Japan in the UN driven by and according to the principle of universalism. That time the Republic of China, permanent member of Security Council, had proposed to admit 11 states out of 18 and also add South Korea and South Vietnam. Thus the Soviet Union not recognizing South Korea and South Vietnam, opposed the proposal of the Republic of China of two states for membership using its veto and vice versa Republic of China also used its veto on Mongolia and Japan.<sup>92</sup>

Between 1946 and 1961, the MPR submitted membership requests four times and was discussed thirteen times at the UN. The second request, signed by Prime Minister Marshal Kh. Choibalsan, was sent on 25 October 1948 and was discussed on the following dates: 16 June 1949, 19 December 1951, 1 February 1952,

5 September 1952, November 1954 and in the autumn of 1955. The third request, signed by Yu. Tsendenbal, Prime Minister, was sent to Dag Carl Hammarskjold, the UN Secretary General. It reached the recipient on 14 September 1956 and was discussed at the UN on 12 December 1956. The last request of 1 September 1957, signed by the Mongolian Foreign Minister S. Avarzed, was discussed at the UN on 9 September 1957. Mongolia's membership requests were continuously postponed mainly because of the Chinese Kuomintang, the USA and the USSR ideological oppositions.<sup>93</sup>

Mongolian scholar Dr. R. Bold making use of the U.S. archival materials has written how the United States and the Chiang Kai Shek's Republic of China coordinated their activities regarding Mongolia's membership in the United Nations. He wrote:

Vetoing Mongolia's United Nations membership would be seen as going against those that would be supportive of Mongolia's membership and that the Republic of China's interests at the United Nations would be severely affected". According to the researcher, there was an agreement that the U.S. would not vote in favor of Mongolia's membership, and the Republic of China would make a statement in support of this. President J. Kennedy would provide reassurance by diplomatic channels to Chiang Kai-shek that the U.S. would veto Communist China's UN membership in return for which the Republic of China would not veto Mongolia's membership.<sup>94</sup>

On 27 October 1961 at the XVI session of the United Nations General Assembly at its 1043-rd meeting 23 states co-sponsored a resolution to admit the MPR as its member and a decision to that effect was taken without a vote. Thus Mongolia's many years of efforts to acquire UN membership ended successfully and it became the United Nation's 101st member.

## Conclusion

The goal of this article has been to give a comprehensive picture of why, how and how far MPR participated in the Korean War, to emphasize the consequences which impacted on the MPR itself, to make some clarifications as to the veracity of newly opened CIA archival documents regarding Mongolia and to make some contributions to research of Korean War history.

The leader of Mongolia, Kh. Choibalsan, his closest comrades and Mongolian people stood firmly on the side of the DPRK and gave a moral and humanitarian aid as much as possible, but did not send any troops to the Korean War. In the speech of Kim Il Sung in Ulaanbaatar in July 1956, in the speech of Yu. Tsendenbal in Pyongyang in October/November 1956, and also in all Mongolian archival

documents related to assistance to North Korea, we find no evidence of troops having been sent from the MPR into the Korean War. Given the fact that the MPR did not send troops even in hardest times of World War II to its own closest ally, the Soviet Red Army, perhaps this should not be surprising. But according to Yalta agreement, the MPR had declared war on 10 August 1945 against militarist Japan, and over 21,000 soldiers of the Mongolian People's Army participated in fighting for the liberation of Inner Mongolia, in Northeast China from 10 August to 21 August.<sup>95</sup> During World War II, the Mongolian government and people had presented around a half million horses to the Soviet Red Army, and sold them 30,000 horses.<sup>96</sup> Therefore the Soviets might have advised on equine matters to Mongolians and Kim Il Sung. Ultimately the MPR was not a military ally with North Korea, operating instead in the framework of the world communist system during Cold War providing firstly, fraternal friendship relations, and secondly, humanitarian aid to North Korea during the war.

The newly released U.S. CIA information reports, already to some extent known before, were produced from sources based derived through military and diplomatic channels, but they also seem to consist of information from Taiwan and propaganda information from North Korea. North Korea spread disinformation deliberately on radio and through intelligence channels such as receiving enormous material and troops assistance from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and the CIA documents seem to bear this out.

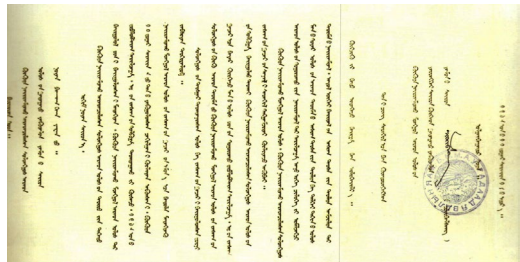
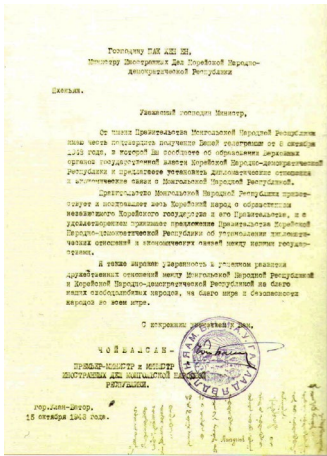
As for what these perceptions did for Mongolia's international standing, this is a more complicated matter. Representatives of the Republic of China delayed and obstructed the issue of membership of Mongolia in the UN, saying from the UN stage that "Soviet satellite the MPR has assisted materially and sent troops to aggressor communist North Korea, which fights against US-led UN unified military force. Therefore the territory named as the MPR which was taken away with Stalin's help from China, is not honored to enter into the UN as a member." Though the postponing of membership of the MPR in the UN was of course connected with the Korean War, it is certain that the factors like the Cold War arising from relations between the Soviet and US, the cancellation of diplomatic ties with Republic of China, then a permanent member of Security Council of UN, in 16 October 1949 and the establishment of diplomatic ties with communist mainland China also affected it.<sup>97</sup>

The Korean War is estimated to have become the origin of controversies between the Soviet Union and the PRC, and Mongolian documents also shed light here. Overall, communist China's involvement in the Korean War rescued North Korea's communist regime, but it did not fully break down the US-led UN forces. This political map of Korea remained unchanged at the end of the Korean

War, which led to a further stage of the Cold War in Asia. Until the beginning of 1970s the PRC could not be recognized by the U.S. and Western powers nor enter the UN as a member. On the other hand, however the Korean War turned out to profit for the Republic of China. Before this war the USA has decidedly refused to participate in a clash between the ROC and mainland China in any form, and terminated its assistance to the ROC. But in the post war period the USA concerned to keep its influence in the region started to encourage the ROC leaders in all forms. In this matter the USA sent its troops, and rescued Chiang Kai-shek's China from obvious defeat.<sup>98</sup> Mongolia's role in these larger conflicts was not central, but the individual diplomats and the information gleaned from Chinese and North Korean interactions with Mongolian counterparts during the Korean War and the Cold War remains useful today.

After the opportunity for UN membership was given to Mongolia it could not be fully used, as during the Cold War the United Nations rostrum became an arena of sharp ideological struggle of the two opposing social systems in which Mongolia was involuntarily involved. Specifically, based on the decision of the MPRP's XVI Congress held in June 1961 to the effect that the Mongolian people consistently sided with and would continue to support the just struggle of the brotherly Korean people to rid South Korea without delay of American troops and to unite its motherland by peaceful and democratic means, on 7 December 1961 the MPR's delegation at the XVI session of the General Assembly has introduced, reflecting the DPRK's national interests, a draft resolution demanding the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from South Korea. This was Mongolia's first draft resolution after it's the United Nations membership. However, since at that time the United States introduced another draft resolution on the same subject which stated that any such action would not be effective when the Korean issue is considered in the absence of Korean representatives, the Mongolian draft was not approved.<sup>99</sup>

# Appendix: Photos and Map



Diplomatic Notes of Kh. Choibalsan, Prime and Foreign Minister of the MPR sent to the Pak Hon-ying, Foreign Minister of the DPRK Oct. 15, 1948 (Russian and Mongolian national script) Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond 3



Ambassador J. Sambuu, after presenting his Letter of the Credence to Kim Doo-bong, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly of the DPRK, August 11, 1950, Pyongyang, North Korea



First Ambassador of the DPRK Kim Yeong-jin, after presenting his Letter of the Credence to G. Bumtsend, Chairman of the Presidium of State Lower Khural (Lower House or Parliament) of the MPR. April 24, 1951, Ulaanbaatar, MPR





Foreign Minister Pak Hon-yong with Kim Il Sung. Autumn of 1948



J. Sambuu, first Ambassador of the MPR to the DPRK. Spring of 1950, Ulaanbaatar



Mongolian delegation J. Jamyan with diplomatic uniform, 1953



Kim Yeong-jin, First Ambassador of the DPRK to the MPR and G. Bumtsend, Chairman of the Presidium of State Lower Khural (Lower House or Parliament) of the MPR. April, 1951, Ulaanbaatar, MPR



Mongolian delegations with Kim Il Sung, North Korea, Autumn of 1951



General Major S. Ravdan, Second Ambassador of the MPR to the DPRK on front side of Honorable Guard. Pyongyang, 1952



Mongolian delegations in Manchurian railway station, Manzhouli 满洲里站 Northeast China, 1952



Map of Mongolia's assistance's convoys from Eastern province, Mongolia to the Manchurian train station Manzhouli 满洲里站 to be sent on to Mukden (current Shenyang railway station 沈阳站), Northeast China, Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3



Mongolian delegations in North Korea, 1952



Staff Sergeant Reckless and her primary trainer, Platoon Gunnery Sergeant Joseph Latham, March 1953, The Battle for Outpost Vegas



Kim Il Sung and Yu. Tsendenbal, July 17, 1956, at Zaisan Hill, front side of Ulaanbaatar, MPR



Kim Il Sung, Premier of Cabinet Ministers of the DPRK and J. Sambuu, Chairman, Presidium of the Supreme People's Congress of the MPR. Pyongyang, May 1961



Left: USSR Ambassador Prikhodov Yu. K. Right: Ji Yatai 吉雅泰 (1901-1968) First Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the MPR (1950-53)



Ambassador of the USSR Yu. K. Prikhodov presented his Letters of Credence to the Chairman of the Presidium of the State Lower Khural (Lower House or Parliament) of the MPR. Left from G. Bumtsend, Marshal Kh. Choibalsan, Yu. Prikhodov, Foreign Minister N. Lkhamsuren

## Notes

1. Professor Ulambayar is Dean, School of International Relations and Social Studies, University of the Humanities, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.
2. Kathryn Weathersby, "New Russian Documents on the Korean War," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC: Issues 6–7, Winter 1995–1996, 30–40, 42–84. \*Orlov A. S., Gavrilov B. A., *Secrets of the Korean War* (Moscow: 2003) (in Russian); Lavrenev S. Ya. and Bogdanov V. N., *Korea in the Fires of War* (Moscow: 2005) (in Russian); Torkunov A. V., *Mystery of War: Korean Conflict 1950–1953* (Moscow: 2000) (in Russian).
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5. Sandag Sh., "Foreign Policy of the MPR (1921–1976)," Sc.D. Dissertation, Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Academy of Sciences, USSR (Moscow, 1978) (in Russian).
6. Sukhee J. "Historical Road of the DPRK-40 Years," *Issues of Oriental Studies Journal*, Institute of Oriental Studies, Academy of Sciences, MPR. 1988 №2 (19), 25–35 (in Mongolian).
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9. Ulambayar. D., "Mongolia and DPRK Relations: Past and Present," *Journal for Strategic Studies*, Institute for Strategic Studies, National Security Council. 2001, № 1–2, 62–81 (in Mongolian); Ulambayar D. "Russian Top Secret Documents on Korean War". *Journal of International Studies*. Institute of International Studies. Academy of Sciences, Mongolia. 2010, № 1–2, 120–144 (in Mongolian); Ulambayar D. "Korean War and the MPR's Attempt to Join the UN" Research Paper. Joint Academic Conference: "38th Parallel of Korean Peninsula Will Become a Peace Zone," April 11, 2015 School of International Relations and Public Administration, National University of Mongolia and Mongolian-Japan Journalist Association (in Mongolian).
10. Batbayar Ts. "Some Issues of Mongolia and North Korean Relations During the Korean War" Research Paper. Joint Academic Conference: "38th Parallel of Korean Peninsula Will Become Peace Zone". April 11, 2015, School of Int'l Relations and Public Administration, National University of Mongolia and Mongolian-Japan Journalist Association (in Mongolian).
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13. Balázs Szalontai. "Small-Power Diplomacy in Northeast Asia: Mongolian-North Korean Relations During the Cold War", 1948–1989 *North Korean Review*, 12, 2 (2016), 45–63.
14. Sergey Radchenko. "New Documents on Mongolia and the Cold War"-Cold War International History Project Bulletin, Inside China's Cold War. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Issue 16 Fall 007/Winter 2008.

15. Li Narangoa, "From One Divided Country to Another: The Korean War in Mongolia," in *The Korean War: An International History*, ed. Tessa Morris-Suzuki (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018).
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17. Our Sir, Closer and Greater Kim Il Sung. J. Sambuu Foundation. The Collected Memoirs. Ulaanbaatar, 2008 (in Mongolian).
18. Charles K. Armstrong, "The Destruction and Reconstruction of North Korea, 1950–1960," *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* Volume 7/Issue 0, March 16, 2009, 3–4. The MPR supplied 0.4% of all the international aid to North Korea during the Korean War, according to Armstrong.
19. Pak Hon-yong (1900–1955) politician, was born to a *yangban* family. In 1919, he graduated from Kyunggi high school. In March 1919, he was involved in the March 1st Movement and later independence movements. In 1921, he joined the Shanghai branch of the Communist Party of Korea. In January 1922, he participated in the Comintern Far East People's Congress in Moscow. He was released in the 1920s and became active as a reporter for the newspapers *Dong-A Ilbo* and *Chosun Ilbo*. On April 1925, Pak Hon-yong became one of the founders of the Communist Party of Korea. In the USSR, he was educated in KUTV (Communist University of the Toilers of the East). In December 1946, he organized the Workers' Party of South Korea, and become its first secretary. Pak Hon-yong become secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea when the North and South parties united in April 1950. Pak was the vice Chairman of the Politburo of the DPRK from 1949 to 1953. He was Foreign Minister of the DPRK until he was ousted and arrested on 3 August 1953. On 15 December 1955, he was sentenced to death for espionage.
20. "Kh. Choibalsan's Response to Pak Hon-yong's telegram", "Unen" (The Truth) Daily Newspaper, Central Committee, MPRP. 1948.10.17. Sunday, №244 (4014), Documents of the MPRs' Foreign Relations (1921–1961) MFA, Volume I, Ulaanbaatar, 1964, 10 (in Mongolian).
21. *Ibid.*
22. Chu Yong-ha 주영하 (1908–?) First Ambassador of the DPRK to the USSR.
23. Meeting notes of Ambassador N. Yadamjav with Ambassador ChuYong-ha: 10 May 1950, 26 May 1950. Proposals of DPRK to Mongolia. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 9.
24. DPRK diplomatic ties with USSR 12 Oct. 1948; Mongolia 15 Oct. 1948; Poland 16 Oct. 1948; Czechoslovakia? Oct. 1948; Romania 26 Oct. 1948; Yugoslavia 30 Oct. 1948; Hungary 11 Nov. 1948; Albania 29 Nov. 1948; Bulgaria 29 Nov. 1948; China 6 Oct. 1949; East Germany 1 Nov. 1949; North Vietnam 31 Jan. 1950.
25. Sambuu J. (1895–1972) 1937–46: Ambassador of the MPR to the USSR; 1946–50: Head of Far Eastern division, MFA; 1950–51: First Ambassador of the MPR to the DPRK; 1951–54: Vice Director of Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 1954–72: Member of Politburo of Central Committee of the MPRP, Chairman of the Presidium for the Supreme People's Congress of the MPR.
26. J. Sambuu presented his LC, 11 August 1950. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 9.
27. Ravdan S. (1907–1972) Colonel General, ambassador. He studied in Leningrad Oriental Institute, Moscow Military Academy. 1943–1950: Deputy and Head of Political Department of the Mongolian People's Army. 1950–1952: Minister-Counsellor at the Mongolian Embassy in Moscow, 1952–1955: MPR's Ambassador to the DPRK, 1956–1959 MPR's Ambassador to the Czechoslovakia, non-resident ambassador to Bulgaria, Albania and Romania. 1960–1970: Deputy Minister of Defense. 1943: Brigadier General, 1944: Major General, 1967: Lieutenant General, 1971: Colonel General.

28. The names of North Korean diplomats are written in archives only in Mongolian spelling.
29. Ji Yatai (吉雅泰1901–68) was a Chinese diplomat. He was the First Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the MPR (July 1950–July 53). Educated in KUTV, Moscow, USSR.
30. Kim Yeong-jin presented his LC, 24 April 1951, Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 9.
31. Prikhodov, Yuri Kandratievich (1906–89) Soviet Union's diplomat, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. 1940–46: Minister-Counsellor at Soviet Mission in the MPR; 1947–48: Head of East Asian Department, MFA, USSR; Since 27 September 1948 to 28 March 1950 Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the USSR to the MPR, Adviser to the Central Committee of the MPRP; Since 28 March 1950 to 14 November 1951 USSR Ambassador to the MPR.
32. Notes of Meeting of the Politburo of the CC, MPRP, 25 June 1950. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 10–11.
33. Yadamjav N. (1908–?) Mongolian diplomat, 1941–44: Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the MPR to the People's Republic of Tannu-Tuva; 1946–53: Ambassador of the MPR to the USSR (since 1951 non-resident Ambassador to the East Germany, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary); 1953–56: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; 1956–59: Ambassador of the MPR to the DPRK; since 1959 Chancery in MFA.
34. Notes of Meeting of the Politburo of the CC, MPRP, 25 June 1950. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Fond 3, File 10–12.
35. Choibalsan Kh. (1895–1952) Politician, Marshal of the MPR, 1930–31: Minister of Foreign affairs; Since 1936 Chief to General Agency of Internal Affairs, Deputy and First Deputy of Prime Minister, Minister of Military Affairs; 1939–52: Prime Minister of MPR, Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister of Defense; 1939–50: Minister of Foreign Affairs; 1952 died of illness in Moscow.
36. Choibalsan's telegram to Kim Il Sung. 12 July 1950. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 12.
37. Lamjav B. (1920–1995?) Politician. Educated in Party Institute under the MPRP in Ulaanbaatar and Communist Party Institute under the CPSU in Moscow. 1942–1962: Deputy Prime Minister; 1963–1986: Head of Cadres Department (at the present: Dept. of Human Resources or Staff Dept.) of the Central Committee of the MPRP, 1986–1990: Chairman of the Central Control Commission of the Central Committee of the MPRP, 1986–1990: Alternate and full member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the MPRP.
38. Lkhamsuren B. (1923–2016) 1942–1947: Diploma Degree in Physics from National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar; 1954–1958: He received his Ph.D. Diploma from Diplomatic Academy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow, USSR; 1972–1975: He received his Sc.D. Diploma from Institute of the Marxism-Leninism Institute under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union; 1959: Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, academician, member of Academy of Sciences of the MPR; 1947–1950: Counselor to the CC MPRP, 1950–1952: Secretary General to Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 1952–1954: Adviser to Prime Minister of the MPR; 1958–1959: Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs; 1962–1972: Alternate Member of Politburo, Central Committee, MPRP; Secretary of International Affairs at Central Committee of the MPRP; 1975–1981, 1984–1988: Representative of the MPRP at the International Journalistic Department in "Problems of Peace and Socialism" in Prague, Czechoslovakia; 1981–1984: Alternate Member of Politburo, Central Committee, MPRP, Director of Institute of Social Sciences under the Central Committee, MPRP; 1988–1990: Adviser to Secretary General, Central Committee of the MPRP; 1990–2000: Counselor to Institute for International Studies, Academy of Sciences, Mongolia.

39. The U.S. dropped a total of 635,000 tons of bombs, including 32,557 tons of napalm, on Korea, more than during the whole Pacific campaign of WWII.
40. Documents of the Special Commission for Assurances to Korean People. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 221, 4–10.
41. *Ibid.*
42. J. Sambuu's report. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 7.
43. *Ibid.*
44. Surenjav Ch. (1914–91) Since 1940 Rector of Institute of Party under the CC, MPRP; Head of Department of the Central Committee, MPRP, First Deputy Prime Minister of MPR, Member of Politburo of the CC, MPRP, Second Secretary of the CC, MPRP, Chairman of the Supreme People's Congress.
45. Jamyan J. (1916–2007) 1948–53: Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, 1953–56: Head of Eastern Department, MFA; 1957–59: Deputy Minister of Justice.
46. Lkhamsuren B. XVI Sixty Years (Memoirs). Ulaanbaatar, 2003, 9 (in Mongolian).
47. Lkhamsuren B. "A Brief History of the Mongolian People's Republic's Foreign Relations (1921–57)". *Journal of Modern Mongolia*, 1957, № 5–6, 65–66 (in Russian).
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49. Unsuitability of Mongolian Horses for use in North Korea. 22 My 1953; 2008/11/20 CIA-RDP80-00810A001200670006-9.
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52. "60 Years of Relations Between Mongolia and the DPRK". The Collected Documents. Edited by Amb. J. Lombo. Pyongyang: 2007 (in Korean and Mongolian), 195–196.
53. *Ibid.* 197–198.
54. Andrew Geer, *Reckless, Pride of the Marines* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co, 1955), 9. Andrew Geer was also a Hollywood screenwriter who in 1951 had commercial success in eulogizing the US B-29 bombing of Japan via writing the story for the film "The Wild Blue Yonder."
55. Lkhamsuren N. (1917–92) Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, 1946–51: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. 1950–54: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. 1954–56: Secretary of the Central Committee, MPRP.
56. Tsedenbal Yu. (1916–91) Politician, the Marshal of the MRP, 1940–84: Secretary General of the Central Committee, MPRP; 1974–84: Chairman for the Presidium of the Supreme People's Congress of the MPR; 1946–52: Deputy Prime Minister; 1952–74: Prime Minister; 1940–84: Member of Politburo Central Committee, MPRP; In 1984 has lost all power as of result of Kremlin conspiracy and died in Moscow in 1991.
57. Ch. Surenjav's report. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 26.
58. *Ibid.*
59. D. Sukhbaatar—the founder of Mongolia's national democratic revolution of 1921.
60. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 26, 98–106.
61. Ch. Surenjav's report. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 26, 106–123.

62. An Account report of Special Commission. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 221.
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64. History of Currency for Dollar to Russia: Scheme Currencies all time since 1792. 22 May 2015 <http://www.vsedela.ru/index.php?topic=3058.0> (in Russian).
65. Source: Datum before 1990—According to System of National Economy Balance. Basic Macroeconomic Indicators. National Statistical Office of Mongolia.
66. An Account report of Special Commission. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 221. Ulambayar D. “Mongolia and the DPRK Relations: Past and Present”, *Journal for Strategic Studies*. Institute for Strategic Studies, National Security Council. 2001, № 1–2, 62–81.
67. Kim Il Sung's telegram to Mongolian Government. 10 January 1953. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 221.
68. Report of Special Commission. Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 221, p. 125.
69. “Joint Statement on the Negotiations between Government of the MPR and Government of the DPRK”—60 Years of Relations Between Mongolia and the DPRK, Collected Documents. Pyongyang. 2007 (in Korean and Mongolian), “Unen” (The Truth) Daily Newspaper of the Central Committee, MPRP. 1956.07.20, “Rodong Sinmun” July 20, 1956 (in Korean).
70. New Evidence on the Korea War. New Russian Documents on the Korean War. Introduction and Translations by Kathryn Weathersby, 34–35, Cold War International History Project. Bulletin. Issues 6–7 WWICS, Washington, DC. Winter 1995/1996: Ulambayar D. “Russian Top Secret Documents on Korean War”. *Journal of International Studies*. Institute of International Studies. Academy of Sciences, Mongolia. 2010, № 1–2, 120–44 (in Mongolian).
71. Namsrai Ts. (1918–90) At that time, he served as a Vice-Director of Institute for History of Party under the Central Committee of the MPRP. 1962–63: Secretary General to MFA; 1964–84: General Chief of “Unen” daily newspaper under the Central Committee, MPRP; 1984–85: Ambassador of the MRP to the German Democratic Republic (GDR).
72. Purevjal T. (1923–91?) 1951–52: Assistant to Secretary General of MFA; 1952–53: Secretary General and Head of Law Department of MFA; 1953–54: First Secretary at the Embassy of the MPR to the People's Republic of China, Beijing; 1955–56: Head of the Eastern Department of MFA; 1957–63: Head of International Organization's Department, Head of European Department of MFA; 1963–65: Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the MRP to the Republic of Guinea, Conakry, Central Africa; 1965–66: Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of MRP to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Algiers.
73. Ts. Namsrai, T. Purevjal's report, Central Archives of Foreign Affairs. Mongolia. Fond. 3 File 46.
74. Yu. Tsedenbal's telegram to Kim Il Sung, 28 July 1953. Documents of Mongolia's Foreign Relations (1921–1961) Volume I, Ulaanbaatar, 1964, 120 (in Mongolian).
75. Jim Hershberg. Associate prof. of History & Int'l Affairs, George Washington University, Yvette Chin. George Washington University, Malcolm Byrne. Director of Research, National Security Archives, Christian Ostermann. Director, Cold War International History Project.
76. CIA Information reports dated 13 June 1951, 19 July 1951, 19 December 1951, 8 September 1952, 21 September 1952, 8 October 1952, 6 December 1952, 21 December 1952, 2 reports from 13 February 1953, 17 February 1953, 22 Mai 1953, 23 October 1953 and 1 report with unknown date: “Outer Mongolian Participation in the Sino-Soviet Conference in Moscow and the Peace Conference in Peiping.”



77. "Movement of Chinese Communist Troops into Korea and Evacuation of Soviet, Polish, and Czech Troops from Korea," December 19, 1951, CIA-RDP82-00457R009700370008-1.
78. "Foreign Aid to North Korea" 21 September 1952. CIA-RDP82-00457R013900230007-0.
79. "Korea: Proposed Plan for the Use of Mongol Troops in Korea", 13 February 1953, CIA-RDP80-00810A000200460013-5.
80. Ho Kai (허가이許哥而, Russian name is Alexei Ivanovich Hegai 1908–53). Born in Khabarovsk. He became member of All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) in 1930. Became Secretary of the Far East All-Union Leninist Young Communist League (Komsomol) in 1932. In 1934 enrolled the All-Russian Agricultural University named Ya. M. Sverdlov. In 1937 was exiled to the Central Asia in connected with the "people's enemy" affair. In 1939 his All-Russian Communist Party membership was revived. In 1941–45 he was working at Tashkent party branch. In the fall of 1945 he participated in liberating the northern part of the Korean peninsula by the Red Army and entering Pyongyang. He played an important role in reconstructing the Korean Communist party. Since August 1946 became full member of the Politburo of the Korean Workers' Party, First deputy of the Central Committee and headed the Central Auditing Commission of the party. After 1949 he became First secretary of the party's Central Committee (Kim Il Sung was at that time Chairman of the Korean Workers' Party). Though it is believed that on 2 July 1953 he shot himself, however since he was the most dangerous rival of Kim Il Sung there is a version that he might have been eliminated on the orders of Kim Il Sung.
81. Mongolia and the Cold War. International Workshop, March 2004, Ulaanbaatar, Documents from the American Archives, CIA Documents, Part 2, Intelligence Report, "Korea: Proposed Plan for the Use of Mongol Troops in Korea", 13 February 1953 CIA-RDP80-00810A000200460013-5: Batbayar Ts. "Some Issues of Mongolia and the North Korean Relations During the Korean War" Research Paper. Joint Academic Conference: "38th Parallel of Korean Peninsula Will Become Peace Zone". April 11, 2015 School of Int'l Relations and Public Administration, National University of Mongolia and Mongolian-Japan Journalist Association (in Mongolian).
82. "Korea: Proposed Plan for the Use of Mongol Troops in Korea", 13 February 1953, CIA-RDP80-00810A000200460013-5.
83. Ibid.
84. <http://www.1212.mn/>, Mongolian statistical Information Service.
85. "Mongolian Troops in Manchuria and Korea", 13 June 1951, CIA-RDP82-00457R007900630001-9.
86. Stolypine, Arcady, Journalist at France Press Information Agency in Shanghai in 1950–55. Son of Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin, Premier of the Russian Empire in 1906–1911.
87. Stolypine, Arcady, *La Mongolie entre Moscou et Peking*. Paris., 1971 (translated and published in 2000 in Mongolian), 81–85.
88. "Korea: Proposed Plan for the Use of Mongol Troops in Korea", 13 February 1953, CIA-RDP80-00810A000200460013-5.
89. Li Narangoa, "From One Divided Country to Another: The Korean War in Mongolia," in *The Korean War: An International History*, ed. Tessa Morris-Suzuki (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018).
90. Battle of Baitag Bogd Mountain or The Beitashan Incident 北塔山事件; *Pei-ta-shan shih-chien*;) was between June 1947 and July 1949 a border conflict between Republic of China, Mongolia, and the Soviet Union, such Xinjiang and Mongolia Western province Khovd aimak. The MPR became involved in a border dispute with the Republic of China, as a Chinese Muslim Hui cavalry regiment was sent by the nationalist Chinese government to attack Mongol and Soviet positions.
91. UN and Mongolia. Documents from the UN and Government archives. Ulaanbaatar, 2008, 72–73.

92. UN and Mongolia. Documents from the UN and Government archives. Ulaanbaatar, 2008: D. Ulambayar. "Establishment of Mongolia's Diplomatic Ties with the Republic of Korea and the Position of the DPRK"—Mongolian Journal of Korean Studies. No. 1, 2016, Embassy of the ROK, Institute of International Affairs, Academy of Sciences, Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, 82–112 (in Mongolian).
93. UN and Mongolia. Documents from the UN and Government archives. UB, 2008: Ulambayar D. "The Mongolian People's Republic's Attempt to Join the United Nations and the Position adopted by the United Kingdom". *Trans-Continental Neighbours: A History of Mongolia-UK Relations*. Volumes II. Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit, Cambridge. 2014, 47.
94. Bold R. *Mongolia's Independence and the USA (1910–1973)*. Ulaanbaatar, 2008, 264–269 (in Mongolian).
95. *MPR Battled with Japanese Kwantung Army during the WWII*. Ulaanbaatar, 1989, 135–148 (in Mongolian).
96. *The History of Mongolian Military (1911–1990s)*. Institute of Military History Studies. Ministry of Defense. Ulaanbaatar, 1996, 367 (in Mongolian).
97. On basis of Yalta Agreement of February 1945, Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance signed on 14 August 1945 in Moscow and the results of Referendum of the MPR in 20 October 1945 was recognized the independence of the MPR by Government of Chiang Kai-shek on 5 January 1945, signed the protocol of establishing diplomatic ties between two countries in China's Chongqing on 13 February 1946 and exchanged notes thereon.
98. The Mutual defense treaty between the U.S. and the ROC was signed by John F. Dulles, Secretary of State and George K. C. Yeh, Minister of Foreign Affairs, ROC on 2 December 1954 in Washington, DC and came into force on 3 March 1955. On June 18, 1960, U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower and Republic of China's President Chiang Kai-shek met in Taipei, the only time in history that a sitting U.S. President visited the ROC.
99. A. A. Foreign Policy of the Mongolian People's Republic. IMO. Moscow: 1963, 158 (in Russian), Ligden B. Activity of the MPRP on Development of the MPRs' Foreign Relations (1945–1970). Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, 1976, 163 (in Mongolian).

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## RESEARCH NOTE

# German Studies of Koreans in Manchuria: Gustav Fochler-Hauke and the Influence of Karl Haushofer's National Socialist Geopolitics

**ADAM CATHCART** University of Leeds

**ROBERT WINSTANLEY-CHESTERS** University of Leeds

## Abstract

This article analyses scholarship and memoir writing by German geographer Gustav Fochler-Hauke with respect to Korean settlement in Manchuria, and along the Tumen and Yalu/Amnok rivers in the 1930s and early 40s. The research note demonstrates that while Fochler-Hauke's work has its value—not least due to the access he received thanks to the Japanese military government—his concepts of geopolitics and the influence of his mentor and collaborator, Karl Haushofer, renders the work flawed; its value as a historical source for scholars today is therefore limited. The research note begins with Fochler-Hauke's rising profile within German geopolitical studies and turns toward that field's documentation of Koreans in Manchuria, the role of borders between Korea and Manchuria, the blind eye turned toward Korean resistance to Japan, and the rehabilitation of some of these scholars and works after World War II.

## Introduction

Gustav Fochler-Hauke was one of the more productive German geographers active in northeast Asia in the 1930s and early 1940s. His fieldwork in, and analysis of, Manchuria and the border regions between then-Manchukuo and Japanese-occupied Korea included extensive discussion of ethnic Koreans, settlement politics around the Tumen River, and geographical exposition of the areas around Mount Paektu or Changbaishan. Although his work was flawed by a lack of Korean or Chinese fluency and reliance on questionable conceptual frameworks, the fieldwork and the writing of Gustav Fochler-Hauke both before and after World War II allows contemporary readers with opportunities for greater engagement and a slightly new perspective on Koreans in Manchuria and the border region. Critical revisiting of analysis by Fochler-Hauke and his associates working on northeast Asia can also feed into growing areas of study today, spanning from the transnational history of German-Korean relations, to the relationship between German geographers and fascist Japan and its colonies in the Second World War era, to the influence of Karl Haushofer on the study of geography both of and within East Asia, including Korea.<sup>1</sup>

Fochler-Hauke's work on Japanese colonialism in Manchuria and his interface with the Koreans grew out of three separate trips to the region. The first trip took place in 1927–28, and was undertaken when he was about 20 years old, and thus prior to his formal doctoral studies. Having been orphaned at a young age, Fochler-Hauke had been working as a bookseller in his teenage years and undertook his journey to Asia without much by way of financial backing. His first trip to Manchuria was largely confined to the Liaodong peninsula; he did not move into Sinuiju or Andong, much less navigate into the Korean-populated areas of Kando/Jiandao. Instead, he busied himself with making money in a textile factory in Mukden (present-day Shenyang), working on a foreign language which would allow him to communicate with the floating population of White Russians that so captivated him in the city that cold winter.<sup>2</sup>

Fochler-Hauke's first sustained engagement with Korean issues and Koreans in Manchuria came in 1932–33, as part of his second trip around Manchuria. This journey was far more extensive, and this was because it had been arranged at least in part by his new mentor, Dr. Karl Haushofer in Munich.<sup>3</sup> This journey was a significant one for Fochler-Hauke's research plans, but it did not result in great notoriety for the scholar or outputs about Koreans, and it seems that most of 1933 and 1934 were taken up with completing his Ph.D.<sup>4</sup> He spent much of 1935 on a research trip around Manchukuo which went well beyond the well-known urban trunk of the region and got into all the peripheral corners of

the new puppet state, collecting data for what would be his magnum opus, a huge prize winning book on Manchuria.<sup>5</sup> After some further travel in northern China in 1936, Fochler-Hauke returned to Germany and quickly became prominent, publishing multiple journalistic and fieldwork reports on his travels in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* and other journals, all in 1936.<sup>6</sup> He also completed a short book on the geopolitics of East Asia which was revised and republished three times during World War II, cementing himself amid a public debate over German policy toward East Asia that was constantly shifting.<sup>7</sup> In 1937, he became still more prominent by co-editing a popular book on global current affairs with the already-famous doyen of German geopolitics, Karl Haushofer, a book which concluded with an orgy of photos and propaganda praising Hitler and the ability of the German people to thrive under fascist conditions. Fochler-Hauke also turned his Asian expertise on colonization and border areas toward a volume on ethnic Germans in border regions with Czechoslovakia, a work which clearly had Haushofer's imprint on it.<sup>8</sup>

In 1938, as war swept across East Asia and Korea and Manchuria were mobilised in support of the Japanese war effort, Fochler-Hauke busied himself with bureaucratic moves in Germany, joining the Nazi Party in December of that year and continuing to consolidate his position as the General Secretary of the German Academy, a post which he had begun the prior year.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, his publication output dipped significantly, managing only short articles in the period from 1939–1941 on Japanese colonial policy and state-building in Manchukuo, respectively, while still preparing his major monograph on Manchuria.<sup>10</sup>

Like his more Korea-focused counterpart Hermann Lautensach, Gustav Fochler-Hauke both benefited and was misled by Japanese rule over the region he studied.<sup>11</sup> As Owen Lattimore argued in his review of Fochler-Hauke's 1941 book, *Die Mandschurei*, during the period prior to and during the Second World War, German scholars benefited extensively from access to areas of Japanese control in Korea and Manchuria.<sup>12</sup> However, access itself did not lead to outstanding prognostications and these scholars were uniformly wrong in foreseeing no end to Japanese dominance. As Keith Howard assessed in his overview of Lautensach's geography of Korea, German scholars active in northeast Asia during the height of Japanese colonial control were misled by their hosts into 'seeing a welcome and increasing assimilation likely to lead to Korea's incorporation into the Japanese nation.'<sup>13</sup> Korean resistance to Japanese colonial rule was perceived by a few German observers at the time, but as a whole only a vague and generally Chinese mantle of 'banditry' was put over the whole work of opposition.<sup>14</sup> Fochler-Hauke was therefore part of a larger group of journalists and geographers who had access to Manchuria in this period and

colonial Korea, and whose work on these subjects was tied up intimately with Japanese colonial politics. Some of their work dealt intensively with Koreans, others (most in fact) did not, being overly focused on economic development, transport, mineralogical investigation rather than on areas where Koreans were prominent such as agriculture or migration. There was a tendency in the work, likely stemming from the example of Karl Haushofer, to treat Korea largely within a much longer history of Japanese engagement with the outside world, meaning that the Imjin War and Tokugawa era often received more attention than the actual annexation of Korea in 1910 or the governance of the peninsula since.<sup>15</sup> Rarely were individual Koreans given a voice in this scholarship and journalism. Nevertheless Fochler-Hauke was intensely concerned with settler politics and borders, and this reflects the influence of his mentor Karl Haushofer.

Koreans in the writings of Fochler-Hauke in the late 1930s and early 1940s appear a transitional ethnicity between Chinese industry and Japanese modernity. In his 1941 magnum opus *Die Mandschurei*, Fochler-Hauke regards them with a little curiosity, but certainly not disdain. He does not regard the Koreans engaged in the diffuse settlement project of Manchukuo as unwelcome or unexpected guests, nor as a glitch in the prospects for colonial success. Koreans demonstrated some initiative in crossing the Tumen to take advantage of new spaces brought about by Qing and Manchu weakness, the dissipating energy of the Russian Empire and the disruptive power of the Japanese.<sup>16</sup> While he is very concerned with industrial and mineralogical efforts, Fochler-Hauke considers in some detail the agricultural efforts of Koreans, particularly the dry and wet rice cultures and the declining impetus for slash and burn agriculture in more peripheral places in the territory.<sup>17</sup> Koreans appear a little old fashioned with their “mud houses” and “thatched roofs,” but certainly not in the same league as actual Manchus, who in his writing appear rich with Orientalist flavour.<sup>18</sup> While not as at the forefront of modernity as the Japanese, Koreans are on a par with the Han Chinese in the book, muscular and capable, if, on this side of the Tumen at least demonstrating a preference for white clothing.<sup>19</sup>

After the publication of his major monograph in 1941, Fochler-Hauke's outputs changed distinctively. Like other geographers of his generation, he became more involved in the general war effort. According to one short biography, he was enlisted in the Wehrmacht in 1940 and returned from captivity in 1946, severely wounded.<sup>20</sup> His other outputs make clear that he was not enlisted into Germany's effort to sustain the alliance with Tokyo, nor necessarily producing intelligence about East Asia for the Wehrmacht.<sup>21</sup> In any event, as the geographer Carl Troll demonstrated soon after the war ended, there was little debate among German scholars concerned with East Asia, and rarely would



they criticize or even cite one another's work.<sup>22</sup> So Fochler-Hauke's writings on Koreans in Manchuria were, to an extent, the standard for German scholars of that era, and they enabled him to write further about Korea as an authority even after he had concluded a period of exile in Argentina from 1948–1954 and, presumably, left the shadow of his mentor Dr. Haushofer behind.<sup>23</sup>

In 1951, Gustav Fochler-Hauke returned to the publishing scene in Germany along with his old collaborator, Kurt Vorwinkel, who had published many books during the 1930s and 40s out of Haushofer's geopolitical school. Fochler-Hauke had chosen to write reminiscences of his journeys to East Asia, and some other world travel, in the years from 1926–1933, years which had the advantage of avoiding any discussion of his early life or his period of embrace with the Nazi Party as well as scholars associated with it.<sup>24</sup> In some respects, however, this memoir was rather frank. Fochler-Hauke never backed away from his empathy for Japanese colonial settlers in Korea and Manchuria, and in both his 1951 book and his 1970 book chapter on Korea, he notes the difficulty that the end of the war caused for those settlers.<sup>25</sup>

He also described his relationship with the Japanese high command in Manchukuo, which had allowed him to get into the border areas and meet Koreans under one particularly important introduction or personal link. Relaying his conversation with a Japanese general in Xinjing (present-day Changchun), then the capital of Manchukuo in 1932, he states the following:

[The general] also did not hide the fact that especially in the remote mountain areas, the "danger from bandits" was still very great, although the number of armed "enemies of the state" of half a million in 1932 had already declined to about a tenth of its former size thanks to the "mopping up" campaign. I explained to him that I was not afraid of the irregular forces (Freischärlern), because as a neutral scientist I would only deal with research tasks, and that on the other hand interesting tasks have to be solved, especially in the borderlands on the Amur and across from Outer Mongolia. With a heavy heart, the General finally consented to help me in accordance with my wishes.

In an elegant car of the Japanese General Staff, I was led first to the Japanese Embassy, because, in truth, that is where all the power threads (Machtfäden) were gathered together. In lengthy negotiations it was necessary to explain to the responsible officials in detail the reasons for my travels, while I was quite aware that it was impossible to dispel the extraordinary mistrust of all these Japanese posts. By a hundred seemingly well-meant warnings they tried to keep me away from this or that area; again and again it was emphasized that when taking the trains or on the streets, there could be no guarantee for my safety, and again and again I pointed out emphatically that I did not expect such at all and would of course take all the risk upon myself.

Had not the General absolute confidence in his friend Karl Haushofer, one of my teachers, who had recommended me, all my efforts would have been in vain from the outset; I would have had to content myself with a visit to the generally accessible to strangers areas and have had just to do without the peripheral landscapes which are important for me (für mich wichtigen Randlandschaften).

## Fochler-Hauke on Kando

In *Die Mandschurei* Fochler-Hauke goes into great detail on the ethnic and cultural flux at play in the Manchuria he has visited. Focusing in particular on what was known as Kando (roughly equivalent to present day Yanbian area), Fochler-Hauke goes into extraordinary detail on the cultural and physical geographies of the territory. Satisfied with the displacement of the power of the Manchu themselves by Han Chinese and many others, Fochler-Hauke explores the settlement of not only Han and Koreans, but also Japanese, Russians and Muslims in the area. He traces the geospatial and agricultural development of Manchuria under colonisation as well as under new forms of rural practice, slash and burn agriculture and wet and dry rice farming. Equally he considers the impact on urban expansion and reconfiguration given the incoming of quite so many immigrants and the differing patterns of land ownership, management and development of the main ethnic groups. Although very clear on the point of historicity and the past, Fochler-Hauke does have a sense of *terra-nullis* about Manchukuo, as if the entire territorial space was up for grabs at the fall of the Qing and that intense settler activity was only right and proper for each of the incoming ethnic groups.<sup>26</sup>

Following the events of 1932 Fochler-Hauke parses the territorial disputes on Kando/Kanto and the displeasure of the Koreans at Japanese efforts to co-opt, prior to Manchukuo, the debateable lands north of the Tumen. Bringing the pages of Nianshen Song's recent important work *Making Borders in Modern East Asia* to life,<sup>27</sup> Fochler-Hauke in particular retells the deliberate and accidental confusions following Mukedeng's unfortunate 1712 effort at demarcating the boundary between Qing and Chosŏn—confusions which were useful to Japanese Imperialism's narrative some two hundred years later.<sup>28</sup> He is concerned also to give detailed accounts of the coal fields, other mining landscapes and timber extraction enterprises and the impact of railways on the whole process of colonisation, as well as on both cultural diffusion and displacement. Fochler-Hauke in *Die Mandschurei* is also intriguing in his description of ethnic difference, though without being overtly offensive or racist. There is of course

a touch of Orientalism in his imagery, but Koreans and Chinese are seen as industrious and hard working, the latter frugal and perhaps the former a little old fashioned. If anything it is the Manchu themselves that come off worst in this aspect, depicted as puffs of exotic smoke seldom glimpsed in the market, a native lady with “exotic hair ornaments” as he puts it.<sup>29</sup> As a geographer the landscape itself, as much as the geopolitics or cultural geography of colonisation, is the star, and Fochler-Hauke generally reads as awed by the mountains at Manchuria/Manchukuo’s edges, by the larches, birches, bears and tigers. As much as modernity and coloniality are embedded in this new Imperial project, the physical materiality of the area seems to challenge whatever modern project the Japanese seek to build.

This landscape would one day awe others and be deeply engrained in the political and cultural geographies of the North Korean present. The tigers and bears would become for both Korea’s cyphers for lost ecologies of historical nationalisms and nationhood—North Korea insists that they are even still present now. The larches, birches and pines would become part of the visual language of modern Korean nationalism, displayed at moments of political authority and inter-Korean engagements. Fochler-Hauke hardly seems to countenance the possibility of Koreans regaining their independence south of the Tumen/Amnok or unpicking themselves from the mix of colonial and Imperial projects and settlements found in *Die Mandchurei*. He even only briefly mentions a communist movement among Koreans in the area and does so in the past tense, but these borders would become contested once again by Koreans, not only in his time, but in the historical memory and invented traditions of Pyongyang. In this the border region, politics is activated and energised again as a space of insurrection and struggle against the forces of Capitalist modernity and Imperialism. The landscape of the area would in this conceptual reconfiguration become even more dramatic than that encountered by Fochler-Hauke. It would not only be the bears, basalt, trees and tigers he was so enamoured of, but the place of many altercations between Kim Il Sung’s guerrilla band and the institutions of both Manchukuo and Chosen (such as its border control force comprised of Koreans and Japanese). During the Korean War this border would also be the victory line in the minds of both assertive and aspirational Americans and rollbackers and anti-communist ROK forces. Dipping a toe in the Yalu would no longer be an exercise for the settler colonialist on their way to greater things in Chientao, but a physical manifestation of the defeat of the Communists. Of course this was not to be but the mines and timber enterprises of *Die Mandchurei* are still vital to North Korean developmental structures and in 1950 were vital to the US Air Forces 19th Operations Group and Far East

Bomber Command as they sought to defenestrate North Korea's industrial and military capabilities and futures.

While Fochler-Hauke's border space was at the time of writing one of the most active and activated places on the planet, a territory of un-bordering, re-bordering and all the many boundings in between, it would become frozen and quiet following the events of 1953. However Die Mandschurei's edges are it seems always active and energetic in the minds of those seeking a reconfiguration of the geopolitics in our own time. Those settler colonialists of Yanbian and what would become Yanji are equally echoed in our times by the colonising power of Chinese speculative capital and the energies which force North Koreans to cross the Tumen once more to join the new categories of settler, becoming trans-national economic migrants in South Korea and elsewhere, forming new bonds, connections and disruptions as they do so. It is unlikely that Manchuria as Fochler-Hauke would know it, will rise again from underneath its now many patterned ethnic and political quilt. Manchu as a language is confined to villages in Aihui district on the bank of the Amur river, an infinitesimally small fragment of the cultural territory once occupied by its people, the strange hair ornaments of the mysterious Manchu woman glimpsed for a moment in the marketplace crowd will not be seen again. The space which Korean Manchuria occupied, however, now known as the expansive eastern counties of Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces will always be a contested, conflicted space at the edge of geopolitics.

## Notes

1. Christian Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan: Die Rezeption seiner Geopolitischen Theorien in der Deutschen und Japanischen Politik*, Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien (Tokyo: Iudicium, 2013); Eun-jeung Lee and Hannes Mossler, *Facetten deutsch-koreanischer Beziehungen: 130 Jahre Gemeinsame Geschichte* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag, 2017).
2. Gustav Fochler-Hauke, ... *Nach Asien! Vom Abenteuer zur Wissenschaft* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vorwinckel, 1951), 146–152.
3. Popular literature and US intelligence files from the early 1940s interpreted such journeys as exercises in pure German espionage by Haushofer's students. See entries for Haushofer in Central Intelligence Agency, "OSS Note Cards," circa 1943, CIA-RDP82-00038R001000160005-0, 16–25.
4. For articles yielded from this trip, see Gustav Fochler-Hauke, "Chinesische Kolonisation und Kolonialpolitik," in *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde*, Berlin 1933, 108–122; Gustav Fochler-Hauke, "Deutschland und China" *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, Vol. 11 (1934), 275–280. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Munich, where he worked under the formal supervision of Erich Dagobert von Drygalski, the famous and rather aged polar explorer; Fochler-Hauke would later take up a teaching post at the same university from 1954 until his retirement in 1971.

5. Gustav Fochler-Hauke won the Silver Carl Ritter Medallion in 1953 for his research on Manchuria and Argentina. "Die 125-Jahrfeier der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin vol 1. Bis 3. Mai 1953," *Die Erde* 1953, 319.
6. Gustav Fochler-Hauke, "Die Mandschurei als Wirtschaftliches und Politisches Kraftfeld," *Schweizer Monatshefte: Zeitschrift für Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur*, Vol. 16 (1936–1937), 35–43. For a listing of other articles published in 1936, see Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Die Mandschurei*, 390–391.
7. Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Der Ferne Osten: Macht- und Wirtschaftskampf in Ostasien*, Macht und Erde series, Vol. 3 (Berlin: B. G. Teubner, second edition, 1938, first published in 1936, third edition in 1942). Korea and the role of Koreans in China paid almost no role in this book, 56.
8. Karl Haushofer and Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Welt in Gärung: Zeitberichte deutscher Geopolitiker* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft / Breitkopf und Härtel, 1937); Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Deutscher Volksboden und Deutsches Volkstum in der Tschechoslowakei: eine geographisch-geopolitische Zusammenschau* Heidelberg & Berlin: K. Vowinkel, 1937. Series: Bücher der Grenzlande, vol 2. Fochler-Hauke may also have had a personal interest in the subject having been born in Troppau, a German area in the Sudetenland (present-day Opava, in the eastern Czech Republic).
9. Donald H. Norton, "Karl Haushofer and the German Academy, 1925–1945," *Central European History*, Vol. 1 (1968), 92–93.
10. Gustav Fochler-Hauke, "Japanische Kolonisation und koloniale Politik," *Koloniale Rundschau*, Vol. 27, No 6 (1939), pp. 453–460; Gustav Fochler-Hauke, 'Staatsidee und Nationalitätenpolitik in Mandschutiko,' *Volksforschung*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1941).
11. In the Korean section of his 1967 monograph on 'divided nations,' Fochler-Hauke cites Lautensach as 'the best German expert on Korea' and meditates on the 'alienating effect' that Japanese rule had with respect to Koreans' own sense of themselves as a nation ('Volksbewusstsein'). Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Die geteilten Länder: Krisenherde der Weltpolitik* (Munich: Rütten and Loening Verlag, 1967), 15–16.
12. Owen Lattimore, Review of Gustav Fochler-Hauke's "Die Mandschurei: Eine Geographisch-Geopolitische Landeskunde" in *Pacific Affairs* (Summer 1948), 303–304.
13. Keith Howard, review of Herman Lautensach, *Korea: A Geography Based on the Author's Travels and Literature*, translated by Eckart and Katherine Dege (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1988), in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* Volume 55, Issue 1 (February 1992), 176.
14. One exception exists in the work of the generalist journalist and world traveller, Anton Zischka, who described the deep currents of underlying opposition to colonial rule he felt whilst in Korea, and traced some of it back to Koreans operating in Vladivostok under Soviet auspices. See Anton Zischka, *Japan in der Welt: Die Japanische Expansion seit 1854* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Goldman Verlag, December 1937), 265–266.
15. Ernst Schultze, *Japan als Weltindustriemacht*, vol. 1, 111–114; Karl Haushofer, *Japan baut sein Reich* (Berlin: Zeitgeschichte-Verlag, 1941), 53–61.
16. Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Die Mandschurei: Eine Geographisch-Geopolitische Landeskunde* (Heidelberg/Berlin: Kurt Vorwinkel, 1941).
17. *Ibid.* 193.
18. *Ibid.* 199.
19. *Ibid.* 200.
20. Josef-Walter Koenig, 'Gustav Fochler-Hauke: Geograph, Schriftsteller,' *Kulturportal West-Ost*, <https://kulturportal-west-ost.eu/biographien/fochler-hauke-gustav-3>.
21. Instead, during the German war with the Soviet Union from June 1941, he published a couple of edited volumes on German identity and editing an illustrated memoir from a German officer involved in a ski unit during the winter war with Soviet troops. The

- University of Hokkaido holds a 1944/45 Festschrift, the scholar's final output of the war years, which lauds the career of one Dr. Karl Haushofer. See Christian Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan: Die Rezeption seiner Geopolitischen Theorien in der Deutschen und Japanischen Politik*, Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien (Tokyo: Iudicium, 2013).
22. Carl Troll, "Geographic Science in Germany during the Period 1933–1945: A Critique and Justification," translated and annotated by Eric Fischer, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (June 1949), 129–130.
  23. See Gustav Fochler-Hauke, "Korea," in *Die Machtblöcke des Ostens: China, Japan, Sowjetunion, Macht und Wirtschaft zwischen Ostsee und Pazifik* (Berlin: Safari-Verlag, 1970), 147–160; Christian Spang, *Karl Haushofer und Japan: Die Rezeption seiner Geopolitischen Theorien in der Deutschen und Japanischen Politik*, Monographien aus dem Deutschen Institut für Japanstudien (Tokyo: Iudicium, 2013).
  24. Gustav Fochler-Hauke, ... *Nach Asien! Vom Abenteuer zur Wissenschaft* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vorwinckel, 1951).
  25. Fochler-Hauke, 1951, 192, 193 and 1970, 147–160. See also Ronald Suleski's extraordinary account of such a moment in "Salvaging Memories: Former Japanese Colonists in Manchuria and the Shimoina Project, 2001–2012," in *Empire and Environment in the Making of Manchuria*, ed. Norman Smith (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2017), 197–221.
  26. Fochler-Hauke was familiar with the Japanese research (Hamada Kosaku) on the Koguryo Kingdom and the Koguryo tombs in Jian. Like Haushofer, Fochler-Hauke was attuned, if sporadically, to the longer-durée.
  27. Recounted in Nianshen Song, *Making Borders in Modern East Asia: The Tumen River Demarcation, 1881–1919* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018), 1–15. and Nianshen Song. "Imagined territory: Paektusan in late Chosŏn maps and writings," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*. Vol. 37. No. 2 (2017), 157–173.
  28. Gustav Fochler-Hauke, *Die Mandschurei*, 191.
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# Book Reviews

Charlotte Horlyck, *Korean Art from the 19th Century to the Present*

**Young In Hong, Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Arts Practice, Bath Spa University**

While the appearance of contemporary Korean art at major international exhibitions and in the international art market more generally is now commonplace, there have been few books written in English on the subject and that lacuna has prevented academics from effectively grasping how Korean art has changed over the years and why. In this sense, *Korean Art from the 19th Century to the Present* is one of the most significant and most accessible surveys of Korean art to date. It is a bonus that the volume has a rich collection of photographs including rare images.

The volume is a fascinating book that surveys Korean modern and contemporary art, focusing on carefully selected events, artworks and artists closely related to the massive social, political and economic changes in Korea pre, during and post colonialization, the division of the nation and the consequent modernisation of the South. These changes had a significant effect and influence on artistic practices, government-initiated exhibitions and art events in the country.

The author's focus in the book is the dynamic relation between politics and the arts in Korea. She begins by differentiating how Western art came to Korea in a manner distinct from other countries in East Asia, explaining that it was due to the country's connection with the Japanese colonial empire: "Korea's engagement with Western art never formed part of a two-way relationship but was entwined in a triangle with Japan as a dominant pole" (13–14). In Chapter 3 (Art, Nationalism and Ideology), Horlyck goes on to discuss the gradual division of art into that of North and South Korea after the Korean War. She argues that South Korean art continued to establish the identity of Korean Art, whereas North Korean art was confined to socialist realism under Kim Il Sung's autocratic control and dogmatic ideology. It is noteworthy that both Chong Son and Kim

Hong-do's paintings from the Choson period are suggested by the author as a shared model of inspiration for the North's socialist realist art in the late 1950s, as well as the Minjung art movement that emerged in the 1980s. This association made by the author seems particularly significant when a number of North Korean artworks will be showcased at the 2018 Gwangju Biennale, and the political tension between the North and South seems to be easing. It is rare that North and South Korean art are seen or discussed side by side, but Horlyck is in a more privileged position, being able to do this more easily from her position as an 'outsider.'

Essentially, the book sees Korean art through a lens of identity formation. Horlyck argues that, due to the long period of political oppression across the peninsula, the question of identity has become crucial to the formation of art in the two Koreas, whether it is the artists themselves or both regimes who are initiating and conducting those practices of formation. The final chapter of the book, *Contesting Form and Content*, introduces a variety of current artists who deal with broader themes and issues since the 1990s. These include the works by the radical '3-8-6' generation born in the 1960s who experienced the student democratic uprising in the 1980s against the military dictatorship (namely Kim Beom, Lee Bul, Yeesoonyung, Choi Jeong-hwa, Bae Young-whan, Suh Do Ho, Park Chan-kyong), artists who approached history and the issue of identity through more wide ranging directions (such as Bahc Yiso, Jeon Joonho, Jung Yeondoo, Lim Minouk, Oh Inhwan, Kang Ik-jung), and artists whose approaches are more individual and/or interdisciplinary (including Choe U-ram, Yang Haegue, Kim Shin-il, Kim Sung Hwan). Seven themes explored by the author in this chapter give the reader a great level of knowledge on the nature of current art practice in South Korea. However, the last section of the chapter makes for a rather puzzling conclusion. Horlyck suggests that national identity has become an impossible pursuit for the younger generation and as such they are less tied to the social, cultural and national confines than artists of earlier decades. I personally think that the pursuit of identity or socio-political concerns has become more complex and multiple in recent Korean art, while the representation of one single national identity has become more difficult in the global formation of Korean culture. Perhaps there can be no absolute barrier between generations. In any case this ending raises questions that individual readers will have to address regarding the links between individual and collective identity in the Korean and perhaps other contexts.

Charlotte Horlyck has been researching and lecturing in Korean Studies at SOAS, as well as at Korea University in Seoul. Her cross-cultural experience has obviously enriched her volume in that it includes colourful references

that she has collected first-hand through her frequent encounters with artists, critics, curators, archivists and art institutions on the current art scene in Korea. Horlyck's wide-spanning career as a curator of Korean Art at Victoria and Albert Museum (1998–2004), then an academic and writer since then, is evident in the quality and style of her writing. She carefully links earlier and later art, and provides great detail of each event and artwork, which really helps to shape a tangible history for the reader. *Korean Art* is a must-read book for early Korean Studies researchers. For more established researchers, the book will also help further their knowledge of Korean art. Finally, the book is also likely to appeal to the general public, as it is written in direct language, is easy to follow and includes stories and anecdotes that will appeal to a broad audience.

### Robert S. Ross and Øystein Tunsjø, *Strategic Adjustment and the Rise of China: Power and Politics in East Asia*

**Yujin Lim, Ph.D. student, University of Leeds**

In April 2018, the first inter-Korean summit took place during Kim Jong-un's leadership and captured the world's attention. Another summit followed soon after the first in September. The two leaders of North and South Korea visiting each other's side in the same year checked the historical momentum of the security tensions which had intensified under Kim Jong-un's leadership. The situation in Northeast Asia reminds us of the geopolitical power game in this volatile security environment.

The U.S. has been the unipolar power in Northeast Asia in terms of regional security. However, the rising power of China poses a challenge to the U.S. and pressures other regional actors to adjust their foreign policy. This changing environment makes has them pondering the meaning and the impact of the rise of China. In this regard, *Strategic Adjustment and the Rise of China: Power and Politics in East Asia* is a timely assessment. The book successfully examines what the rise of China means economically and politically. At the same time, it examines what it means to the region and to each of its primary regional actors. This examination naturally leads to a discussion of the impact which weighs the importance of the matter.

This volume focuses on the challenges the region faces given the incremental rise of the China's power. The contributor of each chapter supports readers in considering the perspectives of all the regional actors. The nine chapters of the book are divided in three parts; *power and politics*, *national security and nationalism*, and *great power relations and regional conflict*. The first part starts

with Scheweller's argument that domestic politics determine the international politics. In the second chapter, Tunsjø discusses the transition from unipolar to bipolar balancing in the region. The next two chapters are dedicated to the debate on the growing impact of RMB (*renminbi*—Chinese currency); Drezner argues that it is yet to challenge the U.S. economy while Wang argues that it has challenged the U.S. market.

The second part is on Sino-Japanese relations and the South Korean perspective on the rise of China. Bowers and Grønning argue that the growing economy of China has brought change to Sino-Japanese relations, which they call he "power shift". In response to their chapter, Reilly affirms that economic interdependence has reduced and Beijing's security stance is driven by the "relative distribution of power" (p. 195). Moon, in the next chapter, discusses South Korea's response to the rise of China and points out that South Korea should play an integrative role domestically and internationally.

The final part of the book focuses on U.S.–China rivalry. Fravel's chapter considers the issues surrounding disputes in the South China Sea and illustrates how both nations are interested in assuring their own maritime power but neither are interested in provoking each other. In the last chapter, Ross discusses the security of Northeast Asia and suggests both China and the U.S. use third-party coercive diplomacy.

The contributors of this volume commonly take the rise of China as a destabilizing factor for international relations. They are aware that China is yet incomparable to the U.S. economy and its security power, however, the growing capacity of China is certainly big enough to bring changes to geopolitical stability. In this regard, all of them agree that smaller states are pressured to adjust their foreign policy as China rises. Tunsjø ends the book with a conclusion by acknowledging the great uncertainty of China's rise based on its declining economic growth during 2014 and 2015. What is certain, however, is that if China continues to rise and the U.S. maintains its power competition will inevitably escalate.

The uncertainties surrounding the rise of China and its impact can also be considered through the lens provided by the changing geopolitical environment around the Korean Peninsula. As mentioned in the very beginning of this review, the inter-Korean summit took place after numerous missile launches and hostile activities from North Korea. North Korea's unconventional moves in 2018 challenged the status quo and power dynamics in the region. The Korean Peninsula issue tests China when it comes to its identity as a rising power.

In that sense, Chapter 9 is particularly noteworthy as it examines U.S.–China third-party coercive diplomacy in relation to the security of Northeast Asia.

Ross explains that “*In third-party coercive diplomacy, the coercing state targets a small-state ally of a great power that is challenging its interests.*” (p. 263) The coercive diplomacy of the U.S. towards North Korea in early 2010s impacted Chinese policy toward North Korea. North Korean provocations against South Korea in stronger military cooperation between South Korea and the U.S. which had implications for China. As a result, China changed its policy towards North Korea and opposed nuclear proliferation. This example shows the effect of third-party coercive diplomacy; “*third-party coercion threatens the smaller state’s great power ally with entrapment in great power hostilities over its ally’s particular interests, encouraging the third party great power to restrain its ally*” (p. 263). However, the Chinese policy on North Korea did not succeed in constraining Pyongyang’s nuclear weapons program. North Korea’s successful nuclear tests resulted in Seoul’s decision to deploy the THAAD system (Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense), which Beijing sees as an instrument to contain China. Exploring the nature of international relations around this issue offers a way of assessing the new security environment of the current day.

Although the volume attempts to provide perspectives from all the relevant regional actors, it has its limitation in lacking an examination of Chinese domestic politics. Providing an understanding of how Chinese politics has evolved and how its foreign policy has played out in the regional context would have been helpful for the readers to have a full picture of the rising power and strengthen the volume’s core argument; that domestic politics is the driving factor for international politics. Despite its limitations, the book has successfully integrates the economic and political factors of China’s rising power. Moreover, domestic and international politics are linked well in explanations of the reactions of other countries to the rising power of China. This volume is useful in understanding structural changes within geopolitics. Close observation of these policies in this book with its academic frame and approach could be helpful for both scholars and policy makers wishing to understand China’s rise and strategic geo-political adjustment.

## Nianshen Song, *Making Borders in Modern Asia*

**Robert Winstanley-Chesters, Lecturer, University of Leeds**

Nianshen Song now of the University of Maryland Baltimore County, first came to attention with the extraordinary *Imagined territory: Paektusan in late Chosŏn maps and writings*, a paper for the seldom mentioned in Korean Studies, *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes* (Vol 37, 2). While on

the face of it the idea of Paektusan as a designed landscape seems something a category jump, Nianshen Song certainly had the reader questioning the contemporary design of the mountain's place in Korean nationalism by the paper's conclusion. While Victorian adventurers would write overwhelmed by the force of Korean traditions at the mythic size and power of the mountain (Campbell), and Paektusan is now an almost cliched image central to contemporary Korean nationalisms either side of the DMZ, Song uncovers a fascinating counter narrative. Instead of a monolith, Paektusan appears as a permeable membrane or space of ungovernability to 18th Qing institutions, through or across which criminals escaped liability.

A particular homicide case of 1710 piqued Kangxi and his administrators' interest in the high gap in between the more accepted and understood boundaries of the Amnok/Yalu and Tuman/Tumen rivers. Song in *Imagined Territory* recounts the dispatch of a Manchu official of the Qing, Mukeden in 1712 to Paektusan with Chosŏn officials as company and the latest concepts in cartography and border demarcation in mind. Hoping to settle once and for all this glitch in the boundary between Qing and Chosŏn Mukedeng followed the advice and assertion of the Koreans with his party that both Amnok and Tuman/Tumen flowed from the are of the peak of Paektusan, so naturally there must be at some point a drainage divide at the watershed between the two river basins. This would be the natural and thoroughly modern boundary between China and Korea and any confusion lifted. Instead of as Korean tradition suggested following one of the rivers course to its headwaters, Mukedeng climbed the mountain along with the party of Qing and Chosŏn surveyors to find the watershed and some five kilometres southeast of the summit, near the headwaters of the Amnok, settled on a small ridge as the necessary divide. Mukedeng then went in search of the headwaters of the Tumen and found a small stream some distance to the east of the ridge after four days of searching. This Mukedeng declared was the final piece of the mystery and ascended back up to the ridge to have a three foot high boundary stele built and inscribed. He then instructed the Koreans to build a series of wooden markers and earthworks to connect the stele to the headwaters of both rivers.

Instead of solving the issue for perpetuity, Mukedeng's efforts merely embedded a new problem in this territory as some months later when the Korean surveyors returned to the mountain to fix the wooden markers, they discovered that the stream found to connect to the stele, was not actually the Tumen at all, but a stream which eventually formed part of the Sunggari/Songhua river which flowed directly north into China. Mukedeng's suggestion that the reason why the Tumen started so far away from its drainage divide was

that ‘it flowed underground for some time before rising’ proved to be wishful thinking. This meant of course that the boundary was not fixed at all, but still unclear and quite possibly an immediate large diplomatic problem. The Chosŏn court, Song recounts decided, after much discussion, to simply not inform the Qing as “it was better to leave the mistake as it was and bother neither its superior empire nor itself with this ‘trivial’ matter.” (Song, 2016).

It is unlikely that that would have been it, such a charismatic place and important boundary could not in the developing period of both national boundaries and nation states stay unfixed for long. Song’s new book *Making Borders in Modern East Asia* picks up the bizarre story of this place and Mukedeng’s lonely and mistaken stele. This book placing the complex relationships between developing geographic and cartographic knowledge, gazetting of territory in both Chosŏn and late Qing and population issues which really result from the weakening power of the Chinese dynasty in the context of the demarcation of the Sino-Korean and eventually Sino-Japanese, Sino-Kanto or Sino-Manchukuo borders connects a number of streams of power and politics to that stele. In fascinating and somewhat intimidating detail Song traces the complicated and unexpected outcomes of Mukedeng’s mistaken solution to Korea’s bounding. Developments in Korean national sensibilities and scholarship following 1712 had led literati to rediscover the north now that it could be more comprehensively understood. While Mukedeng’s surveying had actually extended Chosŏn’s writ to the slopes of Paektusan which had previously been outside Korean territory, the fact of the stele and its perceived bounding was felt by some to have cut national links to imagined former territories in Manchuria such as Parhae and Koguryo. Equally Song recounts the debate in King Yŏngjo’s reign amongst the King and his ministers, that since Paektusan was now officially in Korea, it should be included within the frameworks of Confucian ritual practice, and in fact it was the ‘foundation of royal ancestry.’ Song records Yŏngjo’s words “Even if [Mt Paektu] is not in the realm of our country, since worshipping it meets the [Confucian] doctrine of ‘requiting and following one’s ancestors,’ we should still conduct a ceremony from afar. Let alone, it is our country.” (Song, 2018, p. 65)

Extraordinarily this interest eventually uncovered the fact that Mukedeng’s stele failed to record not only the correct site of the Tumen’s emanation from the mountain, but recorded the river’s name as the confusing ‘T’omun.’ Since the river apparently flowed under the ground from the stele to the stream supposedly forming the Tumen, there was enormous confusion as to which river was which. Was the T’omun the Tuman/Tumen or was it a different river entirely? In reality of course it was neither, but this was yet to properly

considered as an option. By the mid 19th century as boundaries within a new international order of politics and sovereignty became more important the still inexplicable issue of the boundary on Paektu became important again and the Qing and Chosŏn institutions would again attempt to solve the issue through joint surveys. Between 1885 and 1887 repeated efforts are recounted by Song of surveyors from both sides to bridge the gap while maintaining the traditional *zongfan* relationship between the two, a formula for Confucian interstate relations between a superior and suzerain powers which was developing increasing geo-political significance in the new era. Upon discovering anew the issue of the misplaced stele and incorrect hydrological assessment, Song unpicks the complicated manoeuvring of both sides. Chosŏn utilised the fact that the mistake had been accomplished on behalf of Emperor Kangxi to maintain an advantage amidst the confusion. If the Emperor or Imperial authority had declared the cartographic and geographic reality to be thus, then it was hard to work backwards. The Qing were highly disturbed by the situation, everyone essentially understood that by tradition the Tumen served as the boundary between the two nations, but if the T'omun was the boundary and the T'oman actually became the Sungarri/Songhua which eventually flowed into the Amur river then much of Manchuria was actually by rights Chosŏn territory rather than that of the Qing and that simply could not be the result of the exercise.

Several years and a number of surveying trips would narrow the gap, with Chosŏn acknowledging that it had not been the intention of Mukedeng to cede the Amur region to the smaller neighbour, and that the T'omun would be considered one and the same with the Tuman/Tumen. Song recounts complex discussions between the two teams of surveyors on placing the Tumen's head waters ever closer to the stele, discussions which were complicated by a hundred or so families of Korean squatters who had settled in between two small tributaries of the Tuman/Tumen, the Hongdan and the Hongtushan. In order not to accidentally cede these Koreans to China the Qing side suggested that as a compromise the more northern Hongtushan be chosen as the boundary, only to be rejected by Chosŏn on the grounds of being too arbitrary. Finally the Qing having discovered yet another small stream close to the stele which did not disadvantage any settlers, the Shiyi, Chosŏn again rejected the solution as it did not directly flow from the watershed ridge originally discovered by Mukedeng on which the stele was built. The Qing and Chosŏn thus, Song acknowledges left the matter unresolved in 1887.

The T'oman/Tuman/Tumen debate may on the face of it in this review sound absurdly parochial, but this complexity of bordering in the wilderness and the complicated relations between Chosŏn and Qing while sounding as if



from a different age were to later flare into great importance in the practices of re-bordering in the decades to come. Song deftly moves to the impact of border practices in the era of Japanese power and the collapse of Qing authority in the late 1890s. The Russian Empire would press the Qing dynasty for control and authority in Manchuria through the construction of railways branching from the Trans-Siberian. In 1896 in an at the time secret treaty, Russia was granted the right to a railway concession that became known as the China Eastern Railway, which aimed for Port Arthur (Lüshūn) at the end of the Liaodong peninsula. Soon China was overcome by the Boxer Rebellion and Russia occupied Manchuria in order to protect its railway investments. In the chaos Korea sought to assert authority over the north bank of the Tuman/Tumen to protect itself from Russian incursion, establishing a series of border police units and naming the area for the first time Kando (Kantō). This assertion of power in the face of the Qing essentially broke the *zongfan* mould and established a certain flexibility of governance and sovereignty in the area which harked back to the failure of the Chosŏn and Qing surveyors to properly demarcate the boundary between the nations. Developing Korean nationalism in the new era of nations states is also offered by Song as a driver behind this sudden utility of the memory of potentially a question mark over the tight bounding of the Korean nation.

Ultimately however it was not to be Chosŏn or the Korean Empire which would best deploy the complexities and ambiguities of this border space, it would be the Japanese. Victorious in the 1904/1905 Russo-Japanese War, Tokyo was concerned to press home the advantage to the north of what was soon to be its territory. Seeking to also protect its interests and finding the confusion as to the nature of sovereignty on the north bank of the river (as well as the large number of Koreans who had settled there), very much its advantage in 1907 following negotiations with the defeated Russians, Japan declared Kantō a semi-colony. Both Japanese and Koreans seeking to oust them deployed new repertoires of international law to justify their claims, but intriguingly both sides would use material which relied on Mukedeng's mapping and analysis from 1712. Eventually Japan was to colonise Korea itself, co-opt Russia's China Eastern Railway and through Kantō and the South Manchurian Railway company begin to embed colonial imperatives in the ground of this 'debateable land. Song's work is a masterful example of the deployment and use of primary sources, seemingly having paid extremely close attention to the core material (such as the accounts and cartographic output of Mukedeng and the Chosŏn surveyors themselves), which underpins the fascinating processes of border making and unmaking in the Tuman/Tumen area. His careful parsing not only of this

material, but later accounts of how this flowed into the making or unmaking of citizenship and sovereignty in the area make for an extremely useful work.

In a sense Song's work is a transnational history at both the point of transit and transfer and at the moment of reconfiguration of the national itself. While his previous work on the 1712 surveying expedition was an at times mind blowing lesson in nuance given the monolithic place of Paektusan in Korean nationalist narratives of our time, this book serves to really underline the tenuousness of governance and sovereignty in this flexible and malleable zone of contact. Almost unbelievably it would not be until 1962–1964 that a solution was found to Mukedeng's cartographic misstep, and one so arbitrary that it would have shaken Qing and Chosŏn surveyors and officials to their cores. It would be for the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to crystallise the border between the headwaters of the Amnok and the Tuman/Tumen, inexplicably drawing the boundary together across the middle of Heaven Lake at the summit and across the watershed of the Hongtushan. For socialist brotherhood and solidarity rather than *zongfan* logics the two expressions of sovereignty surely impossible to imagine for Qing and Chosŏn, settled the issue, making a border very much for their time. In short this is an extraordinary book, a real tonic to assertions that what is fixed is fixed and what is settled is settled in bordering and nation state construction, the reviewer challenges the reader not to become engrossed in every twist and turn of its extremely articulate pages.

## Norman Smith (ed.), *Empire and Environment in the Making of Manchuria*

**Robert Winstanley-Chesters, Lecturer, University of Leeds**

It feels as if Korea's northern cousin in Imperial subjugation, Manchuria and its uncanny colonial twin, Manchukuo are having a moment in academia. From recent works addressing cultural excitement in Manchukuo's short-lived territory, to writing on its diffusion through the transformation of cartography, to the mythologies of Korean nationalist resistance on its edges, Manchuria that nation know deliberately forgotten, erased and derelict in the memory might be becoming less disappeared. Joining this Manchuria-mania and in tandem with a wide variety of books considering the ecologies and environmental impacts of colonial projects, wider Imperialism and the technologies, bureaucracies and practices of modernity is '*Empire and Environment in the Making of Manchuria*' edited by Norman Smith for University of British Columbia Press.

The People's Republic of China's north eastern provinces are famous these days for only a few things; Koreans, lost culture and language and overwhelmingly an unforgiving climate. While this has demonstrated some touristic potential courtesy of Harbin's now world-renowned ice sculpture festival (surely rivalling Jukasjarvi in Finland's Icehotel for most famous icy place to visit in the world), the area is still commonly known to be absolutely freezing cold in the winter. You can feel the chill of the sub-arctic blast in *'Empire and Environment ...'* as a number of contributions revolve around situations and circumstance that could only emanate from an extremely cold place.

David Bello's *'Rival Empires on the Hunt for Sable and People in Seventeenth-Century Manchuria'* frames the competition between Imperial Russia and the Qing dynasty for dominance in the periphery through the brutal and damaging extraction of wildlife resource and the equally complicated mission to ensnare human populations within the webs of state loyalty. Sharing not a little in common with Ryan Tucker Jones work on Russian Imperial quests in the far north to conquer the Stellar Sea Cow and seal populations for the Tsar (conquering them nearly to extinction), the reader will feel the chill and the fur fly along with the displacement of indigenous populations as well as ecologies in this extremely careful reading of sources, including those from provincial archives.

Lorretta Kim addresses the virtual impossibility of being an imperial subject in the far periphery when tribute is needed in her chapter *'Inclement Weather and Human Error: Regular Irregularities in the Manchurian Tribute System during the Qing Dynasty.'* The weather again appears to conspire against institutional functionality as a weak and diffuse Qing state is either outdone by the weather, or termed second best by those owing tribute. Norman Smith himself turns the issues with weather around in his chapter *'Hibernate No More'* which is an intriguing tale of modernist notions of health, sport and winter activity overcoming the traditional inactiveness of Manchuria in its bleakest of mid winters. Technology plays a key role in this, from the availability of ice skates to traverse the frozen rivers to the construction and development of heating technology for citizens and soldiers to cope with the frozen season.

For this reviewer however primarily this is the environmental aspect of the book completed. Having read a wide variety of environmental histories, as much as the winter blast could be felt in the book's pages, I was disappointed at the privileging of the human and the technological over the environmental in this volume. While of course extracting environmental or more than human histories out of the archives of provincial China is a tall order and perhaps not be expected, I did feel that more focus could have been placed on the sable

themselves, the transformation of landscapes and ecologies through time and the various manifestations of politics and sovereignty in the area. In fact the best of this volume has little really to do with ecologies, climates or natures, but really to do with the struggles of people at moments of transformation, collapse and degradation.

Kathryn Meyer's *The Garden of Grand Vision: Slums, Deviance and Control in Manchukuo, 1940–1941* is an extraordinary articulation on the page of the impact of colonial modernisation in Manchukuo, new institutions and imperatives of Imperial health and cleanliness and their polar opposites, a derelict space for derelicts in Harbin. In Meyer's words there is a pungent odour of opium, sweat and pheromones in her dissection of what became of one of Harbin's flop houses for the addicted and disposed, a building called 'The Garden of Grand Vision.' It is doubtful considering their state whether many of its residents had much in the way of Grand Vision, but the academic architects who visited in 1940 certainly did and that was that of the Manchukuo government's notion of the 'Harmony of the Five Races.' Colonial visions for its urban built environment were certainly without these vestiges of decadent and collapsing culture, shiny new, health clean spaces of modernity would replace them. It is not entirely surprising to read that the surveying teams' report was titled *'Autopsy of the Garden of Grand Vision'*, for these modernists the building and its community as well as the old vision of Manchuria were already dead, so it was no concern of theirs to dissect the fetid corpse a little more.

Corpses are upsettingly frequent in what this reviewer thought was one of the most extraordinary pieces of writing he had read in recent times, let alone simply in *'Empire and Environment ...'* That is Ronald Suleski's contribution *'Salvaging Memories: Former Japanese Colonists in Manchuria and the Shimoina Project 2000–2012.'* Essentially an exercise in recounting the work of a team from Kyoto University and Iida City Government in Japan, Suleski parses the material generated by the project's ambition to capture the fading memories of group of elderly Japanese who had once been colonial settlers in Manchuria and who had experienced at full blast the collapse of Japanese imperial and colonial power and ambition in 1945. Once resident in Kawano village in Manchuria (named after a village in Nagano Prefecture, Japan, the Japanese settlers had been ambitious colonialists making great efforts to extract value from the difficult conditions of the colonial hinterland. They had also been forced on the area by the colonial authorities and the local Chinese harboured a grudge. On August 15th, 1945 when Japan surrendered, Suleski recounts the immediate hostilities against them and local Chinese invading the Japanese village to exact retribution. In an unbelievably awful account the Japanese settlers inspired by

the more grotesque energies of Imperial militarism decide that it is now their time to die and they had better take matters into their own hands and kill themselves rather than be slaughtered by the Chinese. In doing so they even took it upon themselves to attempt to murder their own children. The extraordinary chapter concludes with some of the children escaping their homicidal parents and being given shelter by the Chinese headman of the local workers in the area headquarters, who although obviously concerned by Japanese exploitation and colonial efforts thought what had happened was disgraceful. Eventually these children would become refugees and make it back to Japan proper after three years of wandering and working for the Russian occupiers.

Ultimately this volume contains one of the most astonishing pieces of writing the reviewer has read in some time, a real crystallisation of the agony and chaos of colonial and Imperial energies when the politics and status quo begins to unexpectedly move. There are many such stories of course in Manchuria and in Korea and the violence of Sukeski's contribution is shocking in its sheer level of violence. Other violence's however are certainly done in this volume, violence of institutional, extractive, bureaucratic and political natures. However I must reiterate my feeling that for the most part this volume oversells itself as an environmental history. While it is certainly a fascinating contribution to writing on the spaces and places of Manchukuo and Manchurian modernity or colonialism to the north of Korea, it privileges human stories over non-human stories in a way which it is difficult to avoid.

### Dafna Zur, *Figuring Korean Futures: Children's Literature in Modern Korea*

**Christopher Richardson, University of Sydney**

In the aftermath of the Korean War, North Korean literary theorist and grandee of the Chosŏn Federation of Writers Kim Myŏng Su declared that, "the task of proper cultivation of our children demands that we create a prosperous future for our nation and ... it is children's literature that must play a key role in fulfilling the glorious responsibility of this task" (202). Decades later, Kim Chŏngil proclaimed in his treatise *On Chuch'e Literature* that, "writers must develop children's literature into our style of literature that conforms with our Party's policy and our children's characteristics. Only our style of children's literature can contribute to bringing up our children into pillars of Korean revolution". Today, the Kim Chŏngŭn era has seen a revitalized youth drive in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as the state seeks to bind itself to a

generation of children with no memory of war and national division. Meanwhile, the Republic of Korea has a thriving literary culture, its authors and illustrators admired worldwide. Today's South Korean children's writers flourish in a free society, yet once also operated under heavy censorship and state control. In *Figuring Korean Futures: Children's Literature in Modern Korea*—a remarkable new work of scholarship from Stanford University Press—Dafna Zur takes us back to where this diverging tale of Korean children's literature began.

As the colonial era dawned, low but rising rates of literacy and schooling, alongside new printing techniques and a growing consumer class opened a new marketplace for children's literature in Korea. Koryŏ and Chosŏn had their children's cultures too, yet modernity brought a shift in the perception of the child's role in society and their relationship to story. Childhood was no longer seen as the vehicle for the consolidation of tradition and orthodoxy alone, but rather as a vector for the transformation of society in a newly dawning future. As Zur writes, "children occupied a new place in the world, their value celebrated not for their connection to the past but precisely their difference and separation from it" (1). No longer the passive receptacles of ancestral wisdom, children were instead active and "discerning consumers of culture in their own right, deemed worthy of their own media filled with texts and illustrations that would be of interest to them alone" (2). A new type of literature thus emerged in colonial Korea, one that shook the shackles of the classical—Chinese dominated—didactic and linguistic tradition and instead spoke to Korean children in a voice that they would understand.

As Zur explains, "Korean intellectuals across the political spectrum recognized that young readers were not only a viable new audience that required their own reading material, but that texts had a crucial role to play in the lives of their families, their communities, and their nation" (18). Authors sought to identify, engage with, and shape the *tongsim*, or "body and heart" of the Korean child, and through it the "child-heart" of the nation. In one of the key achievements of his brief but influential life, Korean intellectual, children's rights activist and author Pang Chŏng-hwan returned the word *ŏrini* to common usage, thereby differentiating the idea of "the child" from the broader concept of "the youth". Whether composed for education or for leisure, children's literature opened a space in which ideas could be contested about what it meant to be a Korean child in the modern age, indeed what it meant to be *Korean*, including in relation to the occupying power. The discovery of the Korean child and the "imagined community" of the Korean nation during the colonial era were not parallel discoveries. In many respects, they were the same discovery.

Like Janet Poole, in her equally masterful *When The Future Disappears: The Modernist Imagination in Late Colonial Korea*, Dafna Zur explores the ambivalence of a vision of modernity forged in the crucible of empire. Children's writers, like all Koreans, found themselves torn between the lures of pre-colonial nostalgia and a yearning for the future. This was an era that saw the revival of traditional Korean folktales for children, as well as the arrival of thrilling new stories from abroad, including the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the Brothers Grimm, arriving in translation for the first time. Colonial modernity had severed Koreans from the past, yet in so doing freed writers to experiment with new forms and styles, including in an evolving vernacular (even as the Korean language was under threat from imperial encirclement).

Zur locates the deep wells of Korean agency in this contested space, as children's minds and bodies became the locus of colonial exploitation and control, but also of exploration, knowledge, and resistance. On the one hand, Japanese imperial culture and its Korean literary *amanuenses* sought to mobilize children as loyal citizens of empire, with Zur noting the "large number of explicitly jingoistic stories and images [for children] that express loyalty to the Japanese war effort" in colonial Korea (127). On the other hand, Zur depicts those writers who saw children as custodians of a language and culture under siege. Indeed, "Korean children's magazines provided a sanctuary for poetry and fiction that had long been excised from the school curriculum and other discontinued print culture ... [W]hile the Korean language was being phased out in schools, and Korean poetry and creative fiction were replaced with Japanese poetry and mythology in school textbooks, children's magazines like *Sonyŏn* and *Ai saenghwal* created a space for delight and subversive laughter" (127). Of course, parents and older siblings could (and did) read such texts too, thus elevating Korean children and their literature as vectors of subversion. Even more radically, leftist authors envisaged children at the vanguard of liberation and national emancipation. Proletarian children's authors "emphasized the central role that writing should play in educating the young and transforming them into consciously ideological warriors" (115). As Zur explains, writers such as Song Yŏng, Pak Se-yŏng and Im Hwa, produced works that "dramatized children's revolutionary explosive anger through realism and fantastical allegory in order to perform correct class consciousness" (115). Their proletarian literary theory remains a foundation stone of North Korean children's literature today.

Unsurprisingly, reflecting the increasingly important role of children's literature in Korean cultural life, the colonial government kept a close eye on children's publishing. And yet, even during the most intense periods of

oppression in the 1930s and 1940s, children's authors managed to navigate the colonial state's censorship and control. To a degree then—as still so often now—deemed marginal from the more serious business of adult cultural production, children's writers found a freedom to explore ideas in ways their colleagues writing for an adult audience could not.

Children's literature remains a recent phenomenon, yet children's stories are not. Nor is the argument that children's tales help shape the world around us. As Socrates declared in Plato's *Republic*, “we shall persuade mothers and nurses to tell our chosen stories to their children, and by means of them to mold their minds and characters which are more important than their bodies”. It is therefore surprising that serious scholarship about children's literature and culture remains so rare. Dafna Zur does readers an important service. The mingling of Japanese and Korean literary and educational cultures during the colonial era and its aftermath continues to shape the two republics baptized in the wake of division, even to this day. As Zur notes in her final chapter, “*tongsim* continues to be a compelling concept both in North and South Korea ... [it] speaks to the sustained desire to see difference, to imagine untapped potential, to dream not just of an idealized past but of a future of humanity that is benevolent, intuitive, and politically engaged” (213). The defining English language history of this defining era of modern Korean children's literature, *Figuring Korean Futures* is a tremendous achievement.

## Remco Breuker, *De B.V. Nord Korea: Een Kernmacht in de Marge*

**Victoria Ten, Leiden University**

Remco Breuker's new book in Dutch *De B.V. Nord Korea: Een Kernmacht in de Marge* (in English ‘North Korea LLC: An Atomic Power in the Margins’), discusses the political structure of North Korea. Breuker's work touches on the lives of North Korea's mass citizenry in a very limited way, mostly considering how they are utilized by the political system of the nation. The main idea of the book is that North Korean state is actually not a state but a private company with limited liability, *besloten vennootschap* (B.V.) in Dutch, known as an LLC in the United States and through the Ltd suffix in the United Kingdom, hence the title of the book. The main goal of this B.V. is protecting the interest of the Kim ruling family. North Korean nuclear weapons program is thus conceptualized as destined to protect the country and as such to protect the Kim family. The trade



in narcotics and overseas workers' programs are supposed to provide for Kim family economically.

Following the analysis of a famous political exile from North Korea, Chang Chinsŏng (Jang Jin-sung), Breuker describes three North Koreas. The first one is lived and experienced by North Koreans themselves, the second one is created by the propaganda of the regime, and the third one is a fantasy created by people outside North Korea. In Breuker's opinion, most of contemporary analyses of North Korea focuses on the third one. When it comes to himself, Breuker decides to study a fourth North Korea, the country described by North Koreans who have left the country: the book is based on the accounts of these voluntary exiles. After introducing them in the first chapter, the author proceeds to describe the Kim ruling family and their internal struggles, adopting the version of events publicized by Chang Chinsŏng in his famous book *Dear Leader: My Escape from North Korea* (2014). The third chapter talks about the foreign relations of North Korea. The following chapters describe science, overseas laborers, human rights problems and everyday life of the citizens. A very interesting chapter follows, which discusses cyber war, for which North Korea has been preparing for many decades, selecting and training young cyber soldiers from early age. North Korea has performed a few acts of cyber war successfully, despite its seemingly under-developed use of the Internet. An intriguing next chapter is dedicated to spies and assassinations, another skill North Korea has perfected over the years. North Korea's development of nuclear weapons is the subject of the last chapter.

This book is an extremely engaging read which this reviewer thoroughly enjoyed. The criticism of concentration camps, forced labor, torture and other infringements on human rights in this work is understandable. Yet the reviewer still estimates the book as biased against North Korea. Breuker's book is based on the accounts of North Koreans who have left North Korea; many of them have since settled in South Korea. Breuker notes that these people undergo re-education in South Korea, but he does not highlight the political impact of this re-education, the influence it has on the North Koreans, the way they tell their stories and the content of these stories.

Breuker severely criticizes North Korea for breaking official promises, acting in direct contradiction to announced principles (82–83), and assassinating people abroad (105–106). Yet these actions are performed routinely by many countries. Breuker suggests that these actions are somehow unique, extraordinary and evil. This consideration of North Korea as *sui generis* or unique in world politics is not itself unique to Breuker. Describing North Korea as uniquely awful or disgraceful is a common trope in contemporary academic analysis and also in western media. Breuker mentions, for example, that although it is difficult

to imagine a North Korean in love, they still exist (113). This kind of remarks throughout the book forces the reviewer to ask herself whether the author has managed to escape the stereotyping of North Korean. In the introduction, Breuker talks directly about stereotypes and feelings of exoticization that a westerner might develop in relation to North Korea (10). However, it seems to me that the book itself supports some of these stereotypes and derives authority from them. One more example: many westerners from the non-academic world, a part of intended audience of the book, believe that North Koreans still die of hunger today. In the text, Breuker explains that the hunger occurred in the 1990s. Yet his reference to the “hunger in North Korea” in the introduction (8) creates an impression that hunger is still there in the present day.

Born in the Soviet Union in 1975, this reviewer left Russia during the period of *perestroika*. After moving a number of times I found myself in the Netherlands. I often feel the differences between myself and the people born and bred under capitalist western democracies. At the moments of awakening to such differences the reviewer asks herself how and why we come to think and feel the way we do, and to which degree our surroundings might provide answers to these questions. A moment of such realization of a difference between myself and others was my encounter with the book the subject of the current review, read in my newly acquired Dutch language. As a scholar of Korean Studies, the reviewer is aware of the numerous differences between North Korea of today and the Soviet Russia of her childhood. Yet Breuker’s book reminded me again of so many common points between these two societies. The system of secrecy described in the book, a lack of access to information, inability to freely share your ideas, forced membership in political organizations from the age of 6 or 7—all these things were part of my life in Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union began to fall apart when the reviewer was thirteen. Old enough to remember that my life, up to that point, was the normal life of an ordinary girl: being raised by my parents, playing with friends, going to school. A life that many North Koreans lead today. The reviewer finds problematic Breuker’s suggestion that a monolithic personality cult in North Korea paralyzes all individual emotions (78). The reviewer would rather note that under enormous pressure of totalitarian authority a strong independent personality develops, as internal freedom is forged by adversity. This is why at the times of oppressive Tsarist government and Soviet totalitarian rule a treasure trove of literature was produced, and we might expect to uncover at a certain point similar developments in North Korea. Ultimately while Breuker deeply critiques the North Korean regime in general and the concept of propaganda in particular (153), his own book comes dangerously close to constituting anti-North Korean

propaganda. Just consider his suggestion that academics and visitors to North Korea compromise their own ethics and methodologies (7). However, *De B.V. Nord Korea: Een Kernmacht in de Marge* is a valuable piece of scholarship with a clearly visible drive and ambition. It contributes greatly to recent developing scholarship on North Korean political system. It is an interesting ideological foil to the work of Heonik Kwon, Hazel Smith, David Shim, Sonia Ryang and others who consider the country from a different perspective. Those already convinced by Breuker's argument will find it useful with regard to the developing body of scholarship on transitional justice, which relates to North Korea and the future of its elite.

*Nicolas Levi, A Statistical Analysis of the North Korean Overseas Laborers in Poland During the Period 2000–2017: Current Status and Prospects*

**Robert Winstanley-Chesters, Lecturer, University of Leeds**

North Korea can sometimes feel like a glitch in the machine of the current or passing world order, a troublesome anomaly generating uncomfortable energies across the globe. In 2018 the theatrics of interaction with North Korea on the world stage have reached something of new crescendo. It is hard to tell where the world will go from here, from mystic, mythic union on the peninsula, to muddling through with more of the same, to dangerous return to the status quo ante. North Koreans themselves share something of the glitch with their own nation. Though in some guises, such as the defector, the refugee, the North Korean in the South they are becoming somewhat known, their narratives, desires, fears and ambitions almost familiar in academic discourse. At this moment of seeming reconciliation famous North Koreans in this role, such as T'ae Yong Ho are even prone to becoming glitch-like again, their sound, fury and desires for justice and retribution becoming troublesome to the new regimes of amelioration and forgiveness, no matter how temporary. North Koreans who are still in North Korea are still unknown as they once were, cyphers to project fear, loathing and potential onto; to pity, to seek vengeance for. It is a truism of world politics to say that in general we do not and cannot now what North Koreans' for the most part think and feel, though it is apparent they have a taste for the entrepreneurial, ambition and a taste for media that tends as much of the rest of us to the ephemeral and the schlocky. There is still however yet one more group of North Koreans to consider, the ghosts in the machine of North Korean political economy, North Koreans who are overseas, not in diplomatic,

security, intelligence or military service, yet who are still loyal to and part of the apparatus of Pyongyang's global institutional reach (such as it is). North Korean overseas workers are spectres in their nation's endeavours abroad, occasionally glimpsed, often thought of, never heard from.

There is developing an extensive body of academic work focused on their bodies and the injustices done to them across the globe. From ambitious efforts to seek transitional justice for them and other North Koreans, to a number of efforts to consider their plight and frame them as part of the international problem of modern day slavery. Remco Breuker and others recent works in both English and Dutch consider the position of these North Koreans as one of the few categories of the contemporary enslaved who are not enslaved by individual families or networks of brokers, but by their own state institutions. However often in these works there is a tendency to rush to denunciation, to inscribe meaning from one's own sense of fury and horror, to presume and assume no matter how well meaning. What there is also not is hard statistical facts. We know there are North Koreans labouring away in uncomfortable and miserable roles in places across the globe, in spite of the now extremely extensive and dramatic UNSC Sanctions regime (not to mention the extraordinary unilateral sanctions placed on North Korea at the behest of a conflicted lobbying industry, by an aggressive US Senate and House), but we very often do not know how many, where and what is the actual process for their being at work in host countries.

Nicolas Levi of the Polish Academy of Sciences has in this regard and for this field committed to paper a most valiant act with *A Statistical Analysis of the North Korean Overseas Laborers in Poland*, a whole hearted dive into the statistics of North Korean overseas work from perhaps an unlikely direction. Unlikely though if one does not consider the past connections and solidarities between Poland and North Korea. The People's Republic of Poland and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were socialist brothers until the late 1980s. Many North Korean students studied at Polish Higher Education Institutions and Premier Jaruzelski featured in North Korean propaganda and at Mass Games displays as a reliable friend of Pyongyang. While this has certainly changed, and surely must change further given the pathological hatred for left wing politics and ideology manifested by Poland's ruling Law and Justice Party, some connections and memories must remain; when it comes to North Korean overseas workers it seems not only is that certainly true, but Nicolas Levi's work suggests some real skill on North Korea's behalf at the navigation of current Polish bureaucracy.

Levi has gone to source and extracted his data set from the Polish Ministry of Family, Labour and Policy. The data shows at an extraordinary granular level the ebb and flow of North Korean labour in Poland between the years 2000 and 2017. Levi makes it clear that unlike what might be expected of North Koreans at work overseas, they do not come primarily under a visa regime focused on seasonal or manual work (such as the old visa for seasonal agricultural labourers scheme in the United Kingdom which used to let in many tens of thousands of Lithuanians and Ukrainians to pick cabbages and fruit), but instead were granted a wide variety of visas, unskilled and precarious seasonal work at the behest of a foreign company, to work which required sponsorship from a Polish registered company and is not limited to a purely 6 or 12 month period of work (visa category A). The fact that Levi determines that in 2013 there were 259 category A visas granted to North Koreans in Poland suggests that there must also be a certain level of corporate culpability and responsibility in the long term for those interested in pursuing the matter. North Koreans not only occupied a wide variety of visa categories in Poland, but they also found employment in a wide variety of sectors. It is not the case as it has been in the Russian Federation that the bulk of North Koreans were working one sector, in that case the timber and forestry sector. North Korea's worked in agriculture and forestry, but they also worked in healthcare, industrial processing and construction (according to Levi's statistics there were still 82 North Koreans working in the Polish construction industry in 2017).

Levi also uncovers a wide geographical spread of North Korean labouring, which intriguingly changes over time. Between 2004 and 2006 North Koreans are mainly employed in Pomerania, but in 2008 and 2009 the majority shifts to Masovia, then 2011 and 2012 to Lesser Poland and then later in the data back to Masovia. North Korean's are also working a range of company sizes. Intriguingly Levi also considers the data on gendering of this work and on the country of previous residence of these workers. While one might of course expect North Koreans who currently have a North Korean passport to have residence in North Korea, a number of those in Poland granted a visa had residence elsewhere. Finally, and if this is something readers were wondering about, Levi's analysis suggests a considerable drop in 2016 and 2017 in the numbers of visas of all types issued to North Koreans, and corresponding rise in the numbers of visas held by North Koreans in Poland being repealed or rescinded. While it is clear that there are still some North Koreans on visas in Poland in 2018, the number dropped below a hundred in 2017 and surely must have declined further since. As suggested earlier in this review, Nicolas Levi has done a considerable service with this small volume to scholars of North Korea and current patterns of North

Korean labour abroad. Rarely can a scholar have dissected the data on these matters with such rigor, or found such a comprehensive set. Levi has interrogated the statistics to an extraordinary degree and uncovered a variety of fascinating data stories. Yet he has done so in a very clear and accessible way, with a fine surfeit of diagrams and data representations. *A Statistical Analysis of the North Korean Overseas Labourers in Poland* is a comprehensive piece of work of its type and one which will surely be much used in the future by those interested in unravelling these hidden stories of labouring and making North Korean labourers the ghosts in a global work place a little more knowable.

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Persons submitting articles for consideration should note the following requirements:

1. Articles should be submitted only in English, using British spelling conventions.
2. The body of the manuscript should normally be around 5,000 words in length. Endnotes, bibliography, and other additional material are excluded from this word count.
3. The manuscript should use endnotes and follow the ‘Chicago style’ for references.
4. Romanization of East Asian names, place names and terms should follow the McCune-Reischauer system for Korean, Hepburn for Japanese, and pinyin for Chinese.
5. Where appropriate, the use of Chinese characters and indigenous scripts following the initial occurrence of a term is encouraged. Use Batang font whenever possible.
6. The manuscript should be submitted as a Microsoft Word file attachment and should be written in double-spaced Times Roman 12 point font. This rule applies to both the text of the article and its section headings. All endnotes should be in Times Roman 10 point font. All inserted East Asian characters should be in 11 point font in the text and all East Asian characters in the notes should be in 9 point font.
7. The page format should be set for A4 size with **left-hand justification only**.

8. The manuscript should have a separate cover page that gives the full name of the author, academic affiliation, and full postal and email contact details. The cover page should also have a one-paragraph summary of the contents of the article, and five (5) key words.
9. The first page of the text of the manuscript should have only the title of the article at top. The name of the author(s) should NOT be included.
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11. The Editorial Board intends that an author should know within two months of the submission of an article about the success of his or her submission.



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