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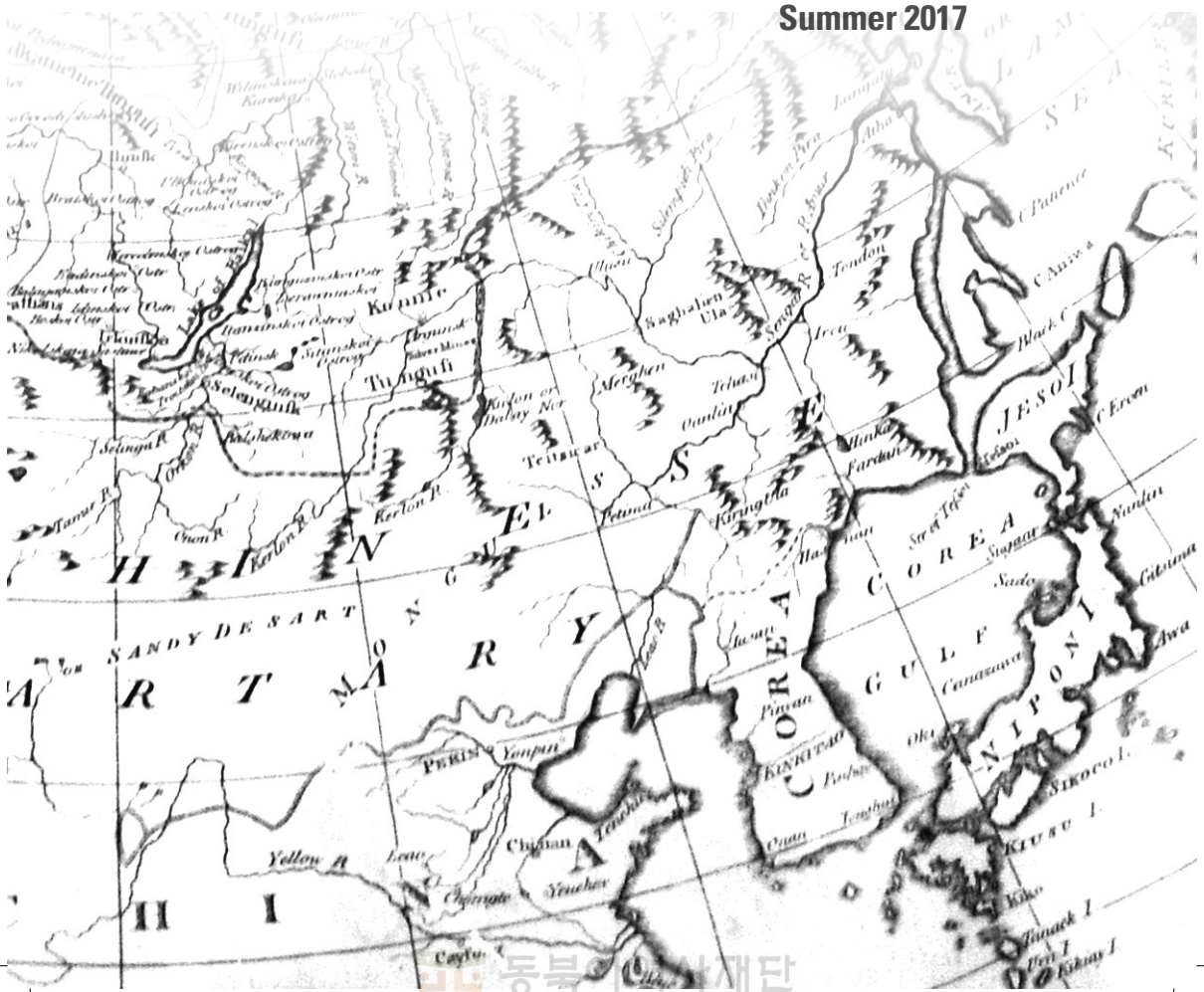

Editorial Board

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A word from the chief editors

The Journal of Northeast Asian History is under new management, with publication entrusted to the Institute of International Affairs at the Graduate School of International Studies, Seoul National University. Professors Tae Gyun Park, Erik Mobrand, JeongHun Jan, and Jaewoo Choo are the Journal's chief editors.

The Journal has published academic articles dealing with a diverse array of vibrant debates and controversies covering topics and issues related to Northeast Asian History. Such works have spanned the ancient to the modern period and covered myriad topics, encompassing the controversies over the perception or interpretation of history and territorial disputes. The Journal has thus facilitated academic discussion regarding various Northeast Asian historical issues.

Therein, the Northeast Asian History Foundation has played a critical role. The foundation has endeavored to raise awareness of Northeast Asian historical and territorial issues in publishing a scholarly journal in English. As a consequence, readers outside the Northeast Asian region have come to be interested in those topics important in Northeast Asia. Readers inside the region have improved their understanding of those issues.

Along with the foundation, the chief editors are committed to continuing and enhancing such efforts. If such an endeavor can be said to have been in its initial stages up until now, then the time has come to elevate the discussion of such issues and topics to a higher level. Moving beyond the task of merely fostering interest in topics and issues related to Northeast Asian history, the aim now is to invigorate relevant scholarly debate.

With this task in mind and sponsored by the Northeast Asian History Foundation, the chief editors commit to renewing publication of the Journal. Accordingly, in addition to increasing the ample supply of scholarly articles and book reviews, we intend to seek out the greater participation of those who are specialists in their fields. This means including not only more articles and book reviews, but also introducing the newest documents, unfolding debates and most recent currents in academia. Furthermore, we plan to expand the scope of research comparing issues in Northeast Asia with those of other regions. We shall also strive to convey the latest information in this regard, introducing, attending and organizing various academic conferences and events in other regions.

We sincerely hope that readers continue to view the Journal of Northeast Asian History with interest and anticipation.

Tae Gyun Park, Erik Mobrand, JeongHun Han, and Jaewoo Choo
Chief Editors, The Journal of Northeast Asian History

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL OF NORTHEAST ASIAN HISTORY

The Journal of Northeast Asian History (JNAH) is a peer-reviewed biannual journal published by the Institute of International Affairs at the Graduate School of International Studies, Seoul National University. JNAH seeks challenging research focusing on regional and trans-national issues within the context of historical Northeast Asia. The Journal concentrates on interdisciplinary, comparative, and cross-cultural approaches to issues such as borders, identity, international relations, history issues, history education, historiography, and other relevant themes within the humanities and the social sciences. In addition to this thematic diversity, the Journal's geographical scope extends to other areas of Asia and beyond, thus inviting scholarly engagement in rethinking globalism and localism in world history. For detailed information about the submission of manuscripts, please contact the Journal at journal.jnah@snu.ac.kr.

Articles

From Foes to Fair-weather Friends and Comrades in Arms: The Ups and Downs of Relations between the GDR and China in the 1980s

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From Foes to Fair-weather Friends and Comrades in Arms: The Ups and Downs of Relations between the GDR and China in the 1980s

The German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the People's Republic of China (PRC) experienced an eventful end to the 1980s, to say the very least. While Beijing brought a violent halt to the alleged "counter-revolution" of the students in Tiananmen Square in June 1989, the GDR collapsed without a single shot fired in the same year. When then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev announced what East Berlin feared would be "regime-threatening" fundamental political and social reforms in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980s, the GDR leadership decided that it was time to patch up relations with China as opposed to indiscriminately adhering to Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika. Some of the exchanges between East Berlin and Beijing in the 1980s, before the GDR collapsed and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) fired into the Tiananmen crowds, precipitating China's international isolation, are examined below.

Keywords: China-GDR relations, Honecker's visit to Beijing, Tiananmen Square 1989, collapse of the German Democratic Republic (GDR)

From Foes to Fair-weather Friends and Comrades in Arms: The Ups and Downs of Relations between the GDR and China in the 1980s

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I. Introduction

When Erich Honecker, Secretary-General of the GDR's Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED)[1] visited Beijing in October 1986, the Soviet Union and China had no political relations to speak of due to the "Sino-Soviet split" of the late 1950s/early 1960s and would only re-establish high-level political relations in the very early 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union.[2] Therefore, Honecker's visit to China in 1986 was always going to be observed with suspicion by his political and ideological masters in Moscow. When the GDR "congratulated" Beijing's political leaders for having ended peaceful demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in June 1989 through military force, Moscow under Mikhail Gorbachev had very little left to be suspicious about and was—

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1 SED in German stands for "Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands."

2 For a very detailed analysis of the "Sino-Soviet Split" see Lorenz Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

unlike Honecker and his "yes men" in the GDR political leadership—well aware that the GDR was about to collapse.

Like all other socialist bloc countries in Eastern Europe, Moscow condemned Beijing's decision to end the students' demonstrations with military violence. Indeed, Gorbachev more than once in the second half of the 1980s acknowledged and declared that the Eastern European countries had the right to what he called "self-determination." Following this logic, Gorbachev must have welcomed East German citizens protesting against East Berlin's repressive leadership in the late 1980s as the ultimate expression of that right. In fact, Gorbachev sought more than once before 1989 to convince Honecker to endorse or at least not oppose the kind of social-political reforms he adopted in the Soviet Union. East Berlin's endorsement of Beijing's decision to defend itself against unarmed students with military force turned the GDR into the "odd man out" within the socialist camp at the time. In reality, East Berlin's cynical support for Beijing, which had opted for violence to end what it claimed was a Western-sponsored "conspiracy" to overthrow the Chinese state, was the ultimate expression of its political helplessness and a desperate attempt to ally itself with Beijing at a time when Moscow was enacting political and economic reforms it perceived as "regime-threatening."

The signs that the domestic and foreign policies of the Soviet Union under the reformist Mikhail Gorbachev in the mid-1980s were about to fundamentally change were there for all to see—except apparently for Honecker and policymakers in Beijing.[3] On the occasion of the XXVII Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in February 1986, Gorbachev announced the intention to comprehensively re-visit the Soviet Union's foreign policy, renouncing

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[3] Honecker's ability to fully understand the political developments and reality around him in the mid-1980s was negatively influenced by a series of personal health problems as well as the demise of his granddaughter Mariana in 1985 caused by decade-long massive environmental pollution in the GDR. This loss in particular is said to have had a devastating impact on Honecker.

central elements of Marxist-Leninist ideology as a basis for Moscow's international relations and policies. Honecker and the GDR's political leadership, however, continued to believe that Gorbachev was "only" planning to modernize socialism as opposed to dismantling it altogether. Honecker's categorical refusal to adopt economic and political reforms in the GDR and his inability to understand that Gorbachev wanted to end the Cold War with the West made sure that the GDR and its so-called "real existing socialism" would land in the dustbin of history when East German protestors and activists started marching for democracy and against the regime in Leipzig and Dresden in late 1989.

II. Patching up Relations in the Early 1980s

In the very early 1980s, East German university professors began to return to Chinese universities[4] just as official party relations between the SED and China's CCP resumed. Furthermore, East Berlin decided in 1981 to terminate the so-called "solidarity week" for Vietnam and ordered an East German publishing house to stop the publication and circulation of materials critical of China.[5] In February 1981 during the tenth SED party convention Honecker announced that the GDR would be—under certain conditions—prepared to normalize relations with Beijing: "As far as the GDR is concerned, it remains prepared to normalize relations with the People's Republic of China based on the principles of equality, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference. We are convinced that peaceful and normal relations are also of interest to the Chinese people."[6]

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[4] These were the first such exchanges in decades since the above-mentioned "Sino-Soviet split" in the late 1950s/early 1960s.

[5] Publications critical of China were taken out of circulation

[6] See Protokoll der Verhandlungen des X. Parteitages der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands im Palast der Republik 11. bis 16. April 1981, Band 1, 1-3. Beratungstag, Berlin

While this sounded conciliatory, it was only the very last paragraph of Honecker's speech on relations with China that struck a conciliatory tone. The previous paragraphs of that speech featured quite a different tone and focused on the alleged disadvantages of China establishing relations with the "imperialist" United States:

> For the fight against imperialism it would [be] crucially important if such a big country as China made its contribution. However, it turned out that the opposite was the case. Chinese cooperation with the U.S. helps the policies of confrontation among the most reactionary forces of global imperialism. That in particular is true for Beijing's anti-Soviet attitude and its [hostility] toward the community of Socialist countries.

Only a few weeks after Honecker's somewhat "semi-reconciliatory" China speech an official East German delegation travelled to Beijing. Composed of officials from the department of international relations of the SED's Central Committee and headed by Bruno Mahlow, the delegation met a group of officials from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Institute for International Relations.[7] This visit was in July 1981 and was followed by the visit of two officials from the CCP's Central Committee to East Berlin, the first official Chinese visit to East Berlin since the mid-1960s. Notably, the protocol for the visit stressed that the actual relations between China's Communist Party and East Germany's SED were not discussed.[8] Meanwhile, it did not provide any information on what the attending officials actually should have talked

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(Dietz) 1981, 42.

[7] Most probably this was an institute affiliated with China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[8] The protocol limited itself to, e.g., emphasizing that the Chinese visitors were interested in the economic development of the GDR. The protocol furthermore mentioned that the Chinese Embassy in East Berlin covered all costs for the Chinese visitors in Berlin, probably to emphasize that this was not an "official" invitation important enough for the GDR to cover the costs for the visiting delegation.

about over the course of the visit from July 16 to August 23, 1981 either.

The lack of clarity in the protocol pertaining to the issues Chinese and East German party officials were to discuss during a visit that lasted five weeks is indeed remarkable. While due to a lack of verifiable information one can only speculate as to why the protocol did not provide any stipulations regarding the content of the talks, it can nonetheless be taken for granted that Chinese and East German officials did during the five-week official visit also talk about bilateral relations—in fact it is hard to imagine that they did not. In other words, five weeks would be a long time trying to avoid talking about bilateral relations. However, the GDR's decision not to publish any information on what was discussed in East Berlin could have been related to concerns about what Moscow thought about a long and official GDR-Chinese encounter at a time when Moscow and Beijing were not, put bluntly, talking to but almost only about each other.[9]

Indeed, Moscow was apprehensive about the Chinese-East German encounter at the time and a secret note most probably written by an official from the CPSU Central Committee in June 1982 indicates that it was clearly worried about possible Chinese attempts to improve relations with East Berlin at the expense of relations between Moscow and East Berlin. As one official stated, "Typical for Beijing's tactics are urgent requests towards the GDR to intensify bilateral relations with Beijing while at the same [time] attempting to harm relations between the GDR and Soviet Union."[10] As alleged evidence that Beijing was trying to drive a wedge between Moscow and East Berlin, the official further cited Beijing's proposal to resume the exchange between East German and

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[9] For a short summary of the visit see Aufenthalt von 2 Mitarbeitern des ZK der KP Chinas in der DDR (16. Juli bis 23. August 1981); SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/20/139.

[10] See Information (Vertraulich!) 22.06.82 4 Exemplare; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA IV 2/2.035/64. The source and author of this note cannot be verified but it is very likely that it was written by an official from the party's Central Committee.

Chinese university students and professors, journalists and writers. Furthermore, the officials wrote that the Chinese ambassador to East Berlin proposed at the end of 1981 to resume and increase bilateral trade and scientific relations. Finally, the official sounded concerned about the fact that bilateral East German-Chinese trade for the year 1982 would increase by seven percent and that the years 1981 and 1982 saw increased exchanges between the Communist Party in China and the Socialist Party in East Germany. The official concluded by claiming[11] that what he refers to as "Chinese propaganda" voiced during encounters with GDR officials suggested that the Soviet Union-led Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)[12] would have 'undesired consequences' for the East German economy.

III. "Neutralizing" Beijing

East Berlin of course denied having been exploited by Beijing and "tricked" into improving relations with it at the expense of relations with Moscow. In fact, East Berlin claimed the very opposite was the case, offering its very own (very peculiar) explanation of what the expansion of bilateral ties with Beijing stood for: "neutralizing" China in order to later reintegrate China into what it dramatically referred to as the "global anti-imperialist fight."

In a letter to the CPSU Central Committee, the SED Central Committee claimed that all instruments—trade and economic ties, scientific ties, cultural ties, and sports ties with China—would be used toward such an end. Meanwhile, ties and cooperation strengthening China's military capabilities, the document emphasised, would not be discussed or established. The SED Central Committee presented itself as

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[11] To be sure, the claim was not supported by any evidence.

[12] Also known as Comecon, it was founded in 1949 and dissolved in 1989 and was the equivalent of the U.S. Marshall Plan for Eastern European economic reconstruction.

very concerned that China's rapprochement with the U.S. would impose what it referred to as a "two-front war" with respect to the Warsaw Pact, creating an anti-socialist coalition consisting of the U.S., China, Western Europe and Japan.[13] Reality, of course, was very different and the fear of a "two-front war" with China fighting on the side of the U.S. was indeed completely nonsensical. East Berlin's claim that the expansion of trade, scientific and cultural ties would serve to "neutralize" Beijing and keep it from intensifying relations with the "imperialist" West also sounds very implausible and must have been perceived as such in Moscow. In fact, the above-mentioned letter from the SED Central Committee to their comrades in the Soviet Union exhibits such a surreal tone, one may surmise that East Berlin's political elites were already out of touch with political realities in China at the time. Indeed, China's economic opening-up and Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms made sure that China's trade relations with and technology imports from the West in general, and the U.S. and Japan in particular, were becoming far more important than ties with and imports from the GDR.

Following the phase of its "neutralization," the letter continued, China would be included in "dealing the final blow to the imperialist enemy."[14] That does indeed sound very dramatic but nonetheless seemed to have sounded plausible to GDR policymakers who aimed at "freeing China from a complot" with the U.S., as the letter makes clear. China, the letter also noted, should be treated like any other "imperialist trading partner." While the use of such dramatic language and terms in official documents published by the GDR authorities and propaganda organs was not unusual, the arguments and conclusions lacked any kind of credibility. These were rather an expression of political helplessness and

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[13] See Schreiben des ZK der SED an das ZK der KPdSU 27.7. 1982; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2/1960.

[14] "Hauptstoβ," the term used in German, is a very belligerent and dramatic term describing what China would be part of in the future in the view of the GDR.

an attempt to portray East Berlin's rapprochement with Beijing as beneficial for Moscow too. Confirming in the same letter that the GDR had successfully kept Beijing from supporting alleged Western German "revanchism"[15] toward the GDR falls under the same category. In reality, West German policies toward the GDR were instead reconciliatory in the early 1980s, though Bonn nonetheless exploited the fact that the GDR depended on Western Germany for economic and financial aid. The Soviet Union was obviously aware of the fact that Bonn's financial aid toward East Berlin in particular was instrumental in keeping the regime from economically collapsing and rhetoric speaking of "revanchist policies" toward the GDR must have sounded hollow to Moscow in the early 1980s. In sum, the letter's tenor, terms and nuances resembled those of an underage son telling his father what he wants to hear in dramatic language as a confirmation of unconditional loyalty and devotion (to the socialist cause, of course).

IV. Further Improving Ties

The expansion of relations between East Berlin and Beijing over the course of 1982 to 1984 further confirms the assessment that "neutralization" was not what the GDR was pursuing with respect to China at the time. In 1983, East Berlin and Beijing adopted their first bilateral agreement in the sector of telecommunications and in April 1984 a newly established joint committee covering economic, trade and scientific cooperation started meeting on a regular basis. Among the agreements made, the GDR committed to helping with the construction and development phases of more than forty industrial projects in China. This resumed economic and industrial cooperation was accompanied by

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15 "Revanchism" is a term that the GDR reserved for the description of Bonn's policies toward East Berlin over decades. It was, however, never really made clear for what exactly West Germany would seek revenge.

the resumption of bilateral visits in 1984, 1985 and 1986.[16] Between the summers of 1982 and 1985, in fact, relations between the GDR and China intensified to a level that cannot by any account be described as part of the above-mentioned "neutralization" process. Rather, the quality and quantity of exchanges between East Berlin and Beijing suggested that East Berlin was looking to charm an old new friend in case it needed one in the years ahead.

As East German and Chinese universities also intensified contacts, East German athletes took part in an athletics competition in Beijing in the summer of 1982 and GDR media were ordered to increase their coverage on China without criticizing the country in any way. Kurt Vogel, a high-ranking official of the GDR journalists' union,[17] returned from a visit to Beijing in the winter of 1982 and wrote in the news magazine *Horizont*[18] that his visit was "an emotional reunion with former comrades and comrade-in-arms from 1950, who have never lost faith in the correctness and superiority of the socialist Weltanschauung."[19]

What followed in terms of visits and official high-level exchanges in 1984 and 1985 also continued to look more like engagement rather

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16 These visits involved several GDR politicians and policymakers such as Margot Honecker, Erich Honecker's wife and Minister of Education, Gerhard Schürer, chairman of the State Planning Commission, and members of the Politburo (Günther Kleiber and Horst Sindermann). Margot Honecker was what was referred to as "Minister of the People's Education" (Ministerin für Volksbildung) from 1963 until the collapse of the GDR in 1989. Above all, if not exclusively, Margot Honecker is remembered for her hard-line Stalinist policies and her (successful) attempts to militarize the GDR's education system. She exploited her relationship with Erich Honecker to make her socialist Stalinist fantasies come true and in 1965 introduced the so-called "Uniform Socialist Education System" (Sozialistisches Einheitserziehungssystem), which envisioned military training in schools and campaigns of ideological indoctrination. This was arguably comparable to what the Nazis in Germany referred to as "Gleichschaltung" (literally: "render everything equal") with regard to schools, universities and public life from 1933-1945

17 General-Secretary of the Central Committee of the "DDR-Journalistenverband."

18 Cited in Werner Meißner, *Die DDR und China 1949 bis 1990-Politik-Wirtschaft-Kultur* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1995), 349.

19 The German term "Weltanschauung" (also used in English) is used here as the English term "ideology" does not accurately describe what Kurt Vogel meant.

than "neutralization." East Germany's Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Herbert Krolikowski, for example, travelled to Beijing in May 1984 after which the SED's Central Committee developed a comprehensive catalogue on how to intensify relations and exchanges with Beijing in the years ahead. This catalogue included the continuation of bilateral political dialogue and the preparation of a bilateral meeting between the East German and Chinese foreign ministers, marking the resumption of official relations between East Berlin's "Chamber of the People" (Volkskammer, East Berlin's parliament) and China's National People's Congress (NPC) as well as leading to various other agreements in the areas of health, non-commercial payment transactions, scientific and technology cooperation and trade and commerce.[20] Krolikowski's visit to Beijing was followed by a visit of Politburo member Li Peng[21] to East Berlin in the summer of 1985, without a doubt a high-level visit of such importance as to induce Honecker and his colleagues to believe that East Berlin really mattered to Beijing as a partner with whom to trade goods and coordinate political views and actual policies.[22] However, what really mattered to Beijing were its trade and investment ties with the "other" Germany at the time. Indeed, the bilateral trade volume between Beijing and Bonn were at the time more than ten times bigger than the respective volume between Beijing and East Berlin and Bonn was a central source for badly needed technology and know-how in China.

Regarding China's relations with West Germany, it is accurate to conclude that what Li Peng said to Honecker pertaining to China's

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[20] See Schlussfolgerungen des Sekretariats des ZK der SED 6. Juni 1984; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/3/3671.

[21] Li Peng was to have a key role in Beijing's decision to end peaceful student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in June 1989 through violent means. For Li Peng's central role in convincing Deng Xiaoping to declare martial law in China in June 1989, see, e.g., Andrew J. Nathan and Perry Link, ed., *The Tiananmen Papers* (London: Abacus, 2001).

[22] This occurred roughly at the same time when high-ranking CCP official Zhao Ziyang visited West Germany.

relations with West Germany during his visit to East Berlin in 1985 was not necessarily what East Berlin wanted to hear. Li promised that China would not interfere in bilateral relations between East Berlin and Bonn and told East German officials that Zhao Ziyang, a high-ranking CCP official (and later CCP Secretary-General) would convey the same message during a visit to Bonn taking place at roughly the same time. Most probably due to its trade and commercial relations with West Germany, which included the export of German know-how and technology crucial for China's economic reforms, China chose not to explicitly support East Berlin's hard-line policies toward the ideological enemy in the West. Before heading back to Beijing, however Li Peng granted something resembling a "consolation prize" to his disappointed interlocutors in East Berlin, stating that he favoured student exchanges with East over West Germany since the GDR was equipped with the 'right ideology.'[23]

The mid-1980s saw more official East German-Chinese encounters, e.g. the meeting between Gerhard Schürer, chairman of the GDR's State Planning Commission, and Hu Yaobang, then CCP Secretary-General in Beijing, in July 1985.[24] Hu said that China supported the concept of "peaceful co-existence" between the two German states while he warned Bonn during his encounters with West German leaders not to "swallow" the GDR. To be sure, West Berlin never had the intention to do so, nor did Hu himself have that impression. Based on his own experience, Hu judged that "revanchist forces" in West Germany did not seem to have

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[23] For details see Information über die Beratungen mit dem Stellvertreter des Ministerpräsidenten des Staatsrates der Volksrepublik China, Genossen Li Peng 25.5.1985; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2A/2758; and Vermerk über ein Gespräch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrats der DDR, Genossen Erich Honecker, mit dem stellvertrenden Vorsitzenden des Ministerrats der Volksrepublik China, Genossen Li Peng, am 20.5.1985; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA IIV 2/20/22.

[24] See Niederschrift über das Gespräch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der KP Chinas, Genossen Hu Yaobang, mit Genossen Gerhard Schürer am 10.7.1985 im Sitz der Partei-und Staatsführung der VR China, Zhongnanhai; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/20/22

great influence. On a conciliatory note, Hu again confirmed that China would not do anything in its relations with West Germany to damage relations with the GDR. However, talk was cheap at the time, and by essentially denying the existence of what East Berlin claimed were "revanchist forces" in West Germany, Hu made it unambiguously clear that Beijing valued economic and trade relations with West Germany over political and ideological relations with a country that had very little, if not next to nothing, to offer in terms of badly-needed technology and know-how.

V. Honecker, Self-Declared Mediator-in-Chief

In 1985, worried that ongoing hostilities between Moscow and Beijing would continue to yield geo-strategic disadvantages for the Warsaw Pact countries, Honecker decided to assume a role as mediator between Moscow and Beijing, eventually visiting China from October 21-26, 1986.[25] Honecker decided that this visit would be the first test case of his alleged "mediation skills" to help Beijing and Moscow improve relations for the sake of the socialist cause. While that sounded good on paper, his plan to mediate between China and the Soviets produced very little, if any, tangible results. Honecker and his propaganda apparatus, of course, would interpret the quality and output of the talks with his Chinese counterparts very differently.

Honecker was received with all honours in Beijing and his Chinese hosts seemed indeed prepared to exchange views with the man, whose eyes according to the Chinese magazine *Liaowang* displayed "wisdom" and "self-confidence."[26] General-Secretary of China's Communist Party

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[25] See Joachim Scholtyseck, Die *Aussenpolitik der DDR Enzyklopädie Deutscher Geschichte Band 69* (R. Oldenbourg Verlag, München 2003), 42-44.

[26] See *Der Spiegel*, "Blick nach Oben," October 27, 1986. http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13521735.html.

Hu Hu Yaobang meanwhile called Honeckers's visit a "big event." Returning the compliments, Honecker praised the "diligent Chinese people" and the "beautiful country." By Honecker's own account, his visit to China was not coordinated with Moscow and was—at least as far as Honecker was concerned—an expression of the GDR's foreign policy independence and the ability to act as a mediator and "honest broker" between Moscow and Beijing. To be sure, this interpretation of what Honecker had achieved in Beijing in October 1986 was Honecker's alone. In retrospect and against the background of what would occur in the GDR in the very late 1980s, one can indeed conclude that his visit to China was also borne out of desperation and the need to look for a new ally and "best friend" who would, like Honecker, remain staunchly opposed to the kind of allegedly "regime-threatening" political and/or social reforms Gorbachev was advocating and adopting in the Soviet Union.

In 1986, Honecker had not yet concluded with confidence that Moscow under Gorbachev would decide to leave Honecker and the collapsing GDR to their own devices as citizens began their regime-changing protests and marching in the late 1980s. Consequently, Honecker and the GDR propaganda organs portrayed his visit to Beijing as the result of Honecker's year-long—and in his view successful—efforts to overcome the "Sino-Soviet Split" that occurred in the early 1960s and pave the way for normalization between the two countries. Indeed, Honecker praised himself in 1989 as the "forerunner of normalization" ("Wegbereiter der Normalisierung") between Beijing and Moscow.

While Honecker clearly overstated the positive impact of his trip to Beijing and the consequences for the GDR's relations with China, however, it did—at least according to Günter Schabowski, member of the SED's Politburo—help to encourage other socialist countries to seek to improve relations with Beijing at the time.[27] Yet such a conclusion was not so much a realistic assessment of what the Honecker visit to Beijing did for the GDR and other socialist countries but more a result of Erich

Honecker's tendency to overstate his personal influence on global politics; he had little to offer to China beyond high-sounding rhetoric regarding "brotherhood between socialist countries" and a joint "struggle against the imperialist or revanchist West." Finally, Honecker claimed that his talks in China were an impetus for intensifying bilateral trade and business relations. This, too, is simply not accurate. Shortly after the visit, for example, Beijing announced it would reduce the annual export of Chinese commercial vehicles from 10,000 to 6,000 in the years ahead and in turn East Berlin denied the Chinese request to establish a joint venture to build a carbo-chemical industrial complex in the Chinese city of Wuhai.

VI. The View from China

Honecker's Chinese interlocutors in Beijing put on a brave face and promised that Beijing would maintain relations with both Germanys based on the principle of "peaceful co-existence." Beijing's continued support for the idea that West Berlin never be allowed to reunify Germany by force might have sounded reassuring to Honecker during his visit, but that was probably nothing more than something the Chinese leadership said to ease Honecker's anxiety about his economically collapsing GDR being "swallowed" by West Germany, not least because West Berlin or the West in general never had any intention to reunify the two German states by force.

Honecker and Chinese Supreme Leader Deng Xiaoping agreed during a bilateral meeting that Honecker's visit was not about resuming

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[27] Günter Schabowski, *Der Absturz* (Berlin, Rowohlt Verlag, 1991), 210; Günter Schabowski was a former high-ranking GDR official and member of the Politburo. Hence, he was on top of a system, which he has (in more than one book authored by himself) strongly criticized. The credibility of former officials of authoritarian states writing and commenting on the authoritarian system they were very much part of is arguably very limited.

but instead continuing relations as Beijing, even amid the Sino-Soviet border conflicts in the 1960s, had never closed its embassy in East Berlin. However, Honecker's (timid) initiative to promote Gorbachev's idea of improving Sino-Soviet relations as suggested during the Reykjavik Summit in October 1986 was censored and not reported by the Chinese media. Meanwhile, Beijing suggested to Honecker not to rely too much on the two superpowers and instead conduct policies more independently from the Soviet Union.

What was also remarkable about the visit was that Beijing spoke of the "nation of the GDR," which led the West German Ambassador in Beijing Per Fischer to call China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in protest, clarifying that there was only one "German nation," e.g. the people who live both in East and West Germany. While the East German delegation on the other hand was delighted about Beijing talking about the "nation of the GDR," Beijing chose to play down the alleged political significance of the term and declared it to be an "idiomatic" concept rather than a declaration that there were two German nations.

More importantly, however, Beijing sought to use the visit for its own purposes in the context of what the German scholar Joachim Krüger calls a "Policy of Differentiation" (also "Policy of Diversification"). Specifically, Beijing attempted to improve relations with the GDR at the expense of relations between the GDR and Soviet Union,[28] driving a wedge between East Berlin and Moscow, in other words. Thus, as Eberhard Sandschneider argues, Beijing never considered the possibility of seeking to patch-up relations with the Soviet Union.[29] The meeting

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[28] See Joachim Krüger, *Zu Gast in Peking. Die DDR und die VR China in der 80er Jahren*; Conference Paper *Deutsch-Chinesische Beziehungen in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Ostasiatisches Seminar Free University of Berlin July 1994.

[29] See Eberhard Sandschneider, "Die DDR und die VR China. Bilaterale Beziehungen im Schatten Moskaus," in *Das Profil der DDR in der sozialistischen Staatengemeinschaft. Zwanzigste Tagung zum Stand der DDR-Forschung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland June 1987,* Conference paper (Koein: June 1987).

between Honecker and Hu Yaobang, then Secretary-General of China's Communist Party in Beijing, however, suggested that Beijing was not interested in offering to improve relations with East Berlin at the expense of East Berlin's relations with Moscow. In fact, Hu said that China would never do anything to undermine relations between socialist countries and the Soviet Union: "We fully respect the particular good relations, which have over decades developed between the socialist countries and the Soviet Union. We will not declare or do anything that might negatively influence the relations between Eastern European socialist countries and the Soviet Union."[30]

In a second conversation with Hu, Honecker expressed his interest in seeing improved relations between Beijing and Moscow, once again portraying himself as a mediator and Moscow's "messenger." Hu told Honecker that Deng Xiaoping would be willing to consider the possibility of visiting the Soviet Union if Vietnam (at the time provided with financial and political support from Moscow) withdrew its troops from Cambodia.[31] Hu, however, complained in the same conversation with Honecker (in Nanjing) that Moscow had seemingly no intention whatsoever to meet that Chinese request. Furthermore, Hu complained that Gorbachev had not addressed the Cambodia issue in a speech in Vladivostok in July 1986. During a bilateral meeting between the Chinese and Soviet Union vice-foreign ministers in October of the same year, it was again Hu who lamented the fact that Moscow had not addressed Chinese concerns about the Soviet Union's ongoing support for China's archenemy Vietnam.[32] Honecker in turn sought to assure

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[30] See Niederschrift über das Gespräch des Genossen Erich Honecker, Generalsekretär des ZK der SED, mit Genossen Hu Yaobang, Generalsekretär des ZK der KP Chinas, am 22.10.1986; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2/2191.

[31] Ibid., 351.

[32] Conversation between Hu Yaobang and Erich Honecker, October 24, 1986, Nanjing; cited in Meißner, *Die DDR und China*, 381-82; document accessible in "Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv" (SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2/2191).

China that Gorbachev was not only to be fully trusted but someone prepared to meet the Chinese leadership any time:

> Make no mistake, comrade Hu Yaobang, I know comrade Gorbachev as a man whose word can be trusted and who has a sincere interest in improving relations between the communist parties in China and the Soviet Union. We, I told Gorbachev, are interested to see improved relations between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China and the best way to do that is to talk to our Vietnamese comrades. I know that comrade Gorbachev is at your disposal to meet anytime. We would be very happy to see outstanding problems resolved and I am saying this as a Communist.[33]

Hu Yaobang, on the other hand, told Honecker during his first meeting with him that China would no longer speak of "US imperialism," "Japanese militarism" and "Western German revanchism." The message was clear: Deng Xiaoping's economic pragmatism accompanied by policies to attract as much Western foreign direct investment as possible had priority over an ideological confrontation with the West in general and the U.S. in particular.

VII. The Visit's Sobering Aftermath

When Mikhail Gorbachev became Secretary-General of the CPSU in 1985 Honecker and other SED officials realized and indeed feared that the kind of political reform he announced (and later adopted) in the second half of the 1980s would become a threat to the entire socialist system. Indeed, anxiety about Gorbachev's perceived "system-threatening" reforms shaped Honecker and the GDR's domestic and

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[33] Ibid.

foreign-policy thinking from the mid-to-late 1980s, leaving very little or no room at all for a GDR mediating role between Moscow and Beijing. Already in November 1986 Gorbachev decided to completely abandon the so-called "Brezhnev Doctrine" through which the Soviet Union had been authorized to intervene in popular protests and demonstrations against the socialist regimes in Warsaw Pact nations (and the Soviet Union's Eastern European satellite states) since 1968.[34] The end of the Brezhnev Doctrine must have set off the alarm bells in East Berlin, which also feared that the doctrine's termination would perpetuate Moscow's strategy of rapprochement with West Germany driven by economic and financial necessities. At the time, however, East Berlin pretended not to notice that Gorbachev pursued very fundamental political and economic reforms and even to be independent enough to dismiss Moscow's plan to fundamentally renew the contents and goals of the decade-old style of Moscow's version of socialism as irrelevant and as no threat to the GDR's regime survival. As it turned out, the East German regime could not have been more wrong about that: Honecker's defiant attitude toward Gorbachev's Moscow and his refusal to follow Gorbachev's advice to consider economic and social reforms confirmed to Gorbachev that he could not be counted on as reformed-minded partner.

Beijing was of course fully aware that the majority of policymakers in East Berlin wanted improved relations with Beijing in order to strengthen the GDR's position in the context of its bilateral relations with Moscow and enable Honecker to conduct a foreign policy less dependent on Moscow. However, Chinese policymakers must also have been aware that East Germany in 1986 had entered a state of permanent economic crisis and that the GDR had very little (if anything) to offer what Beijing

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[34] The doctrine was also adopted to retroactively justify the Soviet Union's invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 during the "The Prague Spring," in which the Soviet military intervened in Prague's pro-democracy and anti-regime protests.

wanted in terms of know-how and technology. China's economic policies in the mid-1980s needed to display economic pragmatism, which called for the intensification of relations with West, not East, Germany. All of that, however, did not seem to matter to Honecker who called his 1986 visit to Beijing an "extraordinary success" upon his return to East Berlin.

Reality turned out to be different. From the Chinese perspective the GDR was probably simply no longer important enough to justify being an "ally" against the Soviet Union (that would change, albeit briefly, after June 1989, as described below). To be sure, in retrospect it remains difficult to assess the "real" quality of the meeting and the "real" intentions China had when receiving Honecker in Beijing at the time, not least considering that the meeting was accompanied by high-sounding political rhetoric and mutual declarations of friendship, solidarity and confirmations to jointly fight for the "socialist cause." However, while Honecker presented his visit to Beijing as a stunning success to the public, the reality of what the visit did and, more importantly, did not accomplish was very different.

The first two years after the Honecker visit to China made it very clear that the bilateral encounter in Beijing did not turn not out to be the "big bang" of GDR-Chinese relations of the mid-1980s. Indeed, from the second half of the 1980 onwards, East Berlin had very little to offer in terms of know-how, technology and products that China could not get elsewhere (above all from East Berlin's arch-enemy, Bonn). For example, Beijing announced as early as 1987 that it no longer felt bound by the agreement of the 1980s to buy 10,000 GDR-made commercial vehicles by the 1990s, deciding to buy only 2,000 instead. Beijing thus clearly put commercial interests before ideology and communist "comradeship" at the time, opting for technology and equipment from West Germany instead.

Consequently, from Beijing's perspective an official visit to East Berlin was probably not enough "added value" in times when Beijing was much more interested in expanding trade and investment relations

with the "other" Germany. Furthermore, it can also be assumed that Beijing did not fully trust East Berlin to take on its self-declared role as "honest broker" between Beijing and Moscow. From Beijing's perspective, Moscow and East Berlin had over decades been too close and too united in its antagonism toward Beijing to be perceived as the kind of "mediator" Honecker presented himself to be at the time. What is more, China in 1986 surely did not feel obliged to pay too much attention to the economically collapsing GDR.[35] Finally, Beijing—like East Berlin in 1986—was probably not yet concerned enough about Gorbachev's reform drive to turn to the GDR as an "ally" against a Soviet Union ready to adopt the kind of political reforms Beijing was determined to oppose at all costs.

As mentioned above, East German propaganda portrayed Honecker's trip to and talks in China as the long-awaited breakthrough in ties with Beijing. But China's top leaders, as it turned out, did not entirely share such enthusiastic assessment of what the visit stood for. While Chinese "semi-retired" Supreme Leader Deng Xiaoping found time to meet Honecker during his visit to Beijing, he did not show any particular interest in discussing in-depth international politics and the state of bilateral relations, instead referring to Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang as interlocutors with whom to discuss politics and bilateral ties. "I am no longer taking care of such concrete issues. My task today is to meet you and my second task is to invite you for dinner," Deng told Honecker.[36] Not only did he explicitly limit his role to hosting the comrade from East Berlin for dinner, but he also showed no interest in reciprocating Honecker's visit to Beijing with a visit to East Berlin. The

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[35] Beijing's policymakers were without a doubt aware that it was West German economic and financial assistance keeping the GDR from collapsing.

[36] See Niederschrift über eine Begegnung des Generalsekretärs des Zentralkomitees der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrats der DDR, Genossen Erich Honecker, mit dem Vorsitzenden der Zentralen Beraterkommission der KP China, Genossen Deng Xiaoping, am 23.10.1986 im Gebäude des NVK der VR China; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2/2/2192.

SED Central Committee in turn put up a brave front and referred to the conversation between Deng and Honecker as an "encounter"[37] as opposed to "talks," possibly to play down the importance of a meeting that was in terms of substance and results fairly superficial. The other meetings Honecker had with Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang were instead referred to as "talks."[38] This represented a subtle but nonetheless important difference and in this case most probably a decision taken by the East German authorities in order to avoid the impression that Deng Xiaoping did not really take the meeting with Honecker seriously and that he had very little to discuss with Honecker as regards the substance of bilateral Chinese-GDR relations (which in fact was the case as the protocol and summary of the encounter demonstrates: a lot of nice-sounding diplomatic and casual niceties as opposed to anything resembling "real" substance.

Finally, if Honecker's visit to China really had been the kind of success Honecker portrayed it to be, then Deng Xiaoping, Chinese President Li Xiannian, and Hu Yaobang would probably have decided to reciprocate Honecker's visit with a visit to East Berlin (as Honecker must surely have expected). None of them, however, expressed any interest in, let alone enthusiasm for, visiting East Berlin and it was only CCP Secretary-General Zhao Ziyang who later accepted an invitation to East Berlin and met with Erich Honecker in June 1987.[39]

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[37] "Begegnung" in German.

[38] "Gespräch" in German.

[39] See Niederschrift über das Gespräch des Generalsekretärs des Zentralkomitees der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrats der DDR, Genossen Erich Honecker, mit dem amtierenden Generalsekretär des Zentralkomitees der KP China und Ministerpräsidenten des Staatsrats der VR China, Zhao Ziyang, am 8.Juni 1987 im Hause des Zentralkomitees; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2A/3030.

VIII. Applauding the Violence in Tiananmen Square

The GDR's final and dramatic policy blunder before its collapse was undoubtedly Honecker's decision to support the Chinese leadership with respect to its orders to open fire on the unarmed students in Tiananmen Square in June 1989. At the time, the GDR's political leadership described in parrot-style what the Chinese called the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square: a 'counter-revolutionary disturbance by a small group of people determined to topple the country's political leadership.'[40] What Beijing and East Berlin agreed were a 'small group of misguided counter-revolutionaries' were in fact up to 100 million Chinese people all over China, who in 1989 protested for what the government promised in the 1980s and did not deliver: political and social reforms in China.

In complete denial of the reality of what happened in Beijing in May and June 1989, East Berlin's Allgemeiner Deutscher Nachrichtendienst (ADN, General German News Service) declared on June 5, 1989 that China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) had suppressed a "counter-revolutionary upheaval," thereby adopting Beijing's terminology as to who the students in Tiananmen Square allegedly were and what they did in May and June 1989. On June 8, 1989 East Berlin's parliament followed the leadership's order to declare its unconditional solidarity with the Chinese leadership and its decision to end peaceful demonstrations with military force on June 4, 1989.[41] That declaration was announced at a time when the large majority of Eastern European countries and most importantly the Soviet Union did not express any such support, indeed condemning Beijing's violent response during the night of June 4, 1989. The declaration concluded: "[Beijing

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[40] See *Der Spiegel*, "Am Leben Bleiben," June 12, 1989. http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-13493717.html.

[41] See 9.Tagung der Volkskammer der DDR am 8.Juni 1989; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2/2231.

had been] obliged to re-establish order and security through force. Unfortunately this led to a number of casualties and deaths."[42] While such a declaration made it unambiguously clear how far East Berlin's leadership was detached from reality and good political sense, it also could be understood as a desperate attempt by the GDR leadership to align itself with China out of fear that it could be next in line after Beijing to be confronted with protests and demonstrations aimed at toppling the regime (as indeed happened in late 1989).

As East Berlin lost no time at all in pronouncing its support for Beijing's violent response in Tiananmen Square in June 1989, there was even talk of an "East Berlin-Beijing axis" aimed at counterbalancing Soviet Union liberalism. But the impetus for such an "axis" rather turned out to be East Berlin's cynical support for Beijing's decision to shoot into the crowds in Tiananmen Square in June 1989. Indeed, the SED leadership lost no time and spared no effort to justify what the Chinese armed forces were allegedly "obliged" to do in Tiananmen Square in June 1989. With East Berlin clearly in denial a report by the SED Central Committee on June 23, 1989 even claimed that the Western media had produced "horror news" concerning what happened on June 4 in Tiananmen Square. It thus proceeded to inform itself of what "really" happened through declarations and reports published by the CCP. Based on that information the SED concluded, just as the CCP had in China, that "counter-revolutionaries forces" turned a peaceful demonstration into an event to topple the Chinese government. Also like its comrades in Beijing, the SED maintained that what happened in Beijing in June 1989 was strictly an internal affair and not for outsiders to interfere in.[43] What is remarkable about all this is the fact that the SED thought it would be plausible to cite the CCP as opposed to outside sources to explain what

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[42] Ibid.

[43] See *Neues Deutschland*, "Aus dem Bericht des Politbüros an die 8. Tagung des Zentralkomitees der SED," June 23, 1989.

had happened and why in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

Even the outside sources the SED cited to allegedly "explain" what happened during that night in Beijing came to the very same conclusions. But the SED first and foremost referred to official Chinese sources, the same which authorized opening fire on unarmed students on the square, at a time when the public in the GDR was protesting against the SED and was no longer willing to take government propaganda and lies at face value. The GDR's ill-fated and cynical solidarity with Beijing in and after June 1989 was interpreted in the GDR that demonstrators would be presented with a "Chinese solution." Beijing for its part showed incredible gratitude for East Berlin's solidarity and dispatched its Minister for Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen to East Berlin roughly one week after the Tiananmen massacre. Notably, the violent events in Tiananmen Square did not even make it onto the agenda of his visit to East Berlin. Instead, East Berlin and Beijing spoke about further expanding relations and confirmed their solidarity against alleged Western attempts and policies to drive a wedge between the communities of socialist countries.[44]

East Germany's public on the other hand reacted very differently to Beijing's violent response to the student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square. Two weeks after the crackdown the protestant church in Saxony published a note protesting the violence against the peaceful protesters during and after the events of June 4, 1989: "With great consternation have we heard and later seen how a non-violent movement was crushed with violence, events followed by the persecution of involved people."[45] In July 1989 the protestant church published another report protesting

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[44] See *Neues Deutschland*, "Oskar Fischer Empfing Qian Qichen/Hoher Stand der Brüderlichen Beziehungen," June 13, 1989.

[45] See *Bestürzt über China: Erklärung der Synode der evangelischen Kirchenprovinz Sachsen vom 18.Juni 1989*; cited in, Gerhard Rein, *Die Protestantische Revolution 1987-1990. Ein Deutsches Lesebuch* (Berlin: Wichern- Verlag, 1990),180.

against the state's response to attempts to deliver a protest letter to the Chinese Embassy in East Berlin. Those who attempted to deliver that protest note to the embassy were arrested along the way and shortly detained. Another attempt to deliver that letter two weeks later (this time by roughly fifty protesters) again ended in beatings and arrests. The protestant church, however, did not give up and instead continued to organize events protesting against Beijing's brutal response in June 1989. It also organized services during which it protested against the violence in Tiananmen Square. One service in the Samariter Church in East Berlin was attended by 1,500 people, made up of churchgoers as well as civil and human rights activists in East Berlin. This event occurred in July 1989 when the SED and the GDR leadership were irreversibly weakened and indeed already on the verge of collapse. At the service it was stated:

> The SED's cynical justification of the Chinese armed forces' violent response to China's democracy movement, the morbid solidarity with the Chinese leadership, with which we are presented in the mass media every day, have only increased the anger and mourning of critical young people. Never was the discrepancy between official SED opinion and how common citizens viewed reality so immense. The SED's message to the GDR population was clear: this is how we will treat counter-revolutionaries. Those who think this is an exaggeration may refer to a neo-Stalinist statement of Minister Margot Honecker during the Pedagogical Congress carried out around the same time. Margot Honecker, wife of the SED Secretary-General, urged the country's youth on June 13 to look for "enemies," "traitors" and "counter-revolutionaries."[46]

Unsurprisingly, the GDR leadership ignored the protests and

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[46] Ibid, 180.

continued to pretend that it was still in control. A few days after the shootings in Tiananmen Square Egon Krenz, a member of the Politburo in charge of the GDR's internal security, told the German politician Oskar Lafontaine[47] during a symposium in the Western Germany city of Saarbrücken that China's political leadership had merely taken the necessary steps to restore order in Beijing and China. Krenz dismissed the Western German television coverage of the Tiananmen massacred as vicious "propaganda." This was the same Egon Krenz who in September 1989 was dispatched to Beijing to "congratulate" his Chinese comrades on their successful policy of having crushed "counter-revolutionary" elements among the peacefully demonstrating students in Tiananmen Square. Krenz's mission in Beijing was to express East Berlin's solidarity with the Chinese leadership. Krenz and Qiao Shi, then member of China's Politburo's Standing Committee (PSC),[48] jointly agreed on who was to blame for the violence in Tiananmen Square in June 1989: the U.S. and the West in general together with "reactionary forces" in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, all intent on toppling socialism in China. Qiao maintained that any Western-sponsored attempts to introduce capitalism in China were bound to fail, to which Krenz replied with a platitude about how it is impossible to challenge what he referred to as the "power of the people" (to be sure, what he really meant was the power of the ruling SED).

Anything else but expressing cynical solidarity with Beijing while blaming the West for what happened in June 1989 in Beijing would obviously have been a surprise during that visit. In fact, the literature suggests that both Krenz and his Chinese interlocutors really believed

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[47] Then a member of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), he is currently a member of the political party Die Linke, the SED's successor party.

[48] See Bericht über den Aufenthalt der Partei-und Staatsdelegation der DDR unter Leitung des Mitglieds des Politbüros und Sekretärs des ZK der SED, Genossen Egon Krenz, Stellvertreter des Vorsitzenden des Staatsrats der DDR, vom 25. September bis 2. Oktober 1989 in der VR China; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIA 2/2A/3247.

their interpretation of the causes of the events on Tiananmen Square in June 1989 was accurate. In retrospect, however, such a conclusion is hardly plausible as it must have been very difficult for politicians like Krenz and Qiao, both at the top of their respective political systems, not to understand what really caused the student protests. When they discussed the internal problems China was confronted with, they seemed to have been in perfect agreement regarding the "imperialist" West and its campaign to topple the Chinese state. Shi confirmed to Krenz that China would not change policies and positions and that Western economic and political sanctions would not be able to exert pressure on the country. Krenz's encounter with then newly-appointed CCP Secretary-General Jiang Zemin struck the same tone and what was said during that meeting was so completely out of touch with reality that it cannot be assumed that Krenz and his Chinese interlocutors did not realize that their description of events and trends in international politics at the time must have, to say the very least, sounded completely and utterly implausible to anybody outside of East German and Chinese policymaking circles. When Jiang Zemin thanked Krenz for the GDR's solidarity after the events in Beijing in June 1989, Krenz went out of his way to flatter Jiang Zemin saying that East Berlin's support for Beijing's was a 'matter of honour and duty' for fellow socialist countries.[49]

Indeed, Krenz was determined to shower Jiang Zemin with praise for all the alleged Chinese achievements related to the promotion of global socialism. Krenz's characterization and praise of a country's leadership which had only a few months earlier shot possibly thousands of its own citizens during (largely) peaceful demonstrations was as repulsive as it gets from a humanitarian point of view. This became even more true when after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the

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[49] See Vermerk über das Gespräch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der KP China, Genossen Jiang Zemin, mit Genossen Egon Krenz am 26, September 1989 in Peking.

GDR Krenz (falsely) maintained that it was thanks to his orders not to shoot on peacefully demonstrating East German citizens during and after the summer of 1989 that no violence broke out in East Berlin, Leipzig, Dresden and other East German cities at the time. While that turned out to be false and something Krenz said to present himself as the one who made sure that protests in East Germany in 1989 did not result in bloodshed, his conversations with his Chinese counterparts did indeed suggest that he not only endorsed what Beijing did in June 1989 but also that he would have considered acting in the same way if the people in the GDR demonstrated against the state. "The counter-revolutionary forces claimed to want freedom and democracy, while their real objective was to topple the Communist Party and the State," Krenz maintained.[50] Ironically, Egon Krenz had a point, although from the students' point of view the connection between freedom and democracy and the Communist Party was distinctively different: the Communist Party and the oppressive state stood in the way of the kind of freedom and democracy the students were demonstrating for.

On various occasions during his talks with his Chinese interlocutors Krenz maintained that nobody should be allowed to 'play with the power of the people' when he elaborated on why China's armed forces were allegedly obliged to end the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square with violence. Such a statement is void of any sense, good or common, and what Krenz must have really meant was that the people (he spoke of the Chinese people but he obviously also had the East German people in mind) must not be allowed in any way to challenge the monopoly of

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[50] See Vermerk über das Gespräch des Mitglieds des Politbüros und Sekretärs des ZK der SED, Genossen Egon Krenz, Stellvertreter des Vorsitzenden des Staatsrats der DDR, mit Genossen Qiao Shi, Mitglied des Ständigen Ausschusses des Politbüros und des Sekretariats des ZK der KP Chinas, Sekretär des Disziplinkontrollkommission beim ZK der KP Chinas, am 25. September 1989 im Gebäude des Nationalen Volkskongresses; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2A/3247.

power of the Communist Party.[51] Indeed, demonstrators taking part in demonstrations against the regime in East Berlin and Leipzig in October and November 1989 were in constant fear that Egon Krenz (who by then had toppled Erich Honecker at the top of the SED) would opt for what was referred to as the "Chinese solution": ending peaceful demonstrations with military force and violence.

IX. Finding a Scapegoat

An inner-SED report on the student demonstrations in Beijing in May and June 1989 sought to analyse, to a certain extent, the real causes of the student protests in Beijing. Naturally, according to the report Washington together with other "foreign conspirators" were responsible for the escalation in Tiananmen Square and hence Beijing had every right to respond with violence to end the students' alleged "counter-revolution." Furthermore, the GDR leadership also joined their comrades in Beijing by putting the blame onto then CCP Secretary-General Zhao Ziyang. Beijing needed a scapegoat and the CCP Secretary-General, who went into Tiananmen Square at the time and urged the demonstrating students to interrupt their hunger-strike and go home, was that scapegoat. Since Zhao had talked to the students, it was decided by Beijing, this had displayed division and disagreement among Beijing's policymakers on how to deal with the demonstrating students. "Responsible for the uncontrolled and snowballing escalation of anti-socialist forces is the former General-Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Zhao Ziyang and other party officials, supported by parts of the

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[51] Krenz said so on at least two occasions during his visit to China; see, e.g., Vermerk über das Gespräch des Mitglieds des Politbüros und Sekretärs des ZK der SED, Genossen Egon Krenz, Stellvertreter des Vorsitzenden des Staatsrats der DDR, mit Genossen Wan Li, Mitglied des Politbüros des ZK der KP China, Vorsitzender des Ständigen Ausschusses des Nationalen Volkskongresses der Volksrepublik China, am 26. September 1989 im Gebäude des Nationalen Volkskongresses; SAPMO BArch, ZPA JIV 2/2A/3247.

mass media and other institutions," the report concludes.[52]

However, the SED report also concluded that the violence escalated in Tiananmen Square on June 4 because of the Chinese leadership's misjudgement of the significance of the demonstrations, its reluctance to act earlier and because China's armed forces were ill-prepared for what the leadership was asking them to do on that tragic and violent night in Beijing. Furthermore, the report pointed out that the leadership was divided on how to respond to the protests and concluded (correctly) that during the night of June 4, 1989, due to divisions within the army's leadership, there was a possibility of armed clashes between different army units.

X. Everything under Control, Beijing Says

Against the background of Egon Krenz assuring the Chinese leadership in September 1989 that the GDR was in full control of the state and more importantly its marching and protesting people, the GDR's collapse only a few months later took many Chinese policymakers and party officials by complete surprise. However, those in China's policymaking circles who were surprised or indeed shocked by the fact that peacefully demonstrating East German people brought down a dictatorship must have chosen to ignore reality at the time. Alternatively, they may have chosen to take Erich Honecker's assurances in early October 1989 amid the celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the GDR that the GDR would hold on to socialism come what may at face value. It may have been believed that the GDR, in other words, would overcome its current problems and weaknesses.

When thousands of GDR citizens sought refuge in the West German embassies in East Berlin, Budapest and Prague in late 1989,

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[52] Bericht für das Politbüro über die Lage in der VR China; SAPMO-BArch, ZPA IV2/2.035/33.

Beijing for its part chose not to report on any of this to the Chinese public. The response of the Chinese government to spread completely false information on the situation in the GDR arguably reached its climax when the newspaper *The People's Daily* portrayed on November 11 the opening of the inner-German border as a sovereign decision taken by East Berlin's political leadership.[53] The paper must not have understood—or rather was obliged not to understand under political pressure—the historical importance of the opening of the inner-German border. Instead of reporting on the historical dimension of what was taking place in the GDR, then, it warned that East German refugees would become competitors for West German citizens in terms of jobs and housing. This was investigative reporting Chinese-style, e.g. reporting not backed up by any evidence and detached from reality. This type of coverage, however, did not stop there. Another article published in the same *People's Daily* on November 5, 1989 reported that two East German citizens who decided to move to West Germany in September 1989 did not find the conditions they hoped they would and eventually decided to move back to the GDR only a few months later. The *People's Daily* cited an interview with the two German citizens featured in the GDR newspaper *Junge Welt* ("Young World"), in which they said that they were not able to find well-paid employment, were confronted with high living costs and were unable to afford decent accommodation. Allegedly, they then concluded that life in West Germany was 'chaotic' and decided to leave when it turned out that the GDR authorities would allow them to return 'home' to the GDR.[54]

By the time the Chinese leadership finally realized and acknowledged that the GDR was about to become history, a newspaper article in the *Guangming Ribao* maintained—obviously on behalf of the leadership in

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[53] See *Renmin Ribao*, "Minzhu Deguo xuanbu kaifang bianjie," November 11, 1989.

[54] See *Renmin Ribao*, "Minde liang gongmin tan zai Xide de zaoyou/meiyou ziji zhusuo/meiyiu guding gongzuo/shenghuo meiyou baozhang," November 5, 1989.

Beijing—that the end of the GDR did not stand for the end of global socialism as such. Socialism, the newspaper insisted unsurprisingly, was still superior to capitalism. Oddly, despite the fact that the GDR was about to collapse, the article concluded that an analysis of the history and development of both German states over the decades had revealed that "the contradictions within the capitalist system have in West Germany become evident and stronger while the socialist system (in the GDR) has over the course of the years solved problems efficiently."[55] Arguably, this was the very definition of reality-distorting state-led journalism.

XI. Conclusions

If Beijing and East Berlin had fully realized that Gorbachev was planning to adopt fundamental political and economic reforms in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980s, they each would possibly have found more common ground during their bilateral encounters in the mid-1980s and, out of necessity and fear of being forced by their respective populations to enact Gorbachev-style reforms, invested more resources and political capital into intensifying bilateral relations in a more substantive manner. However, it is probably accurate to conclude that neither Honecker nor the Chinese political leadership could have imagined the scope and quality of Gorbachev's fundamental reforms at the time. While China's political leaders had next to no contact with their political counterparts in the Soviet Union, Honecker, like other dictators before and after, failed to understand the reality outside his direct sphere of influence and refused to acknowledge that the political and, more importantly, economic foundations of the GDR were bound to collapse. At least twice in the early 1980s East Berlin was confronted with default and was

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[55] See *Guangming Ribao*, "Liangee Deguo de bijiao neng shuoming shehuizhuyi shibaima?" November 6, 1989.

obliged to ask West Germany for massive loans. In 1983, the GDR was granted one billion deutschmarks by Bonn and the deal was brokered between Alexander Schalck-Golodkowsk,[56] a corrupt East German politician and head of "Kommerzielle Koordinierung" ("Commercial Coordination"), a department within East Germany's Ministry of Trade, and the equally controversial Bavarian politician and former West German Minister of Defence Franz-Josef Strauβ. If East Berlin had not been on its path toward certain collapse in 1989, the regime's above-mentioned cynical support for Beijing's violent response to the students' demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in 1989 could perhaps have been the basis for a "best-friend" relationship between East Berlin and Beijing at a time when the West (and Japan) were imposing economic sanctions on Beijing. However, that was not to be as peacefully marching East German citizens made it very clear through the course of 1989 that they were no longer willing to be locked up and terrorized by a collapsing dictatorship.

The last chapter of the GDR's undignified reaction to the Tiananmen massacre in June 1989 was a late apology published by the DDR's Volkskammer in June 1990.[57] The parliament apologized for the declaration regarding the events in Tiananmen Square it had published in June 1989 and announced its intention to mourn for the victims. That apology, however, came precisely one year too late and many of those parliamentarians who apologized in 1990 were the same who had endorsed the above-mentioned Volkskammer statement of June 1989 congratulating Beijing on its violent response to the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square. This was far too little and far too late for a sincere and credible apology.

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[56] Schalck-Golodkowski systematically misused ministry funds over years, which made him flee East Berlin in December 1989. He settled in Bavaria where he died in June 2015.

[57] See Tagung der Volkskammer der DDR am 7.Juni 1990; Volkskammer der DDR, 11. Tagung, 07.06.1990.

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[58] Sources from this archive: "Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisation der DDR im Bundesarchiv," cited in this article as "SAPMO-BARch, ZPA."

[59] To be translated as "Institute for the History of the Workers' Movement, Central Party Archive."

[60] Socialist Unity Party of Germany.

[61] Roughly translated as "Foundation Archive of GDR Party and Mass Organizations in the German Federal Archive."

Aufenthalt von 2 Mitarbeitern des ZK der KP Chinas in der DDR (16. Juli bis 23. August 1981); SAPMO-BArch, ZPA JIV 2/20/139.

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No Conflict by Invitation: Japan's China Balancing amidst US Relative Decline

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No Conflict by Invitation: Japan's China Balancing amidst US Relative Decline

This article highlights the Realist underpinnings of US-China-Japan relations. Washington's quest for primacy in the Asia-Pacific framed Tokyo's China policy throughout the early post-Cold War period; after all, US global power projection also rested on its capacity to influence key regional allies such as Japan. Yet growing US fatigue for military intervention abroad coincided with a changing East Asian power balance premised on China's military and economic rise. On the basis of a Structural Realist analysis, this article argues that Japan hardened its security stance by the mid-2000s. Following the 2012 Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands standoff, Chinese assertiveness and a forceful Japanese response revealed a new reality in US-Japan alliance politics: Washington policymakers would now restrain some of Japan's more assertive security initiatives and nationalistic displays. While detailing the evolution of US-China-Japan relations, this article disputes the likelihood of a US-China conflict of Tokyo's making thanks to sustained US leverage over Japan.

Keywords: US-China-Japan relations, US decline, liberal order, post-Cold War, Realism, conflict

No Conflict by Invitation: Japan's China Balancing amidst US Relative Decline

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I. Introduction

Following the end of World War II (WWII) and the 1951 signing of the Peace and Security treaties in San Francisco, the Japanese government's China policy had consistently acted within the perimeters of US grand strategy in East Asia. Throughout the post-war years, Tokyo and Washington insisted on a Realist foreign policy premised on balancing behavior, but this varied depending on the respective threat perceptions. A Structural Realist periodization posits two systemic changes in the regional distribution of power; specifically the transition from a bipolar order (1945-1991) to a period of flux (1991-2000s), and to an unstable multipolar order in post-Cold War East Asia (ca. mid-2000s onward). Japan's China policy throughout the three periods has been consistent with its status as a junior alliance partner, largely reacting to Washington's strategic calculations. Yet in more recent years, a rising

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China has ignited fears over the geopolitical implications of its growing regional influence. Such fears are more deeply felt in Japan than in the United States, in particular after the advent of the new Xi Jinping administration and the standoff over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. The second Abe Shinzō government, established in late 2012, exemplifies Japan's more confident retort to the Realist toolkit to tame what it understands as an aggressive neighbor.[1]

Several studies have analyzed Japan's China policy within the context of US-China-Japan triangular relations, but the literature on this important topic is quite limited.[2] Existant studies stress Japan's subordinate position to the United States but have largely downplayed the inherent tension in Washington's stance vis-à-vis Sino-Japanese relations, especially in the post-Cold War years. When US anxieties with regard to Japan's China policy are mentioned, scholars have normally focused on US frustrations over Japan's timid efforts in redefining the scope of the alliance.[3] Alternatively, they detailed Japan's recalibration of its foreign policy away from Washington during the short-lived premiership of the moderate Hatoyama Yukio.[4] More recently, Washington's quest for greater Japanese security responsibilities has met

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1 Giulio Pugliese, "Kantei diplomacy? Japan's hybrid leadership in foreign and security policy," *The Pacific Review* 30, no. 2 (2017): 152-168.

2 Thomas Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011): 221-259; Thomas Christensen, "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and US Policy toward East Asia," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 81-126; Ming Wan, *Sino-Japanese Relations* (Washington D.C.: Wilson Center and Stanford University Press, 2006): 168-200; Ezra Vogel, Ming Yuan, and Akihiko Tanaka, ed., *The Golden Age of the US-China-Japan Triangle, 1972-1989* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002).

3 Takao Sebata, *Japan's Defense Policy and Bureaucratic Politics, 1976-2007* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2010), 259-333.

4 Björn Jerdén, "Security Expertise and International Hierarchy: The Case of 'The Asia-Pacific Epistemic Community,'" *Review of International Studies* 43, no. 3 (2017): 494-515; Paul O'Shea, "Overestimating the 'Power Shift': The US Role in the Failure of the Democratic Party of Japan's 'Asia Pivot,'" *Asian Perspective* 38, no. 3 (2014): 435-459.

expectations from the Japanese government's side and Japanese policymakers appreciate the interlinking of the alliance in the US-centered "hub-and-spokes" security system to confront China's ascendance.[5] Moreover, the Abe Shinzō government has heightened Japan's security profile and raised the government's voice in the international arena only partly in response to US desiderata.[6] What is less noticed, then, is that such assertive diplomatic and declaratory stances occassonally exceed US preferences. Chris Hughes attributes such dynamics to Abe's comeback and the flaring up of the Senkaku/Diaoyu standoff.[7] Similarly, Sheila Smith identifies in the heated island dispute the "new scenario" kindling US fears of entanglement in both Chinese and, to a lesser extent, Japanese escalatory moves.[8]

This article locates Japan's security proactivity and US caution in the mid-2000s and ascribes such transformation to changes in the foreign policy outlook of both Japan *and* a slightly more disengaged US. To be sure, Japan is bearing more responsibilities in the preservation of East Asian security along with its transpacific ally and other like-minded countries, such as Australia. Japan did so in 2006-07 and more recently with its "proactive contribution to peace," the leading principle of Japan's 2013 National Security Strategy. Tokyo has traditionally pursued a more sympathetic China policy compared to its ally, but this paper argues that Japan and the US have traded roles in recent years, even before the flaring up of the Senkaku/Diaoyu territorial dispute. Abe's

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[5] H.D.P. Envall, "Japan's 'Pivot' Perspective: Reassurance, Restructuring, and the Rebalance," *Security Challenges* 12, no. 3 (2016): 5-19.

[6] Giulio Pugliese, "Japan 2014: Between a China Question and a China Obsession," in *Engaging China/Containing China: Asia in 2014, Asia Maior* vol. 25, ed. Michelguglielmo Torri and Nicola Mocci (Bologna: Emil di Odoya, 2015), 60-62.

[7] Christopher W. Hughes, *Japan's Foreign and Security Policy under the Abe Doctrine* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 64-78.

[8] Sheila Smith, *Intimate Rivals: Japanese Domestic Politics and a Rising China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 259.

2012 comeback has made evident that Tokyo's China policy has hardened beyond US strategy, possibly entrapping the US in flashpoints of Sino-Japanese discursive or military conflicts, but similar instances surfaced already under the first Abe administration. In the process, there is a possibility that the United States may become involved in a major conflict with China due not only to Beijing, but also to Tokyo's increased reliance on power politics as a tool of statecraft.

To gauge this under-analyzed phenomenon in a trilateral context, this article clarifies the merits of a Structural Realist approach to the study of post-Cold War US-Japan-China relations and emphasizes its appeal against other theories of International Relations (IR), the discipline that studies international relations. In doing so, the article will delve deeper into the international factors that affect Japan's strategic outlook: the decline of US primacy in East Asia pitted against the staggering re-emergence of China to regional centrality. Under *both* Abe administrations, these factors fueled Japanese insecurity and a more assertive foreign policy. The article will then focus on Japan's China policy and recent Sino-Japanese frictions to find that the US government consistently aimed at a stronger Japan but is now stifling some Japanese initiatives that risk entrapping the United States into Sino-Japanese military or historical issue-related brinkmanship. In so doing, the article gauges Washington's leverage as a censor of Japan's nationalistic displays and more assertive postures to measure the likelihood of a Sino-American conflict at the invitation of a more proactive Japan.

II. US-centered Liberal Visions of East Asia in the Early Post-Cold War Years

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 alimented the hopes of many Western governments. In fact, the different strands of Liberalist theory—commercial pacifism, liberal institutionalism and democratic peace theory—dominated mainstream US policy and scholarly debates on East

Asia in the post-Cold War years.[9] More than any other nation, the victorious superpower—the United States of the "roaring nineties"—dusted off the declinist pessimism of the late 1980s[10] and translated its new-found economic and political appeal into a foreign policy aimed at dismantling economic and thus political barriers. The 1994 *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* testified to the saliency of the above aims because US policy-makers, such as National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, understood a world composed of free-trading democracies as conducive to US economic prosperity and physical security. In addition, the boom in productivity and outbound investment during the 1990s facilitated US economic expansion through a late 20th Century "Open Door" policy premised on economic globalization.[11] The so-called "third wave" of democratization in East Asia coincided with the dying years of the Cold War, and in addition to fundamental domestic socio-economic changes, a more proactive US foreign policy was partly responsible for democratic transitions in East Asia. It is often forgotten that, by the late 1980s, Washington quietly favoured the economic and, to a lesser extent, political liberalization of several autocratic regimes; subtle US pressure over President Chun Doo Hwan's South Korea is a case in point.[12]

Together with the end of the Cold War and the demise of state socialism as a viable socio-economic and political alternative, the

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[9] The three liberal IR theories have different appreciations of the origins of inter-state cooperation. Commercial pacifists focus on greater economic interdependence. Liberal institutionalists stress international norms as well as routinized participation and the relinquishment of sovereignty to international organizations, such as the European Union. Democratic peace theorists believe that liberal democracies do not wage war against fellow democracies.

[10] Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987).

[11] Stephen Ambrose and Douglas Brinkley, *Rise to Globalism* (New York: Penguin Books, 2010), 398-428.

[12] Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 223-250.

triumph of market-based democracy signified "the end of history" in the eyes of a good portion of the American establishment.[13] For progressive and neo-conservative policy-makers, the liberal democratic model represented the very goal of humanity, which included cultures and political systems that still diverged from the Western liberal tradition. In such a context, the Bill Clinton administration's welcoming of the People's Republic of China into the World Trade Organization reflected the mainstay thinking of two typical Liberalist schools: commercial pacifism, according to which deep symmetric economic ties change states' preferences in favour of cooperation; and democratic peace theory, according to which democracies do not fight each other.[14] The United States government took advantage of the enormous economic potential of the Chinese market, including in terms of its cheap labour force, based on the belief that a trading China would pursue a largely cooperative foreign policy and, eventually, evolve into a benign democracy.

Economic and democratic liberalist optimism converged with the promises of liberal institutionalism. According to liberal institutionalists, China would slowly find participation in a variety of international organizations—such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the like—beneficial to its own national interests. Thanks to smoother channels of communications, growing preferences for prosperity, and the gradual relinquishment of state sovereignty to supranational agencies, China would embrace the US-led liberal international order built in the aftermath of WWII and reaffirmed and extended after the collapse of the Soviet Union.[15] Thus,

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13 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

14 Stephan Haggard, "The Liberal View of International Relations in Asia," in *The Handbook of the International Relations of Asia*, ed. Saadia Pekkanen, John Ravenhill, and Rosemary Foot (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 45-63.

15 John Ikenberry, "The Rise of China and the Future of the West: Can the Liberal System Survive?" Foreign Affairs 87, no.1 (January/February 2008): 23-37.

when President Clinton publicly stated that "on human rights and religious freedoms, China remains on the wrong side of history,"[16] he provided eloquent evidence of the deep-seated teleological historicism of US government thinking toward East Asia and the world at large. According to this thinking, all was "for the best in the best of all possible worlds," to cite Professor Pangloss from Voltaire's *Candide*.

Moreover, believing that market liberalization, deregulation and a progressive "financialization" of the economy would have been beneficial to global trade and US-based financial and multi-national enterprises, the US pushed for a neoliberal economic agenda at home and abroad.[17] From the 1990s onwards, the much-vaunted dirigiste Asian model based on the "developmental state"[18] gradually lost momentum. This transpired due to the growing appeal of supply side-centred neoclassical economics, Japan's economic stagnation, and the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis followed by substantial international pressure in favor of structural and political reforms. Thus East Asia's assimilation of Western, and more specifically Anglo-Saxon, economic norms hinted at convergence with the US-led liberal order. Under these conditions, the 1980s and the 1990s witnessed a liberal evolution of the politico-economic system of major East Asian states such as South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan—a one party-centred developmental democracy throughout the Cold War. The historical track record of the late 20th century slowly cemented US exuberance over its staying power.

The above changes were expedited by irresistible globalization. Earlier processes of economic internationalization, which coincided with

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16 Michael Elliott, "Beyond History's Shadow," *Newsweek/Washington Post*, June 29, 1998, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/newsweek/diplomacy.htm. Accessed on November 14, 2016.

17 Ronald Dore, *Stock Market Capitalism: Welfare Capitalism: Japan and Germany versus the Anglo-Saxons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

18 Meredith Woo-Cumings, ed., *The Developmental State* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1999).

the first and second industrial revolutions, mostly benefitted the bourgeoisie of colonial powers.[19] In comparison, the globalization that gained considerable momentum in the late 20th century levelled the playing field between advanced capital-intensive OECD countries and labour-intensive developing economies, such as China and India.[20] The liberalization of trade and the free movement of capital coincided with major developments in information, communication, business systems and transportation technologies. The expansion of multinational corporations and the massive inflow of Foreign Direct Investment in East Asia could have seriously challenged state sovereignty from above and below.

Likewise, the globalization of the late 20th century promoted regional integration processes in two ways. Firstly, the dismantling of trade and financial barriers would increase traditional intra-regional exchanges of physical goods, services and capital, and since Asian economies were at very different stages of their economic development, companies from (physical and human) capital-rich economies found it beneficial to outsource different stages of production in *multiple Asian countries*, depending on their respective comparative advantage. This process facilitated deep intra-regional and inter-regional production networks, leading to the rise of a "Factory Asia." For instance, iPhones are designed in California, but most of their high-end technology is made by Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese manufacturers across Asia; it is only at the end stage that iPhones are finally assembled and "made" in China, albeit through a Taiwanese company.[21] The iPhone example also suggests that intra-regional production networks are embedded within a global

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19 Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital* (New York: Scribner, 1975); Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).

20 Thomas Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Globalized World in the 21st Century* (London: Penguin, Allen Lane, 2005).

21 "Study finds the iPhone 5 is Japanese, in parts," *Asahi Shinbun*, October 6, 2012.

system: iPhone's demand is global and Apple pockets roughly sixty percent of the retail price of its smartphones.[22]

Secondly, East Asia has undergone financial regionalism. In the aftermath of the Asian Financial Crisis, East Asian states inaugurated a set of bilateral (now multilateral) currency swap agreements under the so-called Chiang Mai Initiative. In a sense, East Asian states relied on emergency foreign exchange reserves promised by regional counterparts, amounting to a quasi-monetary fund that could do without the support of the Washington-based IMF. With time, the initiative would free East Asian states from political and economic conditionalities dictated by the neoliberal agenda of international and US federal organizations, commonly known as the "Washington Consensus," inside the beltway. In fact, the economic weight and political clout of the United States in this complex web of trade and financial links meant that regionalism was moving within the confines of US "empire"; the need for the IMF to sanction the bulk of Chiang Mai emergency liquidity funds is a case in point.[23] While James Parisot's appreciation of US staying power in East Asia is a Marxist one, his understanding does not differ considerably from Ikenberry's US-centric institutional liberalist proposition premised on a tight and incredibly sticky web of US-centered international institutions, to which behemoth economies such as China would necessarily adapt.[24]

Through a broad-brush overview of the major changes affecting East Asia in the early post-Cold War years, this section has provided an

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[22] John Ravenhill, "Production Networks in Asia," in *The Handbook of the International Relations of Asia*, ed. Saadia Pekkanen, John Ravenhill, and Rosemary Foot (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 348-368.

[23] James Parisot, "American Power, East Asian Regionalism and Emerging Powers: In or Against Empire?" *Third World Quarterly* 34, no. 7 (2013): 1159-1174.

[24] John Ikenberry, "The Liberal Sources of American Unipolarity," in *Unipolarity and International Relations Theory*, ed. Michael Mastanduno, W. Wohlforth and J. Ikenberry, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 216-251.

account of the most influential liberal appreciations of regional dynamics. It highlights commercial pacifism, liberal institutionalism and greater convergence with Western political and economic models as the dominant frameworks through which trends in 1990s East Asia have been understood. As recounted, the above liberal visions for an East Asian future also rested on the primacy of the US-led liberal order. Yet the underappreciated pillar of that very liberal order was US military presence, which indicates the merits of looking at the region through a Realist lens.

III. The Realist Underpinnings of East Asia's *Pax Americana*

US policymakers never lost track of the foundational importance of great power politics to preserve a stable East Asian regional order and US hegemony. According to Structural Realism, the regional order is made up of states responsible for their own security and prosperity. Since the future intentions of surrounding powers are unknown, states' defense and security policy is defined by the strategy that opposes the stronger or more threatening state in order to maintain a state of equilibrium. This is commonly known as balancing, the recurrence and intensity of which depends on the regional distribution of power.[25]

While acting as a benign hegemonic power, US foreign policy towards East Asia presents strong elements of offensive realism.

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[25] There are two types of balancing: internal and external. Internal balancing rests on the augmentation of domestic military, capabilities; external balancing builds on alliances, strategic partnership and ententes with third parties. Structural realist theorists have contrasting views over the aims and extent of balancing behavior: defensive realists posit that states are mostly concerned with maximizing their security while "offensive" realists argue that states are incessantly driven by power-maximization, a very expensive insurance policy to guarantee state security that ultimately leads to high recurrence of conflict in international politics. See Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

According to John Mearsheimer, post-WWII US deployment in Germany and Japan not only deterred Soviet aggression in key industrial centers, but also curbed their turning into Great Powers.[26] Christopher Layne argues that US grand strategy was even more assertive. US foreign policy from 1940 onward was informed by a desire to maintain primacy by moulding the international system, to which end Washington consistently pursued "extra-regional hegemony."[27] Historical evidence corroborates this claim. In late 1991, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Paul Wolfowitz and his taskforce started working on a new Defense Planning Guidance, a document that detailed the United States' overall military strategy as a framework for future defense budgets. The document draft spelled out the means for US hegemony: no contestant was allowed to emerge as a challenger to US primacy, including Japan. The leaked Planning Guidance's draft was heavily criticized for its cynical vision premised on raw US military supremacy, but the final version left its core policy prescriptions unchanged. The United States would thus preclude any power from dominating regions critical to US interests, and to that effect permanent US military superiority was needed.[28]

In terms of policy practice, Washington's East Asia policy was driven by a synthesis of Neo-Realism and Liberalism. For this reason it would be mistaken to associate post-Cold War US policy debates with the first—if partly manufactured—great IR debate, where historian E.H. Carr denounced the false hopes of the mainstream "utopians," the liberal IR thinkers of the early 20th Century, by pointing out the recurring tragic dynamics of state-centric Realism; according to Carr, international

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[26] John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company: 2001), 75-82.

[27] Christopher Layne, *The Peace of Illusions: American Grand Strategy from 1940 to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[28] James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans* (New York: Viking, 2004), 198-208.

politics were premised on national interests, power struggles, and the destructive forces unleashed by nationalism.[29] In fact, US policy practitioners never lost track of the need to preserve US military regional engagement. Indicative of this trend, (Neo-)Liberalist IR theorist and Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Joseph Nye, engineered the post-Cold War US realignment of military forces deployed in East Asia by keeping a robust US presence under the so-called 1995 "Nye Initiative." In this context, Japan qualified as an important chess piece in Washington's strategic calculations and, to a certain extent, the United States kept a strong military presence also to check an eventual Japanese military ascendance.

During the Cold War, the United States' broader foreign and security policy limited Japan's room for maneuver in the international arena. Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru and his successors willingly wore the diplomatic straightjacket knitted on the occasion of the San Francisco peace and security treaties: Japan's security and prosperity was best served by close alignment to the United States, a focus on economic development and, as a corollary to the above, a low politico-military profile.[30] But how did Japan's China policy evolve after the end of the Cold War?

A nagging sense of insecurity aside, Japan still prioritized a policy of China engagement until the early 2000s resting on the above-mentioned post-Cold War beliefs that trade and economic growth would induce China to enjoy the fruits of prosperity brought by international trade agreements and international organizations. From the vantage point of Realism, until the early 2000s, China's military and economic power

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[29] Soeya Yoshihide, *Nihon no 'midoru pawā' gaikō* [Japan's 'middle power' diplomacy] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2005); Kent Calder, *Pacific Alliance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

[30] E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001 – with an Introduction by Michael Cox).

was still relatively small relative to Japan and especially its transpacific ally. More importantly, it was only in the 2000s that China inaugurated a substantial naval buildup to project its power into the oceans, thus feeding into Japanese insecurity and American anxieties. As a maritime power, at any rate, Japan preserved a consistent naval posture.[31] Given the very appreciation of the United States' relatively benign role in East Asia, Japan mostly delegated or "buck-passed" security guarantees to the prominent regional player, the United States. Japan's defensive-realist appreciation of trilateral dynamics, resting on the soothing effects of ameliorating threat perceptions from both sides of the Pacific Ocean, meant that its security profile increased marginally and mostly as a result of US pressure.[32]

Nonetheless, China viewed the US attempt to reinforce its alliance with Japan, notably through the enunciation of new security guidelines in 1997, as a potential threat to the region's order. Chinese analysts and leaders perceived the US to be moving away from its role as a "bottle cap" on Japanese rearmament toward an "egg shell" role, under which the US would provide a military shield for Japan while favoring its ally's gradual, but steady, rearmament.[33] Yet it would be incorrect to posit that the mid-1990s US *and* Japanese military planners re-enacted coercive diplomacy against Beijing, as Christensen does in a later study.[34] Preliminary evidence shows that Chinese analysts' assessments were correct, since the Japanese government was more lukewarm to US calls

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[31] Alessio Patalano "Shielding the 'Hot Gates': Submarine Warfare and Japanese Naval Strategy in the Cold War and Beyond (1976–2006)," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 6 (2008): 859-895; Jennifer Lind, "Pacifism or Passing the Buck? Testing Theories of Japanese Security Policy," *International Security* 29, no. 1 (2004): 92-121.

[32] Takao Sebata, *Japan's Defense Policy and Bureaucratic Politics, 1976-2007* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2010), 259-333.

[33] Thomas Christensen, "Fostering Stability or Creating a Monster? The Rise of China and US Policy toward East Asia," *International Security* 31, no. 1 (2006): 81-126.

[34] Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 221-259.

for greater alliance burden sharing. Tokyo, at this point, did not share Washington's bleak assessment of regional security. This would continue until the bumpy years of the Koizumi premiership, characterized by the progressive chilling of China-Japan political interaction due especially to the Premier's yearly visits to the controversial Yasukuni shrine, as well as China's staggering economic and military rise finally feeding into Japanese insecurity.

IV. Beyond *Pax Americana*: Japan's Hardened Stance Predates China's Assertiveness

The 2006 Sino-Japanese political détente culminated in the inauguration of the Japan-China Strategic Mutually Beneficial Relationship (*nicchū senryakuteki gokei kankei*, 日中戦略的互恵関係), but this did not prove very tenable as the regional order lost its liberal façade around that very year. In fact, events rather validated neo-realist analysis: the changing regional distribution of power toward an unstable multipolar regional order alimented growing tensions. The shifting power differential between China and the United States was chiefly responsible for altering the strategic landscape, and Japan felt very early the need to more forcefully counterbalance China's rise.

The so-called "War on Terror" inaugurated by the George W. Bush administration distracted the United States from the most likely challenger to its primacy: a rising China exemplified the traditional, state-centred logic of Realism. The United States' disastrous military interventions in the Afghanistan and Iraq quagmires were accompanied by the 2008 financial and economic crisis. This crisis ignited by subprime mortgages and Lehman Brothers' bankruptcy spread globally and inflicted a major blow to the world economy, showcasing the downside of excessive deregulation and financialization of economic activities. The worst economic crisis since the Great Depression should have delegitimized the glorified Anglo-Saxon economic model. But neo-

Keynesian expansive fiscal policies were dusted off only briefly following the 2008 crisis: northern European and American economic policymakers threw such precepts back in the dustbin by 2010 and failed to curtail the "moral hazards" of an irresponsible, yet ever-more economically decisive, financial sector. At the same time, the crisis did inflict a major blow to the Anglo-Saxon economic model. This was evident in Barack Obama's clear prioritization of US domestic issues and economic growth, often accompanied by a hands-off approach toward world affairs.[35]

In contrast, the Chinese economy lifted up part of the deficit in global demand following the global financial crisis and China's annual Gross Domestic Product growth wavered around a seven percent increase per year. Notwithstanding its mixed command and market economy, China became the second wealthiest nation by 2010, and its hosting of the 2008 Olympic Games and 2010 International Exposition sanctioned its coming of age, substantial increase in material capabilities, and growing confidence in foreign relations. In stark comparison with Obama's approach, and possibly due to these burgeoning capabilities, China translated its economic (re-)emergence into regional primacy with a more assertive foreign policy. Domestically, hawkish segments within the Chinese Communist Party and Chinese state's apparatus became gradually more vocal. For instance, they started to advance Chinese claims over disputed territories with more confidence, perceiving a progressively inward-looking US as a paper tiger. In short, Chinese home-bred nationalism and hubris clearly stemmed in part from Structural Realist factors, where the growing regional power differential increasingly favoured China and reinforced its ability to interdict and threaten US forward deployment in the Asia-Pacific.

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[35] Colin Dueck, *The Obama Doctrine: American Grand Strategy Today* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

The global financial crisis and the ensuing Great Recession hastened shifts in the regional power balance, but it is worth noting that US and Japanese policymakers envisioned earlier on the risks of a region dominated by China. Indeed, Washington policymakers had already developed policies aimed at preserving a favourable balance by the early 2000s under the first George W. Bush administration, with the vocal support of the Department of Defense and the Vice-Presidency. For example, the US-India civil nuclear deal was indicative of the George W. Bush administration's reliance on power politics: India was not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaties, an international institution exemplifying the so-called rules-based liberal order. It is also worth noting that in 2007 Japan signed a "global strategic partnership" with India and in 2016 allowed exports of nuclear technology and components to the Subcontinent, initiatives that both took place under the Abe administration. At the same time, a diffuse sense of insecurity in East Asia went hand-in-hand with the changing regional power balance. Progressively weaker states, such as the Philippines, Vietnam, and even Japan, fretted about their own territorial rows with China and hurried to secure their own interests before China became a regional hegemonic power. These states also became engaged in active regional diplomacy aimed at building a network of strategic partnerships, or ententes, that went beyond the existing US-led regional alliance system. The Abe Shinzō administrations are evidenceof the new-found impetus for power politics in East Asia.[36]

The language register of the US and Japanese governments indicated the willingness to defend the international liberal order. In a private interview, former Special Assistant to the President for National

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[36] Giulio Pugliese and Aurelio Insisa, *Sino-Japanese Power Politics: Might, Money and Minds* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

Security Affairs and Senior Director for Asia at the US National Security Council, Michael J. Green, testified to the rationale behind US overtures toward strategic states such as India: the US was pursuing a "balance that favoured freedom."[37] Similarly, Japan started to legitimize its national security dynamism as a function of "universal values such as freedom, human dignity and human rights, democracy, market economy, and rule of law" around the same time.[38] Implied in Japan's wording was that an authoritarian China's ascendance needed to be confronted, though it would be welcomed as a peer when it became a full member of the liberal order. Beneath this rhetorical surface, however, by that time power politics were becoming the *leading* engine of international relations in the Asia-Pacific and beyond. US flexibility toward international norms, such as nuclear non-proliferation, testified to these trends. Needless to say, the main target of said initiatives was a rapidly ascending China.

In this context, Tokyo responded with enthusiasm to Washington's calls for enhanced security cooperation. This move was only encouraged by the fact that the US-centered hub-and-spokes bilateral system of alliances was gradually giving way to "intra-spoke" cooperation, evident in US regional alliances with Australia and India as well as other newly-inaugurated strategic partnerships. But only after intra-ministerial overhaul and strategic planning would Tokyo's balancing overtures materialize under Abe's first administration launched in September 2006, consistent with Abe's preoccupation with China's rise. Thus, in 2005-2006 Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and key policymakers laid the basis for a new balancing architecture seemingly echoing US policy

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37 Interview with former Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for Asia at the US National Security Council Michael J. Green, July 9, Tokyo.

38 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting: The Japan-U.S. Alliance of the New Century," June 29, 2006, http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/summit0606.html. Accessed November 11, 2016.

desiderata.[39]

Yet the US China strategy in the second George W. Bush administration turned slightly more conciliatory, toward the State Department line and away from the Dick Cheney/Department of Defense line. Former US official Thomas Christensen contends that Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick's engagement policy of "making China a responsible stakeholder" effectively achieved doctrinaire status in 2006.[40] Thus Abe's much-coveted security architecture in the Asia-Pacific targeting China eventually went against US interests. Washington publicly derailed the nascent US-Japan-India-Australia quadrilateral entente in 2007, for example, appeasing an overtly anxious China and avoiding the slippery slope of a security dilemma. In August 2007, then Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice conveyed to Japanese Defense Minister Koike Yuriko the need to proceed with prudence lest the wrong signals be sent to Beijing.[41] In fact, since the above conversation was instrumentally reported to the press, the US was actually sending conciliatory signals to Beijing. It was arguably the first time that Tokyo and Washington traded roles in their China policy in the post-Cold War environment. Noting its involvement in multiple war theatres in the Greater Middle East, the US desired to induce a more cooperative attitude from Beijing and, for the first time, feared entrapment in Sino-Japanese tensions partly of Tokyo's making.

The first Abe administration was acting boldly, but the broad geo-strategic environment the Japanese government found itself operating in meant that the US would favor Abe's external balancing initiatives only up to a point. Notwithstanding the prominence of balancing behavior,

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[39] Pugliese, "Kantei Diplomacy?"

[40] Christensen, *Worse than a Monolith*, 242-243.

[41] Akita Hiroyuki, *Anryū: Bei-Chū-Nichi gaikō sangokushi* [Undercurrents: US-China- Japan Records of the Three Kingdoms' Diplomacy] (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shinbun Shuppansha, 2008): 1-6.

there have been limited attempts at engagement—particularly with regard to historical issues—and evidence proves that US pressure was at play. President George W. Bush secretly sent veiled and indirect threats to Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe (prior to his becoming prime minister) concerning the negative spillover effects of history-related matters on US-Japan relations. Since prominent members of the second Bush administration were particularly concerned about the repercussions of eventual Japanese nationalistic displays, such as visits to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine, US public criticism was likely.[42] Thus the United States was now censoring to a certain extent Tokyo's quadrilateral balancing initiative—one earlier suggested by the US—as well as Abe's historical revisionism, which was considered deleterious for both US-Japan-Korea *and* US-Japan-China relations.

V. A Conflict by Invitation? Chinese Assertiveness, Japan's Firm Stance, and US Fears

While Japan and the US were inaugurating balancing policies of different intensity toward China, it is worth noting that Beijing's foreign policy outlook was relatively cooperative. In the aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen incident and the 1991 fall of the USSR, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leader Deng Xiaoping insisted on the merits of the economic reforms and opening of the Chinese market inaugurated in 1978. Deng posited that a low profile foreign policy went hand-in-hand with market liberalization and that both were indispensable for fostering sustained economic growth beneficial to a developing Chinese economy. For that purpose, the "Little Helmsman" was responsible for selecting those leaders that would steer the Chinese ship of state through the rich

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[42] Pugliese, "Japan 2014," 53.

seas of a globalizing world economy: Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao.[43] The Jiang and Hu eras thus mostly internalized Deng's precepts of "keeping a low profile and biding one's time (*taoguang yanghui*韬光养晦)" based on a strong consensus in favour of international cooperation. China's peaceful rise, then, coincided with the prioritization of socio-economic development.[44] In turn, China's strong preference for international cooperation and a low-profile foreign policy fed into a positive appreciation of its rise. Indeed, according to an authoritative China specialist, Beijing was slowly becoming socialized into international and regional institutions.[45]

However China was pursuing a cooperative foreign policy also in light of its counterparts' balancing inducements. As Realist scholars noted, China was still playing by the Realpolitik playbook during the Jiang and Hu era. According to Avery Goldstein, by the late 1990s China advanced a "neo-Bismarckian" strategy premised on reassurance and great power diplomacy to bolster its security and increase its material capabilities.[46] This would continue as Japan and the US deepened their alliance in the mid-2000s and the Abe administration inaugurated bold security reforms—the regional balance still favored the United States and Japan with their formidable navies. Yet China's "hide and bide" consensus would not hold for long following the 2008 world financial crisis and its advancement into the oceans, thus confirming earlier Japanese and American fears. Quite fittingly, even while the Dengist

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[43] Andrew J. Nathan and Bruce Gilley, *China's New Rulers: The Secret Files*, 2nd ed. (New York: New York Review of Books, 2003), 39-45.

[44] D.M. Lampton, *The Three Faces of Chinese Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, Berkeley, 2008), 8-36.

[45] Alastair Iain Johnston, *Social States: China in International Institutions, 1980-2000* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[46] Avery Goldstein, "An Emerging China's Emerging Grand Strategy: A Neo-Bismarckian Turn?" in *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific*, ed. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 57-106.

foreign policy consensus appeared to crumble during the Hu administration, it was decisively abandoned with the advent of Xi Jinping, the first leader whose ascendance had nothing to do with the late Deng.

Xi Jinping's China is exemplary of the regained centrality of the Middle Kingdom in the regional landscape. The new leader publicly sanctioned change on October 24, 2013 during a speech given at an important party conference on China's relations with neighboring powers. Xi stated that Chinese diplomacy needed to now "strive for achievements (*fenfa youwei*奋发有为)."[47] The various actors involved in shaping the grand narrative of China's foreign policy came to increasingly adopt Xi's expression used during the conference, highlighting the new reality of the country's "great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics" effectively carried out over Deng's decades-old pleas for caution. As a consequence, China's neo-Bismarckian strategy of hiding capabilities and biding time was already giving way to what we might well call a "neo-Wilhelmine" approach toward its immediate neighbors: Chinese policymakers, with Xi at the center, abandoned caution and did not shy away from advancing China's interests through military means.[48]

Concretely, China pursued an aggressive irredentism in the East and South China Seas. It did so on the basis of geopolitical considerations, cool strategic thinking, and a diffuse nationalism, which reinforced an emotional sense of territorial entitlement.[49] At a structural level, however,

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47 "Xi Jinping zai zhoubian waijiao gongzuo zuotan hui shang fabiao zhongyao jianghua" [Xi Jinping delivers an important speech at a conference on periphery diplomacy], *Xinhua*, October 25, 2013, http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/25/c_117878897.html. Accessed November 23, 2016.

48 Willy W. Lam, *Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping* (Routledge: London and New York, 2015).

49 Giulio Pugliese, "Japan 2015: Confronting East Asia's Geopolitical Game of Go," in *The Chinese-American Race for Hegemony in Asia*, Asia Maior vol. 26, ed. Michelguglielmo Torri

China decided to push its weight around in view of the gradual power vacuum left by a degree of US disengagement. On the face of Obama's initially hands-off approach over Chinese coercive behaviour in the Scarborough Shoal and Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, substantial US defense budget sequestration, continued US involvement in the Greater Middle East, and new preoccupation in Ukraine, Chinese observers must have understood the US "pivot to Asia" as a paper tiger. The Obama administration proclaimed its willingness to rebalance US military, political and economic engagement toward the Asia-Pacific in line with long-standing US strategy and the region's growing importance, but the policy lacked teeth.[50] Similar dynamics were at play in Ukraine: post-Iraq US military fatigue prompted a more assertive foreign policy from the likes of Russia and China. The increased number of crises, louder nationalist drum-beating, and more forceful military signalling would suggest an increased likelihood for conflict in East Asia. After all, the flaring up of the Japan-China Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands standoff has brought Japan-China relations to their lowest point since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1972.

It is revealing that by the 2010s national security and geopolitical priorities also affected major international economic initiatives. For example, the 2015 signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership among twelve Asia-Pacific economies constituted another instrument to contain Chinese regional influence. US and Japanese policymakers saluted with favor both the economic and strategic implications of such a deal because its East Asian perimeters mostly coincided with the network of US and Japanese strategic partners and it would have fostered some degree of economic leverage vis-à-vis China.[51] Chinese economic initiatives

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and Nicola Mocci (Roma: Viella, 2016), 93-132.

50 As of the writing of this paper, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, functioning as the geo-economic component of the pivot, is unlikely to enter into force as originally planned.

51 Michiel Foulon, "Neoclassical Realism: Challengers and Bridging Identities," *International*

inaugurated under the Xi administration clearly betrayed such national security subtext. To be sure, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) was born out of economic considerations and due to China's inability to gain more say within the World Bank system; contrary to the assertions of liberal internationalists, the US-led international liberal order has not been able to adapt and democratically open up to increasingly important actors. At the same time, China also aimed at increasing its economic leverage within the Eurasian landmass for clear political and geopolitical aims while advancing into the South China Seas.[52] Arguably, national security and political considerations trumped economic ones for both initiatives. So far, the only major US ally that refused to join the AIIB was Abe's Japan. Furthermore, preliminary testimonies suggest that the Abe administration took a firmer stance against China's AIIB initiative compared to the United States.[53] Under Abe, Japan needed no US pressure to keep a distance from Chinese geo-economic initiatives.

The flaring up of the territorial dispute since 2012 and the comeback of the Abe administration have hardened Tokyo's China policy beyond the Obama's so-called "Asia rebalance," possibly entrapping the US in flashpoints of Sino-Japanese discursive or military conflicts over historical issues. Under the Obama administration, Washington demonstrated similar sensitivities as the second Bush administration toward the Abe administration. It toned down Japan's over-reliance on power politics in its dealing with China and (less quietly) censored blunders with regard to historical issues to both ameliorate the regional security dilemma and avoid entrapment in Sino-Japanese tensions of

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Studies Review 17, no. 4 (2015): 635-661.

52 Pugliese and Insisa, *Sino-Japanese Power Politics*.

53 Hiroyuki Akita, *Ranryū: Bei-Chū-Nichi gaikō sangokushi* [Stormy Currents: US-China-Japan Records of the Three Kingdoms' Diplomacy] (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Shinbun Shuppansha, 2016), 46.

both Beijing *and*, to a lesser extent, Tokyo's making. Thus, while Obama avoided touching upon national security issues in his first meeting with Abe in February 2013, the US publicly condemned Abe's visit to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine of December 2013 and also refrained from allowing Japan to enable preventive strike capabilities for fear of entanglement in Tokyo's (quite limited) coercive diplomacy. Previous scholarship has noted such subtle trends, but this article has demonstrated how the same dynamics were at play *before* the Senkaku/Diaoyu standoff as well as under a Republican administration, a detail that is particularly notable since Republicans have traditionally been understood as much more sympathetic to Japanese views compared to Democrats. Meanwhile, US anxieties over some of Japan's more proactive security stances and nationalistic displays are likely to stay. These dynamics, in other words, reflect a rapidly evolving strategic landscape. Thus, while Washington aims at a stronger Japan, it needs to dissuade both Beijing and Tokyo from adopting a more assertive foreign policy. More importantly, these dynamics suggest not only relative continuity in US foreign policy, but consistency in Abe's Japan's hardened stance vis-à-vis China that has exceeded US intentions. One may accordingly anticipate the road to trilateral relations and regional stability to be bumpy indeed.

Is Japan really capable of dragging the United States into a conflict with China? The trilateral dynamics recounted so far arguably are symptomatic of growing US fatigue and fears of entanglement as well as Japan's somewhat more assertive foreign policy behaviour. After all, the Abe administration testifies to a rightward shift in Japanese security policy, but only from a minimalistic starting point. And while controversial visits to the Yasukuni shrine by a sitting prime minister now represent a major thorn in US-Japan-China relations, Abe's historical revisionism is clearly not representative of mainstream Japanese views. On the contrary, Japanese public opinion has a restraining influence on top-down nationalistic displays.[54] In addition, popular suspicions of Abe's security agenda were evident in the Abe

Cabinet's plummeting support rates during Diet deliberations for the 2013 Specially Designated Secrets Law as well as the 2015 Legislation for Peace and Security enshrining the principle of collective self-defense. The Abe administration has been able to pass a bold security agenda, but its initiatives have been diluted and it will not be easily or completley practicable according to the power politics book. For instance, Japan pursues relatively modest internal balancing since the percentage of its military expenditure relative to GDP still wavers around one percent, a ratio that pales in comparison to the United States and China. Finally, absent a major—and deadly—security shock, Japan's nuclear breakout is very unlikely due to an even more diffuse national allergy since Fukushima. Currently, only three of fifty-four nuclear reactors are operational owing to popular anxieties since the March 11, 2011 "triple disaster."

More importantly, the Japanese government's autonomous security activism will be blunted as Japan's economic capabilities wane due to secular stagnation and the twin problems of an ageing and shrinking population. Firstly, Japan will face powerful inward looking forces: future Japanese governments will devote growing amounts of public expenditures to the social security of an elderly society. By 2025, in fact, about thirty percent of the population will be made up of people aged sixty-five and over.[55] Secondly, absent major technological advances that would dramatically increase productivity, Japan is destined to decline in relative *and* absolute terms, thus confining Japan to its traditional role as a middle power.

This scenario would engender a *de facto* increase in the leverage enjoyed by the United States over Japanese decisions. US military

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[54] Giulio Pugliese, "The China Challenge, Abe Shinzo's Realism and the Limits of Japanese Nationalism," *The SAIS Review of International Affairs* 35, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2015): 45-55.

[55] Atsushi Seike, "Japan's Ageing Society and the Role of Higher Education" (talk given at King's College London, London, November 17, 2016).

fatigue and a measure of disengagement actively contribute to raising Japan's military profile, but Japan will still rely on *indispensable* US second-strike security guarantees for dealing with China. As of now there is no easy substitute for US protection and extended deterrence, neither in the shape of a very costly and unpopular aggressive Japanese build-up of homebred military capabilities (i.e. internal balancing), nor in the shape of alliances or ententes with third parties, such as India, Australia and the like (i.e. external balancing); these countries will likely not align with Japan against China. The continued centrality of the US-Japan alliance to Japan's strategic outlook ultimately means that US leverage over Tokyo's policy options will both empower and successfully restrain Japan's role vis-à-vis China. For instance, Japan has refrained from constructing facilities in the Senkaku islands to convince the United States that it will not rock the boat of Japan-China relations. Moreover, quiet US pressure over Abe's August 14, 2016 Statement and the unlikelihood that Abe will again visit the Yasukuni Shrine following US criticism are good examples of US leverage at play (along with other international and domestic factors). Brad Glosserman, executive director of Pacific Forum Center for Strategic and International Studies, a US-based think tank, testified to such pressure regarding the Abe Statement in an e-mail exchange: "I have been in meetings when I and others pressed government of Japan representatives to take that extra step, and I have been told by US government representatives that they did the same."[56] What has been insufficiently noted is that Abe toned down his revisionist colors roughly around the same time of Japan's deepening of the US-Japan alliance through the new 2015 alliance

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[56] Brad Glosserman, executive director of the US-based Pacific Forum Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank, testified to such pressure regarding the Abe Statement in an e-mail exchange: "I have been in meetings when I and others pressed government of Japan representatives to take that extra step and I have been told by US government representatives that they did the same." See Pugliese, "Japan 2015," 116.

guidelines. In all likelihood, the Obama administration exacted promises from Abe with regard to Tokyo's public display of strident historical revisionism, also with Japan-South Korea relations in mind.[57] In fact, both Japan and the United States displayed major public gestures of historical reconciliation at Hiroshima and Pearl Harbor. According to a political reporter from the progressive *Asahi Shinbun*, "The gap between the pragmatic actions of Abe and the ideology of the *Nippon Kaigi* [see footnote] has been widening."[58]

VI. Conclusions

The tides of economic globalization have lifted hundreds of millions of people from poverty, torn down barriers among states, and helped strengthen a rule-based international order. Yet these tides have also stranded many members of the middle and lower classes in advanced economies with a shrinking welfare state, thus feeding into an anti-globalization movement charged with popular resentment. The 2016 votes for Britain to leave the European Union and for trade-sceptic (and narrow national interests-focused) Donald Trump as US President are cases in point. At the same time, absent another major economic crisis, trade and financial activity in Asia is likely still to grow in the years to come, albeit at a slower rate. After all, China has benefitted enormously from the above trends and it will continue to emphasize the merits of deeper economic and investment links. It is probably too early to worry

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57 Giulio Pugliese "Japan 2016: Political Stability amidst Maritime Contestation and Historical Reconciliation," Asia Maior vol. 26, ed. Michelguglielmo Torri and Nicola Mocci (Roma: Viella, 2017).

58 Koji Sonoda, "Nippon Kaigi and Grassroots Mobilization of Japan's Right Wing," USJP Occasional Paper 15 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Program on US-Japan Relations, 2016), 51. *Nippon Kaigi*, which in English means "Japan Conference," is a right-wing conservative lobby and religious group in favor of revising the Constitution and shaping Japan's political system along more conservative lines. The group promotes a revisionist view of history and favors visits to the Yasukuni shrine by sitting prime ministers.

about full blown protectionism and beggar-thy-neighbor policies in East Asia. After all, from the US vantage point, a trade war with China would affect US partners and the very prosperity of US multinational enterprises. Since China is often the last point of assembly in the aforementioned "Factory Asia," the mercurial Trump administration could easily harm US interests.

That said, national security often trumps economics when the two clash. The Chinese economy has steadily moved up the value-added chain, demonstrating an expanding capacity in advanced sectors such as high technology manufacturing. For instance, young Chinese phone and computer enterprises are now able to compete against, and indeed lead over long-established competitors, not least because of price-based competition: China *is* hollowing out neighboring economies. Moreover, the size of the Chinese economy is already significant and destined to become bigger as its inner regions develop; this implies that China's economic relationship with East Asian countries will be more and more asymmetric. Economic asymmetry grants the party-state apparatus substantial economic leverage in the conduct of diplomacy for specific security and political goals. China has already provided ample proof of economic statecraft against its neighbours, through both economic inducements and coercive retaliation.[59] The cautionary tales of Realism, therefore, may well apply to the study of East Asia's economic integration.

Regional economic integration marches on, but the so-called liberal order is under considerable strain. With regard to the tides of democratization, the Xi Jinping administration has put to the test the diffuse misunderstanding that political evolution would naturally follow economic evolution. In recent years, China's political regime has taken a

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[59] Robert Blackwill and Jennifer Harris, *War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 93-151.

turn for the worse, moving toward greater autocracy rather than less.[60] More worryingly, other states across the East Asian and global spectrum have registered political regression, including democracies such as Turkey, the Philippines, and Thailand. This is indicative of the new *Zeitgeist*, and of China's economic leverage, inducing even Western governments to proactively engage China while more or less turning a blind eye to Xi's domestic political crackdown and aggressive maritime outlook. For instance, the UK government welcomed Chinese investments and the promise of trading the Renminbi in its financial markets under the rubric of a "Golden Era" in UK-China relations, while avoiding explicit criticism regarding curtailment of political rights in Hong Kong, such as of the freedom of expression accorded to local publishing houses. Chinese heavy-handed involvement in Hong Kong went against earlier pledges in the 1984 Sino-British memorandum. Moreover, in 2015 the UK was the first major US ally to become a founding member of the AIIB, inviting public US criticism.

As posited throughout this article, these are very testing times for the so-called liberal order because of the major structural shift in its Realist underpinnings: US decline relative to China's re-emergence to regional primacy and an unstable multipolar order. These shifts have ushered in Sino-American competition, but Obama's United States was more hands off than many observers acknowledged, as evident in subtle US military disengagement, fears of abandonment among Asian allies, and Washington's increased reliance on third parties such as Japan for the preservation of the regional commons. One such case was Obama's reliance on Japan's pursuit of collective self-defense to add its might to the deterrence mix in the South China Sea.[61]

Washington's increased reliance on proxies might seemingly

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[60] Stein Ringen, *The Perfect Dictatorship* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2016).

[61] Pugliese, "Japan 2015."

backfire in the face of a more assertive Japan. This article has provided ample evidence of growing US concerns over Japanese actions that could endanger US-Japan-China relations, dragging the US into an unnecessary confrontation. Yet this article also makes a counterintuitive point: a US-China-Japan conflict at the invitation of Japan is unlikely even in the face of US relative decline, and in light of its growing reliance on Japan to maintain a favorable balance. Evidence presented here has demonstrated that the US has been largely successful in softening Japanese stances, with the partial exception of Abe's 2013 Yasukuni visit. Given continued and, in fact, growing US leverage over Japan, the future likelihood of a more inward-looking Japan, and an ascending China, Tokyo might well pursue a more restrained China approach. In this scenario, conflict involving these proud great powers would probably instead arise as a result of mounting Chinese aggressiveness or, in fact, at the invitation of the United States rather than Japan. After all, even under a Trump Presidency, the US will hardly retreat from the Asia-Pacific. A degree of US-China competition, therefore, is likely to remain for the foreseeable future.

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Competition for Party Nomination in the 90s: How do Factions and Personal Ties Matter in Korean Politics?

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Competition for Party Nomination in the 90s: How do Factions and Personal Ties Matter in Korean Politics?

This paper explores the candidate-nomination process for South Korean political parties. Given strong party identification in South Korea, nomination by major parties is extremely important for candidates in winning elections. Employing social network analysis, we examine how factions and personal ties affect candidate nomination. Our findings suggest that factions play only a limited role: candidates with weak factional ties but strong overall closeness to other party members enjoy an advantage in the nomination process. This finding is significant in that it indicates that factions tend to be fragmented and unstable, contrary to the conventional wisdom that factional rivalries are deeply embedded in Korean politics.

Keywords: Candidate-nomination, Korean National Assembly, Party Politics, Social Network Analysis

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I. Introduction

This paper explores the candidate-nomination process for political parties in South Korea. Given strong party identification, nomination by major parties is extremely important for candidates to be nominated. We are particularly interested in the effect of factions and personal ties in the nomination process. Do factions and personal ties (*inmaek*) matter in the nomination process? If so, how?

A few individuals enjoying tremendous power in their parties have dominated Korea politics. Notably, these leaders tolerated factions within their parties even though they had the power and influence to eliminate them. It would be interesting to know how these leaders managed intraparty factions in the nomination process. In order to investigate the nomination process in South Korea, we gathered extensive data on every candidate in the 15th and 16th national assembly elections, which is very

rare.[1] In this paper, we present our initial findings. We show that, first, factions had only limited effect. This is because party leaders managed factions by using the nomination process in a way to eliminate potential rivals by disallowing them from providing benefits to their followers. Without the ability to provide benefits to their followers, faction leaders were unable to maintain their factions. Suspecting they might be disadvantaged in the nomination process, faction members were no longer incentivized to follow their faction leaders, and ultimately the factions fell apart.

If factions do not matter so much, then, perhaps candidate's personal ties might be factor in the nomination process. Thus we also investigate which types of personal ties matter and how in the nomination process. Our analysis indicates that politicians with "weak ties" in the party are more likely to be nominated. Altogether, our findings are significant because they indicate that factions tend to be fragmented and unstable, contrary to the conventional wisdom that factional rivalries are deeply embedded in Korean politics.

In the next section, we provide a general background of party politics and the nomination process in South Korea. Section three provides an overview of the variables and the next two sections discuss the paper's findings. Section six concludes our paper.

II. Pathways to the Korean National Assembly

The South Korean Constitution and laws governing elections and political parties pose few explicit and detailed procedures for candidate

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[1] "The current legislature is the 20th national assembly. Due to data limitations, we rely on past nomination processes to examine how personal ties matter in Korea politics. Although political parties have changed names, and faction leaders have changed overtime as well, we believe that the main characteristics of the party nomination process remain more or less the same. The empirical investigation of the 15th and 16th national assemblies thus offers valuable insights into the candidate nomination process in South Korea.

endorsement. Article 8.2 of the South Korean Constitution only states that the organization and activities of political parties, which includes the candidate nomination process, should be democratic. Laws governing elections and political parties mainly defer the candidate endorsement process to the political party itself. Each political party in South Korea has its own regulation on candidate endorsement but with few differences. In general, there exists the Party Endorsement (Nomination) Review Committee that reviews candidates for each district wishing to run for election with a party label. This committee selects a candidate for each district and makes recommendations to a Party's steering committee, which consists of high-ranking party officials including the party president, secretary general, and chair of the Policy Research Council that make the final decision. Candidates who are selected become official party nominees for each district, but those who fail to receive endorsement have to run in the election as an independent or look for another party's endorsement.[2]

For decades, a few individuals have dominated Korean politics. These individuals have also dominated political parties, rendering them personalistic and paternalistic.[3] For example, in 1995, there were two major parties, the ruling New Korea Party and the National Congress for New Politics (hereafter National Congress) led by Kim Dae-Jung.[4] These parties did not diverge much in ideology or in policy preferences but did have different electoral bases, namely, each leader's native region. The New Korea Party drew its main support from the southeastern Gyeongsang provinces and The National Congress drew its main support

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[2] South Korea maintains a single-member district system, and only those who receive official party nomination can register as a party candidate. Also, each party can nominate only one candidate per district.

[3] "Hee Min Kim, "Rational Choice Theory and Third World Politics: The 1990 Party Merger in Korea," *Comparative Politics* 30, no.1 (1997).

[4] As of 2017, these two parties have different names; New Korea Party became the Liberty Korea Party and the National Congress for New Politics became the Minju Party.

from the southwestern Jeolla provinces. In the 1992 presidential election, for instance, Kim Dae-Jung received less than ten percent of the vote in the Gyeongsang provinces but more than ninety percent in the Jeolla provinces. Furthermore, no one in both parties won a seat in the national assembly from a rival region for decades.

Since political parties are identified with their leader and attain electoral support on a regional basis, party leaders enjoy tremendous authority within the party. Interestingly enough, for example, the former leaders of two major parties, Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam, who had fought for democratization of the country for more than thirty years, maintained an extremely authoritarian system within their own parties.[5] In particular, party leaders enjoyed the exclusive power to nominate a candidate regardless of the formal nomination process within each party, supposed to be "fair." It is not an exaggeration to say that leaders can single-handedly deny an incumbent national assemblyman candidacy in the next election if they desire.[6] Considering that independent candidates are rarely elected,[7] the fate of politicians thus rests in the hands of a few party leaders dominating the party nomination process.

Despite the fact that Koreans tend to identify political parties with their leaders, who exercise absolute control over the party, intraparty factions still arise. As several scholars point out, factions are often formed on the basis of regional, school, or patronage ties.[8] The very

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[5] Kim, "Rational Choice Theory and Third World Politics."

[6] Chan Wook Park, "Change is Short but Continuity is Long: Policy Influence of the National Assembly in Newly Democratized Korea," in *Legislatures: Comparative Perspectives on Representative Assemblies*, ed. Gerhard Loewenberg, Peverill Squire, and Roderick Kiewiet (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003).

[7] Since the thirteenth national assembly election, held in 1988, less than three percent of national assembly members have been elected as independents in each election. Note that South Korea overcome thirty years of direct or indirect control of the political process by the military in the late 1980s, whereby a full-fledged party system began to operate.

[8] Sung-joo Han, "South Korea: Politics in Transition," in *Democracy in Developing Countries: Asia*, ed. Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset (Boulder: Lynne Rienner

existence of factions, however, provides a puzzle. Why do party leaders allow these factions within the party? While several works have attempted to explain the existence of factions,[9] the question remains as to how party leaders manage factions within the nomination process. Do factions matter in the nomination process?

As noted above, especially in the Jeolla and Gyeongsang provinces, official nomination from the regionally dominant party is commensurate to being elected. In addition, without party nomination, an independent candidate in the national election also has almost no chance of being elected. Thus, the competition for party nomination is notoriously as fierce as the election itself. However, unlike Japan, factions have not contested the candidacy for national assembly seats within districts. In other words, there is not much *tomodaore* as leaders succeed in managing factional conflict in the nomination process.[10]

In this paper, we are generally interested in investigating the determinants of party nomination empirically. Which candidates receive nominations? Meanwhile, we are particularly interested in how factions matter within each party. Does joining a faction increase the chances of a candidate being nominated? How do party leaders manage factions in the nomination process? In addition, we are interested in how personal ties matter in the nomination process. Do candidates with strong ties within the party win the nomination? Answering these questions is not so easy especially due to a lack of available data. We collected extensive data on politicians who applied for nomination in the 15th and 16th national assemblies in Korea. This data includes the nomination candidates'

Publishers, 1989).

[9] Hyung Joon Kim, "Economics of Factional Politics: A Study of Factional Behavior in Korea" (Ph. D. diss., University of Iowa, 1994).

[10] *Tomodaore* is a Japanese term for over-nomination due to factional conflict within the party. See Gary W. Cox and Frances Rosenbluth, "Factional Competition for the Party Endorsement: The Case of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party," *British Journal of Political Science* 26, no. 2 (1996).

various backgrounds and factional affiliations. In this paper, we provide our general findings from the dataset on party nomination in South Korea.

III. Data

We gathered information pertaining to the 15th and 16th Korean National Elections through the Korean National Election Committee. The variables included in the dataset are as follows: the entire list of candidates in the 15th and 16th Korean National Elections; age; election results for each election; province and district; gender; educational record; career prior to becoming a politician; party affiliation; and party nomination in both elections. In addition, we included the candidate's competitiveness in the elections. The variable "competitiveness" refers to the ratio of the number of votes a candidate received to the total number of votes in the district in the election.

Table 1. Re-nominations in the Major Parties

	The New Korea Party	The National Congress
Total number of nominees in the 15th election	210	212
Re-nominated in the 16th election	86 (41%)	64 (30.2%)
Not nominated in the 16th election	124 (59%)	148 (69.8%)

Among all the nominees in both elections, this study focuses on the winners of the 15th election from the New Korea Party (currently Liberty Korea Party) and the National Congress (currently the Minju Party). The dataset for the New Korea Party consists of 126 legislators who were elected in the 15th election. The number of National Congress legislators was sixty-five. We created a variable "nomination" for the winners of the 15th election. If a legislator was nominated again in the 16th election then the binary variable "nomination" was coded as one. If he or she failed to be nominated, the variable was coded as zero. Table 1 provides the re-nomination rate for the two major parties at that time.

In addition, we identified the factions within each party. The New Korea Party contained five significant factions. We identified the factions and their members from two sources. First, we rely on Park's study summarizing the major factions in Korean parties.[11] Second, this data was complemented by new information extracted from *Monthly Joong-ang* and *Shindonga*, which are considered the most prominent monthly magazines in Korea. During the nomination process for the 16th assembly, the five major factions were as follows: the Lee Hoi-chang faction; Kim Yun-whan faction; Lee Handong faction; Kim Duk-ryong faction; and Kim Young-sam faction. Table 2 shows the number of national assembly members who were nominated from each faction in the New Korea Party in the 16th election.

Table 2. New Korea Party Factions in the 16th election

	Lee Hoi-chang	Kim Duk-ryong	Kim Young-sam	Kim Yun-whan	Lee Han-dong
Nominated	23 (69.7%)	8 (72.7%)	10 (62.5%)	8 (57.1%)	3 (27.3%)
Not Nominated	10 (30.3%)	3 (27.3%)	6 (37.5%)	6 (42.9%)	8 (72.7%)
Total	33 (100%)	11 (100%)	16 (100%)	14 (100%)	11 (100%)

Lee Hoi-chang, who was the "boss" of the New Korea Party, led the largest faction. In our dataset, thirty-three legislators are identified as members of the Lee Hoi-chang faction (twenty-six percent of the total). The next largest was the Kim Young-sam faction, which consisted of sixteen legislators. Kim Duk-ryong and Lee Han-dong had eleven followers each, while Kim Yun-whan had fourteen. There were also a few legislators who were members of multiple factions. The Lee Hoi-chang and Kim Duk-ryong factions enjoyed the highest rate of re-nomination. About sixty-nine percent of the Lee faction members

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[11] Chong-Sung Park, "The Structure and Dynamics of Political Factions in Korea," *Korean Political Science Review* 27, no.1 (1993).

reran in the 16th election (twenty-three out of thirty-three), while about seventy-two percent of the Kim faction were re-nominated (eight out of eleven). However, overall, of all the 15th election nominees from the New Korea Party, only forty-one percent were re-nominated by the party (see table 1).

It is necessary to briefly mention the background of the 16th election. In the 1997 Presidential Election, Kim Dae-jung of the National Congress defeated Lee Hoi-chang of the New Korea Party by a narrow margin and was elected President. Lee Hoi-chang retired from politics, but only briefly. Without the presence of Lee Hoi-chang and the former President Kim Young-sam, the New Korea Party underwent political chaos, and members realized they had no choice but to bring back Lee Hoi-chang. After returning to the political scene, Lee monopolized the party nomination process for the 16th election in 2000. Under the slogan of "Reformist Nomination," Lee Hoi-chang did not nominate some of the powerful faction leaders within the party. Kim Yun-whan and Lee Han-dong, calling Lee's nomination policy a "massacre," left the party with several other party seniors and founded the "Democratic People's Party." However, their experiment turned out to be a disaster, which even the endorsement of former President Kim Young-sam could not mitigate. The Democratic People's party ended up winning only one seat in the 16th election.

The National Congress had three major factions: the Kim Dae-jung faction; Kim Sang-hyun faction; and Neutral faction. Among the sixty-five legislators in the dataset, twenty-two (thirty-three percent of the total) of them are identified as members of the Kim Dae-jung faction. The Kim Sang-hyun faction had nine members, and the Neutral faction had eight. It was the Kim Dae-jung faction that demonstrated the most successful record in the nomination process. Seventy-seven percent of the faction members (seventeen legislators out of twenty-two) reran in the 16th election, while only thirty percent of the National Congress nominees in the 15th election were allowed to rerun in the 16th election.

Table 3 shows the number of national assemblymen who were nominated from each faction in the National Congress in the 16th election.

Table 3. National Congress Factions in the 16th election

	Kim Dae-jung	Kim Sang-hyun	Neutral
Nominated	17 (77.3%)	5 (55.6%)	5 (62.5%)
Not Nominated	5 (22.7%)	4 (44.4%)	3 (37.5%)
Total	22 (100%)	9 (100%)	8 (100%)

IV. Do Factions Matter in the Nomination Process?

First, we looked at how well the members of particular factions did in the nomination process. We performed a logit analysis with respect to the dependent variable of "nomination" indicating whether a member received nomination or not. The independent variables included binary variables indicating factional affiliation, age, and competitiveness.

Table 4. The Effect of Factions on New Korea Party Nominations

Variables	Coefficient	S.E.	Wald	p-value
Lee Hoi-chang faction	1.363	.465	8.598	.003
Kim Duk-ryong faction	1.296	.765	2.872	.090
Kim Yun-whan faction	.841	.639	1.730	.188
Lee Han-dong faction	-.385	.745	.267	.606
Kim Young-sam faction	.920	.603	2.328	.127
Age	-.034	.033	1.010	.315
Competitiveness	.920	1.784	.266	.606
Constant	.750	2.058	.133	.716
N = 126				
Pseudo R squared = .102				
Log likelihood = -78.403				

Notes The dependent variable was "nomination," which was coded as one when the legislator was nominated in the 16th election and zero when otherwise.

Table 4 reports the result for the New Korea Party. Not surprisingly, the variable indicating the faction of the New Korea Party leader, Lee Hoi Chang, is significant (p=0.003). Lee Hoi-chang faction members were more likely to be nominated in the 16th election than other members of the party. In addition, although not as strong as the Lee Hoi Chang faction variable, the Kim Duk-Ryong faction variable is also significant (p=0.09). Among the minor factions, only the Kim Duk-ryong faction enjoyed favoritism. The other three faction variables show that factions did not have a significant impact on their member's nomination.

With regard to table 4, it should be noted that there is no evidence that Kim Yun-whan, Kim Young-sam and Lee Han-dong faction members did not suffer any disadvantage for their nominations. Our guess is that Kim Yun-whan and Lee Han-dong's rebellion against Lee Hoi-chang's party leadership was not due to unfair treatment of their factions but probably their inability to provide their followers with privileged status vis-à-vis nomination. If that was indeed the case, the results suggests that Lee Hoi-chang cut Kim and Lee off from their factions not by getting rid of Kim and Lee faction members but by preventing the faction leaders from showing favoritism to their factions. If Lee Hoi-chang discriminated against minor faction members by eliminating them from the nomination process, he might have ended up facing severe resistance to his party leadership. However, Kim Yun-whan and Lee Han-dong faction members did not have any incentive to revolt against Lee Hoi-chang. They rather chose to stay and submit to Lee Hoi-chang's authority than leave the New Korea Party, which would have certainly risked their chances of winning in the 16th election race.

For the Kim Young-sam faction, which did not have a strong leader like Kim Yun-whan or Lee Han-dong, the results suggest a story that is not very different. After Kim Young-sam stepped down from the presidency and retired from politics, his faction could not find a formidable leader. Consequently, Lee Hoi-chang and Kim Duk-ryong absorbed much of the remaining Kim Young-sam faction. It is plausible

to infer that the Kim Young-sam faction was not able to procure Lee Hoi-chang's favor, but neither did Lee have any reason to turn them against him by discriminating against them.

In the case of the National Congress, only the members of the Kim Dae-jung faction, the leader of which was also leader of the party, had a better chance of re-nomination than other faction members or non-faction members (p=0.3). The results in table 5 indicate that the party favored the party leader's faction but, as with Lee Hoi-Chang of the New Korea Party, neither did Kim Dae-jung use the nomination process to eliminate potential rival factions.

It is surprising that both parties were not seriously concerned with a candidate's competitiveness in the election. In both models, the variable "competitiveness" was not statistically significant. Perhaps due to strong regionalism competitiveness was not necessarily an important factor in selecting nominees. As mentioned earlier, being nominated by the right party by district almost certainly ensured a seat in the national assembly. Combined with this powerful regionalism, the party nomination process controlled by the party leader thus actually prevented Korean voters from choosing their favorite candidates.

Table 5. The Effect of Factions on National Congress Nominations

Variables	Coefficient	S.E.	Wald	p-value
Kim Dae-jung faction	1.450	.661	4.808	.028
Kim Sang-hyun faction	-.133	.775	.030	.863
Neutral faction	.221	.842	.069	.793
Age	-.092	.041	4.995	.025
Competitiveness	-.884	1.453	.370	.543
Constant	5.401	2.236	5.832	.016
N = 65				
Pseudo R squared = .1956				
Log likelihood = -34.431				

Notes The dependent variable is "nomination," which is coded as one when the legislator was nominated in the 16th election and zero when otherwise.

The empirical analysis also suggests that the younger National Congress members were more likely to be nominated than older ones. However, the variable "age" was not significant for the New Korea Party nomination process. On average, among incumbent candidates National Congress nominees were about three years younger than New Korea Party nominees. When we add nominees who were not incumbent legislators into the dataset, National Congress nominees still remain about two years younger than New Korea Party nominees. It seems that even though the National Congress did not consider candidates' performance an important factor in the 15th election, it did prefer younger nominees. The National Congress tried to appeal to the demand for political reform by nominating younger candidates, who were supposed to be less corrupted by the existing political system. We speculate that it was natural for the National Congress to prefer younger nominees who could help with the party's "liberal" image. By the same token, it is plausible to assert that the "conservative" New Korea Party had no reason to prefer younger nominees who were relatively liberal.

V. Do Personal Ties Matter in the Nomination Process?

The analysis in the previous section shows that the data do not indicate that faction members performed well in the candidate nomination process, excepting those from party leader factions. In other words, it seems that faction affiliation generally did not provide an advantage for candidate nomination. In this section, we investigate the effect of personal and social connections on the nomination process. It is often said that personal and social connections (*inmaek*) are the most important factors for success in Korean politics. We investigate this stylized fact with respect to our data. In order to check whether *inmaek* matters for nomination, we employ network analysis that is common in sociology and labor economics.[12] For this analysis, we created a matrix indicating the relationships among candidates. Given the data availability, we check

only one but also the most significant criterion for building personal ties in Korea: school ties based on undergraduate and graduate education.

Figure 1. Networks Based on School Ties: New Korea Party

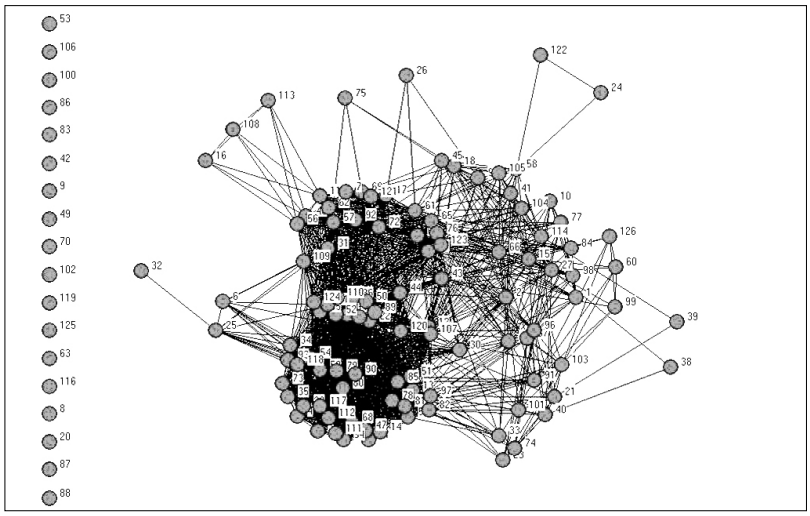

Figure 1 present the network pattern for New Korea. Each node in the figure represents a member of the party. The number next to the node is the number assigned to each member. The lines between the nodes indicate relationships. If a node does not have a line connected to it, it means that a member does not share any personal ties to the other members in the matrix. In the figure, we can see that there are groups of people connected more densely. Figure 2 presents the network pattern for the National Congress Party. Figure 3 compares the network patterns of the two parties. It is interesting to see that both parties have similar

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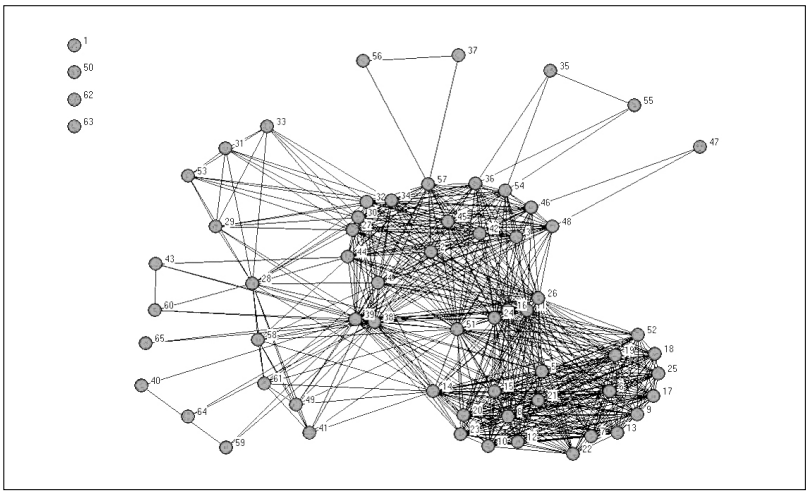
12 See, for example, M. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 789 (1973): 1360-1380; M. Granovetter,"The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited." *Sociological Theory* 1 (1983): 201-233; David Knoke, **Political Networks: Structural Perspective** (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

Figure 2. Networks Based on School Ties: New Korea Party



patterns of varying density, and both have two core groups that are closely tied. The difference in the densities with respect to each figure is due to the difference in the number of members in each party.

In order to check whether personal ties matters for the nomination process, we created three micro network measures, namely "degree," "closeness," and "betweenness."[13] "Degree" indicates the number of direct ties that each one member has in the network. It would be plausible to think that actors who have many ties to other actors may have enjoyed advantageous positions. Various and numerous ties may allow one alternative ways to satisfy needs and thus decrease dependence on any one individual. Most importantly, people with many ties may receive and send out more information than other individuals. This factor might conceivably translate into an advantage in the nomination process.

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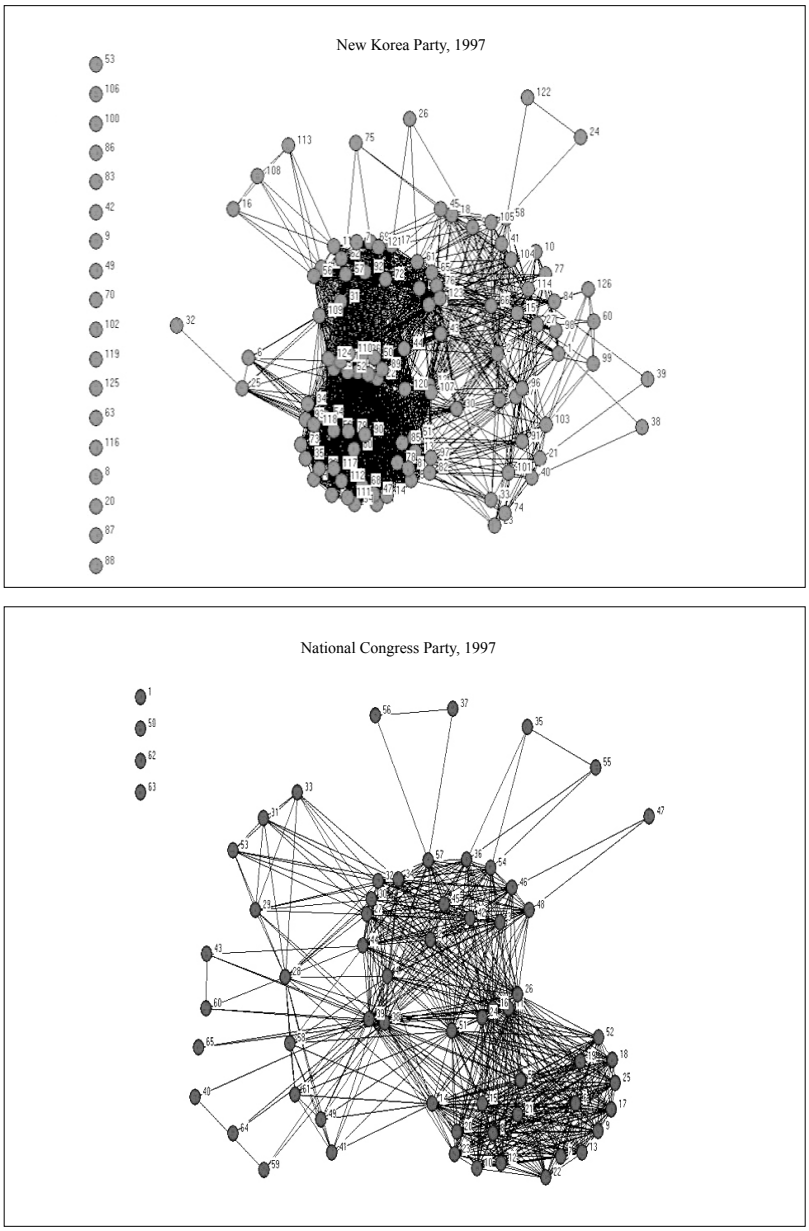
[13] For the complete formula, see Robert A. Hanneman, *Introduction to Social Network Methods* (Riverside: University of California Press, 2001). The measures were created using the software UCINET for Windows

Figure 3. Comparison of Networks in Two Major Parties in 1997



We expect that members with a higher "degree" score, then, will be more likely to be nominated.

The second measure, "closeness," measures the distance of an actor to all others in the network. The difference between "closeness" and "degree" is that "degree" only takes into account the immediate ties an actor has. One actor might be tied to a large number of others, but those others might be rather disconnected from the network as a whole. In this case, the actor might be a central one, but only in a local sense. "Closeness" takes into account both direct and indirect ties. Thus, this measure indicates how close a member is to the party in terms of ties we have in our data. We conjecture that a member who is closer to the party is more likely to be nominated.

Finally, we measure "betweenness." Connections are often formed between individuals via an intermediary. Logically, the more people one knows, the more likely one is to be an intermediary in connecting others. Thus, it is plausible to speculate that an actor situated "between" other actors might be the more influential. Considering this point, we check whether members with more connections are more likely to be nominated or not.

Table 6 reports the result of a logit regression performed with respect to the New Korea Party. The dependent variable was "nomination," which indicates whether a member was nominated in 16th election or not. "Age," "competitiveness," and "faction" were included as independent variables in addition to "degree," "closeness," and "betweenness." The table provides several surprising results. First of all, "closeness" was the most important among the micro network measures. This suggests that overall closeness to the party rather than direct ties or "betweenness" is more important in the nomination process. In other words, politicians with more efficient access to, and who are more efficiently accessible by, other actors possess an advantage for the nomination process. Second, the faction variables were not significant, including the Lee Hoi-chang faction variable, when entered together with

Table 6. Nomination and Personal Ties to the Party: New Korea Party

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Age	-0.39 (0.034)	-0.34 (0.34)	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.03)
Competitiveness	0.523 (1.62)	0.88 (1.61)	0.98 (1.56)	1.07 (1.63)
Closeness	0.298 (0.15)**	0.35 (0.17)**		
Degree	0.008 (0.13)		0.02 (0.01)**	
Betweenness	0.001 (0.001)			0.002 (0.002)
Constant	0.49 (0.62)	0.89 (0.48) *	0.65 (0.56)	0.96 (0.54)
Kim Yun-Whan	0.55 (0.81)	0.81 (0.77)	0.80 (0.79)	0.97 (0.78)
Kim Yun-Whan	0.17 (0.63)	0.34 (0.61)	0.27 (0.64)	0.58 (0.63)
Lee, Han-Dong	-1.09 (0.78)	0.34 (0.62)	-0.73 (0.76)	-0.82 (0.79)
N	126	126	126	126
Pseudo R squared	0.13	0.11	0.10	0.09

Notes The dependent variable is "nomination," which is coded as one when the legislator was nominated in the 16th election and zero when otherwise. The numbers in parentheses indicate standard error. ** indicates significance at 0.05, and * indicates significance at 0.1.

the network measures in the regression.

In sum, as in the previous section, we could find no strong evidence to support the conventional wisdom that factions play a crucial role in the nomination process. However, we found that personal ties to the party do matter. Especially, the overall closeness of an actor to others in the party is what matters. This provides strong evidence to overturn the conventional idea that factions play an important role in Korean politics. Factions tend to be exclusive. Therefore, members in a particular faction have very exclusive, strong ties among themselves but do not have strong connections with other members of the party. Our findings imply that an individual who is close to all other members of the party, or in other words an individual with weak ties to a specific network, tends to be nominated. As Granovetter suggests, weak ties can be a better source of job information than strong, exclusive ties because weak ties provide novel information.[14] It seems that this is true in our case as well. Politicians with more direct and indirect ties were more likely to be

nominated. We think that politicians with weak ties have more information and knowledge of what is going on than other politicians, which helps in bargaining for and acquiring nomination.

VI. Conclusion

It is often said that factions are crucial for the candidate nomination process in Korean politics. Our analysis shows that factions do not play such a role. At best, only the members of the party leader's faction are more likely to be nominated. On the other hand, personal ties to the party matter. Our analysis shows that a politician with more ties to all other members rather than exclusive ties to some is more likely to be nominated. This is consistent with Han's argument that "Korean political factions and groupings tend to be fragmented, amorphous, and often lacking in strong personal leadership."[15] Overall, personal ties (*inmaek*) based on education, region, and common experience are a more important factor than political factions in the candidate nomination process in Korea politics.[16]

Over the years, several aspects of the political environment in South Korea have changed. For example, Korean parties no longer have charismatic leaders such as Kim Dae-jung or Kim Yong-sam, who monopolized regional support. In addition, "grass-root nomination" has been experimented with since the presidential election in 2002. However, the parties still want to hold on to regionalism, which made it so easy to mobilize support. Regionalism, which created and sustained the old regime for the last thirty-five years, is thus still very much alive.

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[14] Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties."

[15] Han, "South Korea: Politics in Transition," 296.

[16] Some might argue that factions are formed based on personal ties. Although we have not yet fully analyzed the relationship between factions and personal ties, our measures of personal ties and factions are not correlated statistically.

Accordingly, we believe our empirical investigation of the 15th and 16th national elections undoubtedly offers valuable insights in this regard.

In order to improve upon these finding, future research should expand the dataset, whereby one can check the effect of factions and personal ties as well as analyze the relationship between network structure and party behavior over time. Furthermore, it would be fruitful to ask why factions in Korea, unlike in Japan, are not so stable or important for the nomination process. The answer to this question will increase our general understanding of the relationship between factions and the candidate nomination process.

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Food from the Enemy: The Representation of Western Humanitarian Aid in the North Korean Media 1990-2010

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Food from the Enemy: The Representation of Western Humanitarian Aid in the North Korean Media 1990–2010

Some observers hope foreign humanitarian aid might undermine the DPRK's legitimizing ideology. However, a detailed analysis of two official DPRK media outlets shows that the authorities have put in place a sophisticated strategy of damage control through their propaganda apparatus in order to justify the distribution of assistance by supposedly hostile countries. This official discourse describes food problems as a capitalist plot and Western aid as a neocolonialist tool serving a variety of sinister purposes. These efforts became more conspicuous as the information blockade began to disintegrate. As a result of this surprisingly elaborate response, the majority of North Koreans are primed and given a lens through which to interpret contact with foreign aid workers and the receipt of international aid, thereby partially negating its capacity to undermine the official doctrine. Therefore, aid should be distributed on purely humanitarian grounds, with no misguided hopes of automatically winning hearts and minds.

Keywords: North Korea, DPRK, aid, humanitarian assistance, North Korean media, propaganda

Food from the Enemy: The Representation of Western Humanitarian Aid in the North Korean Media 1990-2010

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I. Introduction

The inflow of humanitarian aid to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has fallen considerably over recent years. International aid organizations based in Pyongyang have faced a persistent lack of funding, even though humanitarian needs remain significant.[1] Aid to the DPRK has been subject to intense debate ever since the start of Western humanitarian involvement in 1995: The risk of diversion to the military, a lack of direct access to beneficiaries, and challenging monitoring conditions have led many organizations to believe their assistance supports the regime rather than the population, and prompted their departure. Since the North Korean economy has been showing signs of recovery, donors have grown increasingly reluctant to assist a country that is prioritizing its nuclear and ballistic missile programs over the basic needs of its population.

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[1] World Food Program, Protracted Relief And Recovery Operation (PRRO) 200532 "Nutrition Support For Children And Women" In DPR Korea, 2014.

For the North Korean regime, foreign aid is useful. It provides basic commodities and services to its population for free, allowing for expenditure elsewhere, effectively outsourcing the fulfillment of state obligations to humanitarian agencies. Yet this heavy dependence on foreign assistance contradicts the official Party ideology of *Juche* that prescribes self-reliance and rejects outside intervention in internal affairs. The receipt of aid poses a formidable threat to the ultranationalist narrative found in the state's wider discourse—the country is portrayed as proud and successful, valiantly resisting imperialist enemies hell-bent on its annihilation—particularly if that aid comes from countries depicted as sworn enemies. In addition, seemingly altruistic assistance from foreigners conflicts with a distinctly xenophobic narrative that paints the outside world as an unforgiving place and the West as a cruel enemy. Finally, international aid efforts are a blow to the pervasive personality cults surrounding the Kim family, which are crucial for their legitimacy and the internal stability of the regime. It raises the question—if our leaders are as adoring and infallible as the media claims, why do we need to rely on food from the enemy to survive?

What is more, assistance from Russia and China—typically in the forms of debt relief, subsidized imports, and shipments of industrial goods and agricultural inputs—was relatively discreet. In contrast, Western aid projects are markedly conspicuous: they entail ethnically diverse teams, sporting international fashions, travelling around the countryside in white Toyota trucks, meeting people directly to distribute food and medicines from sacks, which are emblazoned with explicit indications of their origin. The regime therefore tries to maximize the influx of assistance, while minimizing its visibility and controlling the interactions between foreign staff and its citizens. To this end, the authorities impose tight restrictions on the UN agencies and international NGOs resident in Pyongyang, by means of travel controls, short visa validities, curbed personal freedoms and, until 2008, a ban on Korean-speaking expatriates. Scott Snyder remarks that the state "often seemed

to be reaching out with an open hand, while wrapping itself up to protect its people from external influence."[2]

Critics use this restrictive environment and the regime's resistance to change to argue that foreign assistance serves to prop up a regime considered responsible for the suffering of its own population, thereby preventing its collapse. The former American ambassador to South Korea, Christopher Hill, wondered "whether the short-term cost in human lives is worth the potential long-term benefits (also in terms of human lives) that a famine-induced collapse of North Korea could bring."[3]

In this context, some pro-aid advocates put forward the argument that, in addition to the direct benefits to the wellbeing of the population, foreign assistance has the capacity to be a Trojan horse. That is, aid workers, through their personal interactions with ordinary citizens, can become a communication channel, a way to expose the population to outside information that challenges the official propaganda. Implicit to this argument is that aid workers will carry a subversive message that undermines the official ideology and, by extension, the regime. Many in the small expatriate community of Pyongyang share the belief that they are "worms in the fruit."[4]

In his insightful report on the famine, Andrew Natsios writes: "Foreigners introduced new ideas that conflicted directly with *Juche* [...] In those areas suffering most from the famine, where aid workers reported that local and provincial officials were much more accommodating and less rigid and ideological, these new ideas likely fell on fertile ground."[5] Hazel Smith has expressed similar hopes:

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[2] L. Gordon Flake, "The Experience of U.S. NGOs in North Korea," in *Paved with Good Intentions*, ed. L. Gordon Flake and Scott Snyder (Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), 16.

[3] Christopher Hill, "Food for Thought in North Korea," *Project Syndicate*, February 22, 2011.

[4] Personal testimonies to one of the authors.

[5] Andrew S. Natsios, *The Great North Korean Famine* (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace

"[Humanitarians] […] were also responding […] to a different type of hunger—the population's hunger for peace."[6] Aid is also thought to have the potential to promote change in the regime's economic management: "The invisible impact of individual encounters with the outside world on North Koreans, [...] mostly in the context of assistance, is hard to measure; but they may have higher and deeper long-term significance than any of the visible changes," writes Rüdiger Frank.[7]

These hopes are shared by some donors, sometimes publicly. Dorothy Stuehmke, former representative of USAID for the DPRK, claimed:

> The food aid program also offered an incredible opportunity to engage with regular North Korean citizens [...] Visits to homes, schools, orphanages and public distribution centers gave these North Koreans an unforgettable experience: contact with foreigners and Americans. It gave them a window on the outside world and perhaps a different perspective of the U.S. Through my interaction with them, I was able to confirm how much they appreciated our help […] and that they clearly knew the food aid was coming from the U.S.[8]

The problem with these assertions is their disregard for the other side of the story: how the official propaganda represents Western aid and aid workers, and how this discourse might serve to inculcate views in the domestic population. North Korean propaganda is more efficient than most observers acknowledge. Despite the devastating famine of the 1990s, the regime did not collapse, a comparatively low number of North

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Press, 2002), 224.

6 Hazel Smith, *Hungry for Peace* (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2005), 12.

7 Rüdiger Frank, "The Political Economy of Sanctions against North Korea," *Asian Perspective* 30, no. 3 (2006): 5-36.

8 Dorothy Stuehmke, "Should we feed North Korea?" *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 2011.

Koreans fled the country, and Kim Il Sung still enjoys a highly positive image to this day, including amongst refugees in the South. In this light, the efficacy of state output in forming immutable perceptions should not be underappreciated.[9]

According to a 2011 survey, sixty percent of DPRK defectors said they were aware of the existence of foreign aid efforts while in the country.[10] The majority of refugees come from the northeastern areas that have been excluded from international aid efforts by authorities, so this figure is likely to be even higher in areas receiving aid. This high awareness of foreign assistance would not be tolerable for the authorities, whose very survival rests on ideology, without a comprehensive strategy of damage control. The regime's complete domination of the media environment enables it to take discursive counteraction to this effect.

Contrary to a common assumption, the question of aid is widely discussed in the North Korean media. These discussions predate the arrival of Western humanitarian agencies by many decades. From the earliest days of the regime, the official discourse downplayed the contributions of the Soviet Union, China and other communist allies. Nevertheless, Western aid brought with it new challenges: demands for assessment and monitoring visits, daily interactions with locals, and transparency in line with international standards. From the regime's perspective, it became crucial to provide a coherent and convincing explanation to the population.

II. Methodology

This research focuses on two of the North Korean regime's major written

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[9] Ralph Hassig and Kongdan Oh, *North Korea Through the Looking Glass* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 129.

[10] Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, *Witness to Transformation* (Washington DC: PIIE Press, 2011), 40.

outlets: the Rodong Sinmun and the Korean Central News Agency (*KCNA*). The Rodong Sinmun is the official newspaper of the Workers' Party of Korea and enjoys daily distribution across the country. Lankov notes that the editorials receive explicit approval from the highest ranks of the regime and, as such, "are seen as the voice of the Party in its purest form."[11] Meanwhile, the *KCNA* is the official press agency for the country and publishes articles in Korean, English, Russian and Spanish. Accordingly, some of the *KCNA*'s work is intended for consumption by the outside world, but the two regularly cite one another as an authoritative source[12] and translations are largely faithful.

The rationale for selecting the Rodong Sinmun and the KCNA is four-fold. Firstly, they represent the dominant written news sources in the country and thus those to which most people have access. Other papers target specific subsets of the population—such as the military (*Joseoninmingun*) and the Party (*Minjujoseon*)—but their content and style are largely similar to the Rodong Sinmun. Secondly, the regularity of their publication allows for the consideration of their output as being responsive to contemporary developments, e.g. specific aid shipments and the activities of foreigners within the country. Thirdly, as mentioned above, the two sources seem intertwined at times, with each outlet publishing articles from the other. Fourthly, the ready availability of these sources outside the country, relative to others, permitted a much broader assessment. Since there is significant uniformity across the North Korean media landscape, such practical concerns seemed defensible.

This study analyzed articles regarding aid from donors portrayed as hostile in the official discourse: the United States, South Korea, Japan and, to a lesser extent, the European Union (EU). News stories were sourced using keyword searches of the digitized archive at the

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[11] Andrei Lankov, *North of the DMZ* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007), 55.

[12] See, for example, "S. Korean Authorities Should Lift 'May 24 Step': Rodong Sinmun," *KCNA*, May 11, 2014.

Information Center on North Korea in the National Library of Korea, Seoul. The research concentrated principally on the period from the mid-1990s onwards, since 1995 marked the arrival of the first international aid agencies in Pyongyang, until 2014, the most recent year for which material was available.

III. Findings

1. The evolution of aid coverage and stylistic features

The topic of aid has featured in the North Korean media ever since the country's foundation. Through the 1960s to early 1980s, the Rodong Sinmun made frequent calls for the South to stop accepting aid from both the US and Japan, describing this assistance as "degrading."[13] The newspaper wrote how American aid "stopped [South Korea] from standing on its own two feet,"[14] while headlines declared, "South Korea's core industries are bankrupt and enslaved by American aid."[15] The discussion of aid was used to rally support against foreign powers and was tailored to appeal to an ethnonationalist sentiment. Also common were articles that praised likeminded countries for turning down offers of aid from Western powers. This, too, has continued to the present day, with headlines pronouncing, "Cuba rejects American conditional "aid,"[16] and articles urging countries "to see the wicked goals that underlie American aid, and develop from their own efforts."[17]

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13 "미국의 원조는 굴욕적인것이다" [American aid is humiliating], *Rodong Sinmun*, July 30, 1964.

14 "자립을 방해한 원조" [Aid that hinders self-reliance], *Rodong Sinmun*, March 24, 1963.

15 "미국 〈원조〉에 의한 남조선 기간 공업의 파탄과 예속" [Breakdown and subjugation of South Korean key industries by American "aid"], *Rodong Sinmun*, November 20, 1961.

16 "꾸바 미국의 조건부적인 〈원조〉 제의를 배격" [Cuba rejects American offer of conditional "aid"], *Rodong Sinmun*, September 13, 2008.

17 "미국의 원조는 세계제패를 노린 침략의 도구" [American aid is a tool of aggression aimed at world domination], *Rodong Sinmun*, June 6, 2014.

During the 1960s, the comradery between North Korea and the Soviet Union and China was celebrated with lavish spreads in the Rodong Sinmun, with detailed reports of the meetings and banquets attended by leaders, accompanied by photos and promises of "cooperation and assistance." Even North Korea's practice of maintaining an equidistant relationship between its two patrons is apparent within the newspaper: one country would receive coverage one day, followed by the other shortly after. In more recent years, however, the amount of attention afforded to China's pledges of aid has dwindled, often to no more than a couple of sentences.

Humanitarian aid has been represented as harmful and deserving of suspicion with remarkable consistency through the decades, seemingly as a conscious effort to inculcate the readership with a critical perspective. To this end, the neutral word for "aid" (*wonjo*) is rarely written in isolation; it is normally enclosed in angle brackets—the Korean equivalent of scare quotes—or prefaced by "so-called" (*sowi* or *ireunba*) to convey cynicism. Aid is described as "two-faced"[18] and "reactionary,"[19] and decried as "racist."[20] Furthermore, a limited number of metaphors are used time and time again—aid is a "poison" (*dogyak*), a means of "plunder" (*ryeoktal*), a "trap" (*olgami*), a "decoy" (*mikki*), or a "tool" (*dogu*) for "subordination" (*yesok*) and "domination" (*jibae*). Likewise, headlines are recycled, whole paragraphs repeated word-for-word a couple of years apart, and similar stories published in close succession, as if to drive the point home in an almost Pavlovian fashion. The graphic imagery used in headlines has also varied little over the years, serving to accentuate the perceived threats. For instance, headlines in the post-

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18 "불순한 목적으로부터 출발한 위선적인 〈원조외교〉" [Hypocritical "aid diplomacy" that starts from an impure purpose], *Rodong Sinmun*, May 22, 2006.

19 "미국의 〈원조〉에 각성을 높여야 한다" [We must wake up to American "aid"], *Rodong Sinmun*, June 4, 2004.

20 "인종멸시적 〈원조〉" [Racist "aid"], *Rodong Sinmun*, January 18, 2003.

famine era—"Aid diplomacy with embedded thorns"[21] and "Within aid lies a hidden dagger"[22]—have clear origins in those published in the 1960s—"American aid: pressured by the threat of a bayonet"[23] and "American aid is opium."[24] This uniformity extends even to the positioning of aid-related stories on the page in the Rodong Sinmun; they are generally found in the lower half of the back page.

2. Causes of the famine and general food scarcity in DPRK propaganda

The historic causes of the 1990s famine, and of more recent chronic malnutrition, are manifold, and include the collapse of the Soviet bloc, a rigid command economy, dilapidated industrial infrastructure, a failure to prioritize the problem, and an unwavering adherence to ideologically motivated policy. External shocks in the early 1990s in the termination of economic assistance from allies and a series of climatic disasters served to aggravate an already degrading situation and precipitated the collapse of the Public Distribution System.[25] These hardships posed a challenge for DRPK propagandists, who had to account for the famine, while leaving the personality cult intact.

Initially, food shortages were explained by blaming sanctions imposed by the US and natural disasters, namely the floods of 1995 and 1996, and the severe drought of 1997. Tellingly, the North Korean entity tasked with liaising with the first humanitarian agencies coming to the

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21 "가시박힌 〈원조〉외교" ["Aid diplomacy" with embedded thorns], *Rodong Sinmun*, August 8, 2008.

22 "〈원조〉 속에 감추어진 비수" [Within "aid" lies a hidden dagger], *Rodong Sinmun*, March 29, 1999.

23 "총검의 위협으로 강매되는 미국 〈원조〉 물자" [American "aid" pressured by the threat of a bayonet], *Rodong Sinmun*, November 30, 1961.

24 "미국의 〈원조〉는 아편이다" [American "aid" is opium], *Rodong Sinmun*, October 2, 1964.

25 Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, *Famine in North Korea. Markets, Aid, and Reform* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

country was called the Flood Damage Rehabilitation Committee. These two ideas are often invoked in tandem as a convenient and politically safe excuse: "Our people well know that the food shortage has been caused entirely by devastating natural disasters, particularly by foreign hostile forces' protracted economic sanctions and blockade."[26]

In official discourse the famine of the 1990s is euphemistically referred to as the Arduous March (*gonanui haenggun*). This name serves to meld it with the mythology surrounding Kim Il Sung's days in the anti-Japanese resistance, and alludes to an embellished story in which he heroically leads a group of guerrilla fighters in the Manchurian hinterland, enduring hunger, cold and attacks by the enemy. Duly rechristened, the famine has been discursively transformed from a gruesome humanitarian disaster to a patriotic act of defiance and struggle against an external enemy. Indeed, the name circumvents the idea of government failure, even demanding respect for the Kim family. The rebranding of the famine by association with other national hardships is a powerful tool, since it elicits a whole set of preexisting responses instilled in every DPRK citizen from childhood.

Over the years, excuses of sanctions and adverse weather began to wear thin so the regime began to use more diverse and elaborate reasons behind the food crisis, such as global warming, Western agricultural export subsidies, and the international financial crisis.

The number of food shortage-related articles suddenly surged in the summer of 2008, coinciding with the conclusion of a denuclearization agreement between the North and the US, which included the shipment of 500,000 tons of food. This brought about one of the largest food distribution campaigns ever in DPRK history, and one for which the WFP had negotiated unprecedented levels of access and transparency. From July 2008, the initial shipments of American corn and wheat (in

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[26] "Food aid, 'quad talks' are different things," *KCNA*, April 12, 1997.

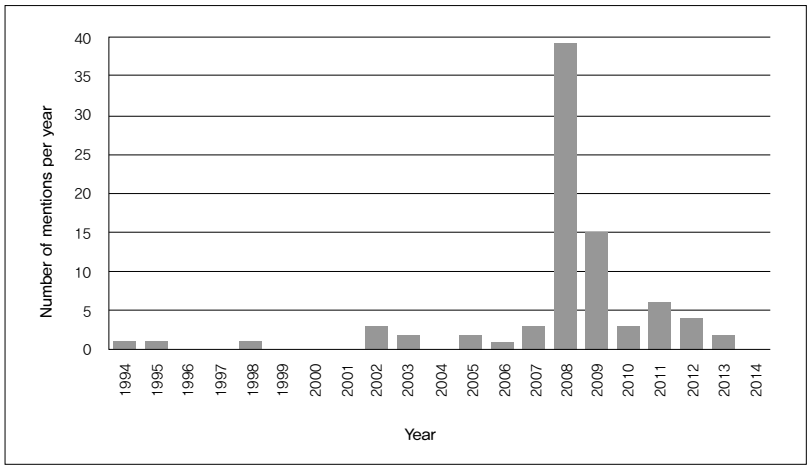

Fig. 1. The number of appearances of the most common terms relating to food shortages used in the media—"food problem" (*singnyang munje*), "food crisis" (*singnyang wigi*), "food shortage" (*singnyang bujok*) and "food difficulty" (*singnyangnan*)—to be found in Rodong Sinmun headlines through 1994-2014, showing a pronounced spike in 2008.

bags stamped with "*migugeseo bonae on seonmul*" on one side, and "USAID—from the American people" on the other, along with a US flag) began to pour into the country, to be distributed by the WFP and five American NGOs. With a nearly six-fold increase in WFP personnel and access to previously forbidden counties,[27] foreign aid workers began visiting countryside hospitals, nurseries, schools, distribution centers, warehouses and even family homes, sometimes without having to provide advance warning.[28] This summer also saw a relaxation of the ban on hiring Korean-speaking foreigners.

This intensification of mitigation activity by the Rodong Sinmun overlapped precisely with this new aid operation, with greater visibility, invasiveness and geographical reach. The newspaper started to publish,

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[27] "World Food Program, EMOP 10757.0, "Emergency Assistance to Population Groups Affected by Floods and Rising Food and Fuel Prices," 2008.

[28] "Personal experience of an author.

on an almost daily basis, articles describing a horrendous hunger crisis unfolding across all developing countries. For instance, "At least 300 million people in Africa are facing a food crisis […] 800 million people do not have enough food"[29] and "every day, 8000 children die of hunger and malnutrition."[30]

심각한 식량위기로 하여 기아에 시달리는 아프리카인들

Fig. 2. These articles were often accompanied by undated photographs showing emaciated persons from unspecified African countries, suggesting the global nature of the food crisis, and, by extension, the relative food security of the DPRK.[31]

These articles invariably held the West, with the US in particular, to be ultimately responsible. Initially, they blamed a rise in worldwide food

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29 "세계를 휩쓰는 심각한 식량위기 더욱 높아 가는 우려의 목소리" [A severe food crisis sweeping the world, voices of concern louder], *Rodong Sinmun*, July 22, 2008.

30 "식량문제로 인하 전세계적인 비상사태" [Worldwide state of emergency caused by food problems], *Rodong Sinmun*, July 29, 2008.

31 "세계적인 식량위기의 련쇄적후과" [Chain reaction from the worldwide food crisis], *Rodong Sinmun*, July 26, 2008.

prices on increased biofuel production by the US,[32] then on the intentional restriction of exports by Western governments in order to inflate prices[33] and realize "excessive profits."[34] Developed countries were subsequently accused of using "subsidies to protect their own agricultural markets," thus crippling "developing countries, which do not have enough food."[35]

The media gradually shifted towards more sinister reasons behind the catastrophe: "Imperialists are scheming to put developing countries under their control again, and are using food as a weapon."[36] Three days later, the Rodong Sinmun furthered these neocolonialist allegations: "In the past century, Western countries used food as a political weapon to annihilate the spirit of independence of other countries and make them into new colonies. Now […] it is even worse."[37] Despite its significant donation, the US was by far the main target of the newspaper's tirades. The Rodong Sinmun wrote, "The world food crisis—exacerbated by the West, foremost by America—and food itself is being used as the new century's weapon of domination, and is a cunning trick to control other countries and people, and lure them into their sphere of influence."[38] The same accusation was repeated often until the end of the year, when the US decided to end its contributions to the WFP.

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32 "심각한 식량문제와 위한 노력" [Efforts for the severe food crisis], *Rodong Sinmun*, April 29, 2008.

33 "세계식량가격 최고기록, 인류를 위협하는 식량위기" [Record-high world food prices, a food crisis that threatens humanity], *Rodong Sinmun*, May 5, 2008.

34 "세계적인 난문제로 되고있는 식량문제" [A food problem that is becoming a terrible problem worldwide], *Rodong Sinmun*, May 13, 2008.

35 "식량문제로 인하 전세계적인 비상사태," *Rodong Sinmun.*

36 "식량문제해결은 발전도상나라들앞에 나선 절박한 과제" [Solving the food problem, a pressing task facing developing countries], *Rodong Sinmun*, August 1, 2008.

37 "식량문제와 자주적인 삶" [Food problem and independent life], *Rodong Sinmun*, August 4, 2008.

38 "식량문제와 자주적인 삶," *Rodong Sinmun.*

3. Aid explained as a tool of imperialism

Entirely consistent with the country's resolve for self-reliance, the North Korean media views foreign assistance with marked cynicism, and condemns it in damning terms. Decades before the distribution of Western aid began, aid was criticized as "a tool of aggression and plunder,"[39] a "method of pillage and subjugation,"[40] and a vehicle to "support America's strategy in Asia."[41] Warnings of the malign intentions behind aid have continued through to more recent decades, with its characterization as a form of "psychological warfare" that "abuses the idea of humanitarianism,"[42] the dangers to which the population must "wake up."[43]

The ideological threats posed by humanitarian aid originate not only from the aid itself—Why do we need it? Why do we accept it?—but also the underlying humanitarianism—Why are they giving it to us? This foreign generosity runs counter to the xenophobic principles foisted on the population, and so notions of philanthropism must be neutralized. The media achieves this by suggesting that aid is purely self-serving on the part of the donor. It speaks of "real intentions" (*soksim*) and implies the existence of "ulterior motives" (*sasim*), sanctimoniously remarking: "Generally when we refer to aid, it cannot have ulterior motives. That is

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[39] "미제의 〈원조〉는 침략과 략탈의 도구이다" ["Aid" from US imperialists is a tool of aggression and plunder], *Rodong Sinmun*, October 14, 1976.

[40] "미국 〈원조〉는 침략과 예속과 략찰의 수단이다" [American "aid" is a means of aggression and subjugation], *Rodong Sinmun*, June 18, 1963.

[41] "미제의 아세아전략을 뒤받침 하기 위한 추악한 〈원조〉 계획" [Hideous "aid" a plan to support American imperialist strategy in Asia], *Rodong Sinmun*, July 14, 1971.

[42] "미제의 심리모략전에 각성을 높이자" Let's wake up to US imperialist psychological warfare], *Rodong Sinmun*, August 14, 2003.

[43] "서방의 〈원조외교〉에 각성을 높여야 한다" [We must wake up to Western "aid diplomacy"], *Rodong Sinmun*, November 11, 2010

basic."[44] It claims that "Western countries fancy themselves as 'saviors,'"[45] asserting that they "are not doing it out of kindness."[46] Aid is said to be a "means of survival" for imperialist powers[47] and "nothing more than a means of realizing selfish goals."[48] It supports this by suggesting a fundamental incompatibility between capitalism and selflessness—"In this world capitalism that takes care of others does not exist. When capitalism acts to help others, it is already not capitalism"[49]—and that Westerners are inherently incapable of such a virtue—"Much as a leopard cannot change it spots, the imperialists, greedy by their very nature, can never be philanthropists and therefore they are never acting out of 'good will' or 'mercy' for others."[50]

One of the means by which enemy donors are able to further their self-interested goals through aid, according to the North, is the imposition of conditionality. It is argued that donors use aid as leverage to induce in the target country "an American-style political and economic system," "democratic politics," "economic opening," "the guarantee of human rights," "a multi-party system," "free markets," and "reform of the economic and political systems," conditions which are dismissed as "costly" to the country.[51] It is suggested that such interference causes "political and economic turmoil," which directly leads to "terrorism, international crime and illegal migration." In 2009, an editorial entitled

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44 "원조기구인가, 모략기구인가" [Is it an aid agency? Or a scheming agency?], *Rodong Sinmun*, April 6, 2011.

45 ""서방의 〈원조〉란 어떤것인가" [What is Western "aid"?], *Rodong Sinmun*, September 23, 1997.

46 "가시박힌 〈원조〉외교," *Rodong Sinmun*

47 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 독약과 같다" [Imperialist "aid" is poison], *Rodong Sinmun*, October 4, 2000.

48 "미국의 원조는 세계제패를 노린 침략의 도구," *Rodong Sinmun.*

49 "서방의 〈원조〉란 어떤것인가," *Rodong Sinmun*.

50 "제국주의 〈원조〉에는 독약이 들어있다" [Imperialist "aid" contains poison], *Rodong Sinmun*, February 22, 1995.

51 "제국주의의 〈원조〉는 략탈과 예속의 올가미" [Imperialist "aid" is a noose of plunder and subjugation], *Rodong Sinmun*, March 24, 2005.

"Playing around with cutting off aid to exert pressure" harshly criticized the US for placing conditions on its aid to Nicaragua—the US had requested that "transparency be guaranteed" in the national elections.[52]

> Only if you introduce punishments for corruption and guarantees of democracy will they provide "aid." They make high-handed demands to improve the investment environment and change the banking system. Using "aid" as bait, they make demands for change, right up to and including the political system. They time and time again blatantly interfere in the domestic affairs of other countries: telling them to implement a multi-party system, embrace a market economy, saying who can and cannot govern the country, etc.[53]

Accusations of intrusion into internal affairs particularly resonate with North Korean ideology as the notion of autonomy is fiercely defended. To this effect, political enslavement is said to be a central intention behind aid. Donors demand "slavish submission" such that recipients "act under their pulls and pressure."[54] It is claimed that aid is used to advance political agendas on a global scale, as "during the Cold War era, the criteria for [Western] 'aid' were anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism,"[55] while it is pointed out that modern-day programs are contingent on democratic reformation and the adoption of liberal economic policies. Similarly, aid programs are depicted as "neocolonialist plots,"[56] targeting "those countries which have achieved political independence"[57] and "scheming […] to rule them and have them

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52 "압력을 노린 〈원조〉 중지놀음" [Playing around with cutting "aid" to exert pressure], *Rodong Sinmun*, February 4, 2009.

53 "가시박힌 〈원조〉외교," *Rodong Sinmun*.

54 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 독약과 같다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

55 "서방의의 〈원조〉란 어떤것인가," *Rodong Sinmun*.

56 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 독약과 같다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

under their control once more."[58] The Rodong Sinmun suggests that donors have little regard for the safety of recipients, recounting an incident in which Germany offloaded tons of toxic waste to Albania under the pretext of humanitarian aid.[59] A 2008 editorial warned, "Holding your hand out begging to the West is stupid; it is like, out of your own free will, sticking your head into a trap of subordination."[60]

> Last century, the imperialists ruled and robbed other countries and people largely by flagrant armed aggression and coercive means. […] This century, the imperialists are daring to use more concealed and cunning methods. One of the most representative ways is exploitation and plunder through "aid." That is to say, the imperialists portray themselves as "patrons" while intensifying their neocolonial exploitation and plunder.[61]

The use of aid in bringing countries into alignment with the worldview of donors is a recurrent idea, either as a bargaining chip—"US aid […] is nothing but dangerous leverage to enslave other countries economically and politically in order to Americanize them"[62]—or by inciting political disturbances—"[Washington] [...] employed […] "aid" and "sanctions" to engineer political coups and rally its stooges in different parts of the world."[63] More broadly, aid as an instrument of world domination is a common motif: "American aid is a tool of aggression for world

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57 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 독약과 같다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

58 "식량문제해결은 발전도상나라들앞에 나선 절박한 과제," *Rodong Sinmun*.

59 "서방의 〈원조〉란 어떤것인가," [What is Western "aid"?], *Rodong Sinmun*, October 25, 1994.

60 "식량문제와 자주적인 삶," *Rodong Sinmun*.

61 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 략탈과 예속의 올가미이다" [Imperialist "aid" is a noose of plunder and subjugation], *Rodong Sinmun*, July 11, 1997.

62 "Reactionary and Dangerous Nature of U.S. Aid Disclosed," *KCNA*, March 24, 2005.

63 "KCNA on U.S. Arbitrary Practices in 2003," *KCNA*, December 12, 2003.

domination" is a forthright headline from 2014.[64] This is complemented by the oft-repeated refrain, "American 'aid' is an important means of carrying out their world domination strategy."[65] The media claims that aid is "nothing more than a military tool," with aspersions that the West uses it "as bait to set up military bases in other countries"[66] and to secure military allies, encouraging them to sign "shackling 'military agreements."[67]

On another tact, the North Korean media contends that aid is motivated by economic interests, conferring asymmetric benefits on the donor. Firstly, a linkage between structural adjustment prescriptions and the dispensation of aid is highlighted, and the US is attacked for exploiting aid as a means of achieving the introduction of economic policies coinciding with its interests:

> From the early 1990s, the U.S. has forced international monetary organizations under its wire-pulling to use the "Washington Consensus" as a string when rendering "aid." […] As a result, [countries undergoing economic difficulty] forfeited the rights to control the strategic domain and economic artery and in the long run, they were controlled by the "Wall Street."[68]

Similarly, "economic infiltration" enables the securing of access to new markets, investment opportunities and raw materials.[69] The media asserts

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64 "미국의 원조는 세계제패를 노린 침략의 도구," *Rodong Sinmun*.

65 "제국주의의 〈원조〉는 략탈과 예속의 올가미," *Rodong Sinmun*.

66 "미국의 원조는 세계제패를 노린 침략의 도구," *Rodong Sinmun*.

67 "U.S. Aid Is Means for Aggression: Rodong Sinmun," *KCNA*, June 6, 2014.

68 "U.S. Foolish Attempt to Attain World Domination through Banking Facilities," *KCNA*, April 24, 2008.

69 "Imperialists' Economic Infiltration Termed Means of Aggression and Plunder," *KCNA*, July 20, 2008.

that "the objective [of aid] is to milk the country for greater profits."[70] These arguments are supplemented by unreferenced statistics to contend that American multinational corporations profiteer from humanitarian investment: "They reaped four of five times and even more than 10 times for every US dollar invested."[71] This asymmetry is also evident in a particularly common quote, cited from the 1990s through to the current decade, attributed to Kim Jong Il: "The imperialists' aid is a trap of plunder and subordination in order to steal ten or one hundred things for every one given."[72] Likewise, an explanatory piece from 1997 outlined in detail a "develop and prey on" policy, supposedly practiced by imperialist countries, giving chicken as an example:

> Their logic is that if you want to eat a lot of good chicken, you need to feed them from when they are chicks so that they become fat. Similarly, by giving developing countries what they desperately need, you can extort more from them, and more quickly. In other words, if you want to exploit and plunder other countries more effectively, you give to them steadily, and then you can make them happily function as a source of raw materials and a place to sell your products.[73]

In this light, any humanitarianism is made void, as foreigners are painted as parasitic, seeking only to profit from untapped markets and resources. Moreover, they may seek to actively damage the recipient's economy. They "seize absolute control of the life of the economy and rights, and suppress economic development, and pursue economic subjugation,"[74] which may "[deter] developing countries from achieving

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70 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 략탈과 예속의 올가미이다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

71 "KCNA Blasts U.S. Economic Aggression," *KCNA*, April 6, 2006.

72 "서방의 〈원조외교〉에 각성을 높여야 한다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

73 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 독약과 같다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

74 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 독약과 같다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

economic self-sustenance."[75] It is claimed that aid leads "not to prosperity but poverty, destitution, and death"[76]—to this end, it is asserted that aid has made some African countries poorer, bringing about "only economic bankruptcy, mass unemployment and chaos."[77] Western donors are said to use aid to foster a relationship of dependency: They allegedly provide assistance as a "lure" in order to become an essential "economic lifeline," before applying additional conditions under the threat of the suspension of aid.[78]

Figs. 3 and 4. Published decades before the arrival of Western aid, these two satirical cartoons

demonstrate the consistency of anti-aid themes within state media up to the present day: how aid is used as a bait to damage and subjugate the economies of small and weak countries (fig. 3, 1962) and how Americans suck dry a country of its resources (fig. 4, 1965).

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75 "Imperialists' Economic Infiltration Termed Means of Aggression and Plunder," *KCNA*.

76 "제국주의 〈원조〉는 독약과 같다," *Rodong Sinmun*.

77 "제국주의자들의 〈원조〉의 략탈성" [The predatory nature of the imperialists' "aid"], *Rodong Sinmun*, October 26, 2002.

78 "원조기구인가, 모략기구인가," *Rodong Sinmun*.

4. Aid explained as a diplomatic tool

The characterization of aid is not limited to a tool of imperialism; it is also suggested as serving a diplomatic function for donors. While the North Korean belief that there exist ulterior motives behind aid has been demonstrated above, the ways in which it is said to be politicized deserve further investigation.

The North has accused America and Japan of obstructing the work of UN aid programs, hijacking them to "wrest a sort of 'concession'"[79] in the resolution of bilateral disputes:

> The U.S. and Japan have put up political conditionalities on the humanitarian aid to the DPRK under the pretexts of the nuclear issue and the issue of "abduction." Not content with this, they are openly hindering the regular assistance of UN organizations by politicizing it.[80]

In particular, the North charges the US with spreading "anti-DPRK false propaganda" in the wake of its appeal for UN aid, openly acknowledging and dismissing accusations of food diversion to the military.[81]

Notably, the North Korean media interprets US offers of food aid in the late 1990s—widely believed to be a means of incentivizing negotiation, but officially unrelated—precisely as a tool to secure talks.[82]

> What also disappointed us was the U.S. position that food assistance to the DPRK can be expanded only after the "four-way talks" are opened.

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79 "Humanitarian aid with political conditionalities unacceptable," *KCNA*, December 16, 2002.

80 "Attempt to Politicize UN Organizations' Assistance to DPRK Rebuffed," *KCNA*, September 15, 2003.

81 "Humanitarian aid with political conditionalities unacceptable," *KCNA*.

82 "Results of preliminary meeting for 'four-way talks' are below DPRK's expectations," *KCNA*, August 10, 1997.

> With a serious food problem, we guard against the possible use of food assistance to the DPRK as a political weapon at the "four-way talks."

The North complains that the "brigandish demands" attached to aid carry the aim of "[forcing] […] countries to disarm themselves,"[83] and that, more generally, the US "[is using] the humanitarian issue of food assistance [to] […] disarm the DPRK."[84] In the late 1990s and early 2000s the North Korean media exposed what it saw as the use of food assistance from the US as a bargaining chip to pressure it into denuclearization:

> The U.S. is clamouring about "missile threat" and the "suspected underground nuclear facility" in the DPRK, politicizing humanitarian food assistance together with its followers. What it seeks in this is to disarm the DPRK.[85]

> If we give up our nuclear programme, the American imperialists will "provide" us with food or will give us "humanitarian assistance" or whatever, and are waging a hypocritical propaganda campaign. The objective of America's "aid operation" in Korea is to promote a fantasy about America in the minds of our people and, by paralyzing anti-American consciousness, weaken our class consciousness and ideologically bring about our collapse, and eventually overthrow our socialism.[86]

This defiance and cynical interpretation of aid has been maintained through to this decade. The launch of the Kwangmyŏngsŏng-3 satellite in

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83 "People Called upon Not to Harbor Illusion about Imperialism," *KCNA*, November 17, 2008.

84 "Trick over food problem," *KCNA*, April 24, 1997.

85 "U.S. can not flee from responsibility," *KCNA*, January 9, 1999.

86 "미제의 심리모략전에 각성을 높이자," *Rodong Sinmun*.

April 2012 violated the terms of the Leap Day Agreement, and in response the US suspended its delivery of food aid. One week later, the North implied that it had turned down the food of its own accord, dismissing the aid as part of an American disarmament strategy.

> Now while America waves a food aid package worth pennies in our face, it is plotting to strip us of our right to a space development programme, but this is nothing more than a foolish delusion. Our military and our people have not survived through American support and cooperation with anyone.[87]

The North argues that aid is used by donors to boost their international profiles. The US is censured for using aid as a means of "swaying public opinion" in developing countries, and improving its relations with other countries by appearing charitable, in a shallow bid to make amends for other wrongdoings.

> The objective of America's "aid operation" is to create a fantasy about America in people's minds, paralyzing anti-Americanism by encouraging pro-American flunkeyism. [...] While America was heavily bombing Iraq with one hand, it was providing the country's inhabitants with "aid" with the other.[88]

Similarly, Japan is also accused of seeking to improve its reputation and brush off its history with its "cunning" aid:

> Whenever the Japanese authorities have a chance they praise themselves

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87 "미일반동들과 그 주구패당들이 아무리 짖어대도 우리의 위성은 더욱 힘차게 구쳐 오르게 될 것이다" [No matter how much the reactionary Americans and Japanese and their lapdog keep on howling, our satellites will soar ever more powerfully], *Rodong Sinmun*, April 20, 2012.

88 "미제의 심리모략전에 각성을 높이자," *Rodong Sinmun*.

> as the number one provider of economic aid […] However, popular opinion holds that Japan is flaunting its wealth with its economic aid, and that it is a trick to curry favour and shake off its militarism and bad name.[89]

Japan is also said to use its aid to assert its credentials worldwide and further its role on the world stage. The Rodong Sinmun accuses it of "[stretching] out its dark tentacles to African countries under various names such as 'development aid,'" with a view to "showing off its moneybag" and "[increasing] its influence on [sic] the international arena." Through aid, it claims, Japan hopes to "open more embassies in Africa" and even to "create an atmosphere favorable for its bid to sit on the UN Security Council."[90]

5. Acknowledgement of aid by donor

Despite systematically deploring humanitarian assistance on grounds of subterfuge, politicization and its potential to thwart the pursuit of self-reliance, the North Korean media still reports specific incidents of its own receipt of aid. However, the manner in which this is covered depends strongly on the donor country in question. Stories of aid from "friendly" countries are couched in cordial language and suggest some degree of gratitude—for instance, assistance from Russia is customarily presented as "free," "sincere,"[91] and "a manifestation of traditional relations of friendship and cooperation."[92] Notably, in Korean-language

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89 "〈경제동물〉의 교활한 〈원조〉정책" [The cunning aid policy of economic animals], *Rodong Sinmun*, January 29, 1994.

90 "Rodong Sinmun on Ulterior Motive of Japan's Diplomacy towards Africa," *KCNA*, March 29, 2008.

91 "Russian Government Provides Food Aid to DPRK," *KCNA*, October 3, 2014.

92 "Russian Govt. Offers Food Aid to DPRK," *KCNA*, August 19, 2011.

output, a distinction is made between donors on the basis of the word used for "aid": "non-friendly" sources are simply said to provide "*wonjo*," while donations from "friendly" states are honored with appellation as either "*hosang wonjo*" (互相: emphasizing comradery and a feeling of mutual benefit) or "*musang wonjo*" (無償: underlining the "strings-free" nature of aid between allies). Historically, assistance from the Soviet Union, Peru, Mongolia and China has all been described in such terms.

United Nations agencies are also depicted as acceptable donors, with their aid represented as acts of "good faith,"[93] and "goodwill" on behalf of the international community.[94] Aid from UN agencies requires less mitigation, as their supranationalism separates the donation from any one donor and serves to embed North Korea in the international system. Partnership with UN agencies can also lend credence to the government's official account of events. Their response to, and cooperation with, the Flood Damage Rehabilitation Committee in the mid-1990s conferred legitimacy to the government's natural disaster narrative. Even today, the current WFP operations document refers exclusively to natural disasters and insufficient domestic production as contributing causes of the crisis.[95]

Stories of direct food aid from the US have made appearances in both the Rodong Sinmun and the KCNA. On the one hand, some articles seem begrudgingly brief. For instance, "The US government on Feb 25 decided to donate 100,000 tons of food to the DPRK this year through the World Food Program" is the entirety of an article published in 2003. The receipt of aid is also used as a platform to reprimand the US, suggesting that it does not fulfill its promises: "The US expressed its will

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[93] "Gratitude expressed for appeal for international assistance to DPRK," *KCNA*, December 4, 2000.

[94] "Interview over UN combined appeals," *KCNA*, November 29, 1999.

[95] "Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation – DPRK 200532," *WFP*, May 17, 2013.

to offer 100,000 tons of food aid to the DPRK through the World Food Program this year but only 40,000 tons of it have been supplied but nobody knows when the remaining 60,000 tons would be delivered."[96]

On the other hand, a minority of articles are marked by a distinct optimism and diplomatic civility. For example, in 2000, after the US agreed to donate 50,000 tons of food via the WFP, the KCNA pronounced, "This step will have a positive impact on promoting the understanding between the DPRK and the United States."[97] Similarly, in 2008, both the Rodong Sinmun and the KCNA ended articles with the startlingly upbeat conclusion: "The food aid provided by the US government will […] contribute to promoting the understanding and confidence between the people of the two countries."[98] These incidental displays of courtesy run in direct contradiction to endemic anti-Americanism and anti-aid editorials. The authors of this paper conjecture that they represent gestures of goodwill while negotiations are in progress. Such concessions would be tolerable by virtue of their exceptionality, being swamped by inflammatory articles, and the opportunity it provides to present the country as a sincere party in talks. Moreover, the conventional narrative can be restored at a later date, while anti-US sentiment need never diminish; a story under the headline "U.S. urged not to stand in way of Korea's reunification" ran the same day as the story from the year 2000 above.[99]

Aid from Japan has been discussed in the context of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In 1997, the North allowed Japanese-born wives of North Korean citizens to visit their hometowns, and was subsequently rewarded with another food

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96 "KCNA Slams U.S. Moves to Politicize Aid," *KCNA*, September 25, 2003.

97 "United States decides to donate food to DPRK," *KCNA*, June 17, 2000.

98 "미국이 우리 나라에 대한 식량제공을 결정" [America decides to provide our country with food], *Rodong Sinmun*, May 18, 2005.

99 "U.S. urged not to stand in way of Korea's reunification," *KCNA*, June 17, 2000.

shipment.[100] Soon after, the KCNA wrote, "Both sides affirmed that the solution to the humanitarian and cooperation issues will be conducive to deepening mutual understanding and friendship,"[101] demonstrating the inextricable association between food and bilateral relations. Also, the North Korean media framed an acknowledgement of aid from Japan as "continuation of the good precedents of mutual humanitarian assistance," making reference to its own donation to Japan via the Red Cross in response to the Kobe earthquake in 1995.[102]

With fewer political entanglements, and less resistance from donor states, the EU currently represents the largest Western donor to North Korea. Its multilateralism renders its aid largely apolitical, such that its reporting poses less of a threat to the state. This perceived neutrality is attested to the greater operational freedoms afforded to European NGOs through the European Union Programme Support structure. Individual EU members may enjoy a more positive image due to historic ties with former communist states or resistance to the US over the Iraq War, while the bloc collectively could be seen as a counterbalance to US hegemony. The depiction of the EU in the media has suggested a healthy relationship, with its "disinterested"[103] aid serving as "a token of humanitarianism" that is "conducive to promoting understanding."[104]

Humanitarian assistance from South Korea has been realized by means of NGOs, sometimes supported by government funding, and official joint business ventures. Both are subject to cyclical patterns of restriction and relaxation in accordance with the prevailing state of inter-Korean relations, and generally appear in the North Korean media only

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100 "Marie Söderberg, "Can Japanese Foreign Aid to North Korea Create Peace and Stability?" *Pacific Affairs* 79, no. 3 (2006): 433.

101 "Japanese delegation gives reception," *KCNA*, November 14, 1997.

102 "Personal correspondence with the Japanese Red Cross.

103 "Disinterested international aid, cooperation," *KCNA*, December 19, 1997.

104 "EU's humanitarian aid to DPRK," *KCNA*, December 26, 1997.

in response to the imposition of curbs by the South Korean government.

The humanitarian activities of South Korean NGOs in the North are varyingly referred to as "exchanges and cooperation,"[105] "north-south non-governmental cooperation,"[106] or "cooperation projects,"[107] obscuring the donor-beneficiary dynamic. Notably, both voluntary humanitarian aid and commercial ventures are conflated under the label of cooperation. While aid workers have reported a "[lack of] fundamental understanding of the nature, role, and intent of NGOs"[108] by their North Korean counterparts, which could explain this confusion, the tone of the writing suggests this practice is intentional, cynically implying mutual benefit and financial interest on the part of South Korean NGOs.

The disruption of the NGO cooperation pushed at least 2,400 medium and small South Korean enterprises into bankruptcy and deprived more than 300,000 of their jobs. The business loss reached 32.3 billion US dollars as of May this year.[109]

6. Aid agencies and workers

The Rodong Sinmun and the KCNA tend to frame aid from NGOs as "cooperation," with whole projects introduced euphemistically as "cooperation activities," suggesting collaboration between two bodies of equal footing. On occasion, aid agencies are even relegated to passive participants and referred to merely as afterthoughts, e.g. "the resident UNICEF representative also took part in the vaccination."

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105 "All Koreans Urged to Open up New Horizon for Peace and Reunification," *KCNA*, August 12, 2012.

106 "S. Korean Authorities Hit for Hampering North-South NGO Cooperation." *KCNA*, April 5, 2012.

107 "Crimes Committed by Unification Minister Exposed," *KCNA*, July 14, 2010.

108 L. Gordon Flake, "The Experience of U.S. NGOs in North Korea."

109 "S. Korean Regime's Crimes of Hindering North-South NGO Cooperation, Exchange Disclosed," *KCNA*, December 18, 2012.

However, the organizations also attract criticism, routinely being described as pursuing agendas political in nature, and operating as agents of sponsor governments. As far back as 1965, aid organizations were pronounced to be "dens of devils,"[110] while a 2011 editorial under the headline "Is it an aid agency? Or a scheming agency?" elaborated on the threats they allegedly pose to the security, economy and sovereignty of host states.[111] They are pronounced to be "dens of conspiracy, interfering with the domestic affairs of other countries, and habitually scheming," as well as "guides for invasion." Furthermore, it is suggested that USAID missions are obliged to submit annually the telephone numbers and email addresses of all their local contacts to the organization's headquarters, information which is subsequently "seized" by the FBI and the CIA.

Aid workers, too, do not escape rebuke. The same article recounts a case in Bolivia in which the president deported aid staff who had allegedly been financing "impure influences" within the country, and were suspected of plotting an "anti-governmental conspiracy." Meanwhile, in Cuba, it is claimed that USAID personnel provided funding and satellite communications equipment to "anti-governmental criminals," and orchestrated the Color Revolutions through the sponsorship of television and radio broadcasts.

Nevertheless, aid workers provide a convenient opportunity for the North Korean media to advance its claims of international respect for the Kim family. Indeed, this constitutes the most common depiction of NGO personnel. Following the death of Kim Jong Il, the KCNA described how "staff members of [...] the World Health Organization, the World Food Program and the United Nations Children's Fund paid respects to the bier," laying wreaths and leaving messages of consolation.[112] The

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110 "대한 경제 원조단은 악마들의 소굴" [The Korean Economic Aid Group is a den of devils], *Rodong Sinmun*, August 10, 1965.

111 "원조기구인가, 모략기구인 가," *Rodong Sinmun*.

112 "Foreign Diplomats Visit Bier of Kim Jong Il", *KCNA*, December 26, 2011.

following day, representatives of the UN Development Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the UN Population Fund were reported as having done the same.[113] In the case of UNICEF, over the last twenty years there have been four explicit acknowledgements of the receipt of medical equipment, compared with thirty-three stories of its staff offering "floral baskets, gifts and congratulatory letters" to leaders, or paying tribute to the Mansu Hill statues.

IV. Conclusion

The North Korean official discourse related to food crises and international assistance is subtler than typically presumed. Contrary to popular assumption, the media does not wholly shy away from discussing the country's receipt of foreign aid. Indeed, it has been acknowledged ever since the 1960s, when support from the Soviet Union and China was understood as a token of friendship. However, at the same time, other countries were applauded for turning down offers of aid. Similarly, its own subsequent receipt of aid from "hostile" countries between 1990 and 2010 was framed with disdain almost universally, with only the justifications invoked changing with time, in response to world events.

Moreover, many accusations put forward by the Rodong Sinmun and the KCNA are not entirely unfounded. They identify genuine issues, such as the increase in world food prices due to biofuels, and the alleged association between US food aid and nuclear concessions, and then distort them to fit the official narrative. Aid distributed by supposedly hostile countries is represented in a way that not only manages to preserve the official ideology, but even reinforces existing propaganda themes, e.g. capitalist greed, imperialist plots to dominate the world, the

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[113] "Foreign Diplomats Visit Bier of Kim Jong Il," *KCNA*, December 27, 2011.

dangers of neocolonialism, and the imperative to resist.

While awareness of aid programs has necessitated discussion, the regime's total domination of the media landscape has enabled it to pursue a strategy of damage control. It has underplayed the extent of foreign assistance, sullied the intentions of humanitarian agencies, and vilified foreign workers. In essence, aid from "non-friendly" states has been rationalized to the extent that it does not pose an irreconcilable threat to the regime.

This approach, meticulously developed over the years, intensified as the activities of foreign aid workers became more conspicuous and the information blockade imposed on average citizens began to disintegrate. The famine in the mid-1990s represented a fundamental breakdown of the socialist social contract and resulted in a complete reorganization of North Korean society, with its citizens seeking to lead lives outside government-controlled structures. More frequent cross-border travel to China, the proliferation of mobile phones, increased exposure to outside sources of information and the emergence of private markets have provided new opportunities for information exchange. Indeed, the *jangmadang* emancipates the population from the regime not only in terms of commodities, but also news. It gives a previously atomized society a focal point for interaction, and acts as a conduit for the organic diffusion of information, separate and distinct from government channels.[114]

Nonetheless, at the heart of the North Korean media's treatment of aid lies an inescapable contradiction. News sources publish haughty, pious editorials that denounce the very idea of foreign assistance, alongside articles that acknowledge the country's own receipt of aid, which speak optimistically of its potential to improve bilateral relations, while boasting of the DPRK's own donations. This seeming

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[114] John Everard, "The Markets of Pyongyang," *Korea Economic Institute* 6, no. 1 (2011): 4.

inconsistency can be resolved by appreciating the onus on the media to satisfy two conflicting criteria: self-aggrandizement and victimhood. There is a need for the regime to project an image of the DPRK as a strong, independent state that unfailingly occupies the moral high ground, while concurrently accounting for and dissociating itself from the suffering within the country. Since the occasional neutral or optimistic reference to aid pales in comparison with an all-encompassing propaganda effort to besmirch the outside world, the occasional stoop to representing aid in more favorable terms is not only tolerable, but useful, as it can be assumed that readers will carry ideas across from other propaganda sources and apply them themselves. By decrying aid as a weapon, a political tool, and wholly self-serving on the part of the donor, its receipt does not necessarily entail deigning; rather, providing the recipient makes known their resolute defiance, they can show themselves to be exploiting the benefactor. In this way, the preservation of the domestic status quo in the face of pernicious foreign influences becomes an accomplishment, reversing the power dynamic of the donation and achieving the two primary goals of the media.

Unfortunately, no extensive survey regarding the perception of foreign aid by the North Korean people, and the evolution over time of this perception, has been conducted, which makes problematic a qualitative test of our hypothesis. Nevertheless, the annual surveys conducted by the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies are enlightening, in that they show that attitudes among refugees to *Juche* remain consistently positive through the years: for every year of the period 2008-2016, between 51.9 and 63.8 percent of respondents said they were proud of the regime's ideology.[115] Furthermore, in 1998, 38.6 percent of North Koreans surveyed believed that natural disasters were

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115 북한주민통일의식조사 [Study on the Unification Consciousness of North Koreans] (Institute for Peace and Unification Studies, 2017), 109.

the reasons behind economic difficulties.[116] This figure falls to 0.7 percent in the 2016 survey,[117] which is not surprising since propaganda efforts shifted away from the natural disaster narrative in the intervening years.

Upon reflection, the hope of some aid workers, donors and academics that humanitarian aid has the potential to change the perspectives of North Korean citizens and maybe effect changes within the society appear to be misguided. By means of a sophisticated response by the propaganda apparatus, the population is primed and given a lens through which they are expected to interpret any interactions with foreigners and receipt of food from the enemy. The result is the effective insulation of the population from the goings-on within their own country; it seems difficult to see how one isolated and controlled meeting with a foreigner—especially when that encounter can be of a tense and interrogative nature, and always in the presence of a government official—can modify a perspective crafted by a lifetime of propaganda. The potential for aid to undermine the official doctrine and to change the mindset of the population has therefore been greatly reduced.

Since the soft power capacity of aid is regularly invoked as an argument in favor of intervention, aid agencies would be wise to recognize the extensive propaganda apparatus working counter to their efforts. This should serve as a compelling reminder to donors that aid should be distributed, above all, on purely humanitarian grounds. That is to say, not least because its potential to achieve as much in North Korea is rendered more limited than in other settings, undue expectations should not be pinned on winning hearts and minds or undermining the regime through aid.

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116 Philo Kim, "Social Changes in North Korea 2008-2011: Interviews with Defectors," *North Korean Studies Review* 15, no. 1 (2012). http://www.koreafocus.or.kr/design2/layout/content_print.asp?group_id=104129

117 북한주민통일의식조사, 115.

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North Korean Defectors, States, and NGOs: The Case of Former Korean Residents in Japan

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North Korean Defectors, States, and NGOs: The Case of Former Korean Residents in Japan

The Japanese Government provides special assistance to two categories of North Korean defectors: former Korean residents in Japan who left for North Korea during the Repatriation Operation (1959-1984) and their Japanese wives. In Japan, two NGOs have devoted activities to the cause of these returnees since the 1990s. These organizations play four main roles. Firstly, they collect and disseminate information on repatriation operations, raising public awareness of the fate of returnees. Secondly, they assist defectors as they arrive in China (or neighboring countries), acting as intermediary between them and the Japanese diplomatic and consular missions and helping in the procedures for their admission to Japan. Thirdly, they play the role of a lobby, pressuring actors in a position to facilitate the return of defectors to Japan. Finally, they look after defectors after arriving in Japan, taking care of their settlement, offering Japanese language courses, or even finding them a job

Keywords: North Korean defectors, repatriation, Korean minority in Japan, NGO, track two diplomacy, refugee

North Korean Defectors, States, and NGOs: The Case of Former Korean Residents in Japan

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I. Introduction

At the end of the Second World War, Koreans constituted the largest foreign community in Japan with approximately two million people, most having arrived after the anexation of the Korean Peninsula in 1910.[1] From August 1945 to the beginning of the Korean War (1950-1953), a first wave of repatriations allowed more than 1.4 million Koreans[2] to

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[1] For a study of the Korean residents of Japan before and during the colonial era, see Tonomura Masaru, *Zainichi chōsenjin shakai no rekishigakuteki kenkyū. Keisei, kōzō, henyō* (Tōkyō: Ryokuin shobō, 2004).

[2] It was mainly those who had arrived in Japan during the war—and who therefore were less established in Japan than those who had settled there for years—who returned to Korea at that time. Mizuno Naoki and Mun Gyeong-su, *Zainichi chōsenjin. Rekishi to genzai* (Tōkyō: Iwanami

return to the southern part (where about ninety-five percent had their origins) or northern part of Korea by their own means or by using the ships chartered to repatriate the Japanese who were still in Korea (*hikiagesha* 引揚者).[3] On April 19, 1952, i.e. just several days before the entry into force of the Treaty of San Francisco (April 28 1952), the Japanese government promulgated an administrative directive that stripped the Koreans remaining in Japan of their Japanese citizenship. The Japanese authorities based their decision on Article 2(a) of the San Francisco Treaty: "Japan recognizing the independence of Korea, renounces all right, title and claim to Korea, including the islands of Quelpart, Port Hamilton and Dagelet." Since Korea was no longer Japanese territory, the Koreans no longer had the citizenship of that territory.[4] The deprivation of Japanese nationality prohibited them from applying for positions in the public service as well as access to social security schemes (National Pension and National Health Insurance).[5] Although they could receive financial support in the form of "Public Assistance (*seikatsu hogo* 生活保護)," many were subjected to socio-economic discrimination and lived precariously or even in poverty.

In this context, Kim Il-sung promised in September 1958 to guarantee all Korean repatriates from Japan decent living conditions. This proposal represented hope for a better future for many of these Koreans. Some of them also saw in this an opportunity to contribute to the reconstruction of the liberated homeland under the socialst banner.

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shoten, 2015), 94.

[3] Kikuchi *Yoshiaki, Kitachōsen kikoku jigyō. 'Sōdai na rachi' ka 'tsuihō' ka* (Tōkyō: Chūō kōron shinsha, 2009), 20-22.

[4] Ōnuma Yasuaki, *Tan'itsu minzoku shakai no shinwa o koete. Zainichi Kankoku-Chōsenjin to shutsu.nyōkoku kanri taisei*, 2nd ed. (Tōkyō: Tōshindō, 1993), 150-161; Kim Tae-gi, *Sengo Nihon seiji to zainichi chōsenjin mondai. Sukappu no tai zainichi Chōsenjin seisaku 1945-1952* (Tōkyō: Keisō shobō, 1997), 739; Mizuno Naoki and Mun Gyeong-su, *Zainichi chōsenjin*, 125-127.

[5] Kikuchi Yoshiaki, *Kitachōsen kikoku jigyō*, 204; Mizuno Naoki and Mun Gyeong-su, *Zainichi chōsenjin*, 144-145.

Between 1959 and 1984, more than 93,000 people—of whom about two thousand were Japanese women living with Koreans—arrived at the Thirty-Eighth Parallel. In Japan, this mass repatriation is referred to as the "Repatriation Movement" (*kikoku undō* 帰国運動) or "Repatriation Operation" (*kikan jigyō* 帰還事業), whereas it is named "Deportation to the North" (*buksong* 北送) in South Korea.[6]

In the 1990s, due to the adverse economic situation gravely exacerbated by famine from 1994 to 1998,[7] hundreds of people[8] —including former returnees from Japan—decided to flee from North Korea mainly by crossing the Sino-North-Korean border (particularly the shallow Tumen River which freezes over in winter) often with the help of brokers.[9] The present article examines the attitude of the Japanese government vis-à-vis these "returnee" defectors and highlights the different roles played by the two principal Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) devoted to their rescue.

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[6] On this repatriation operation, see Takasaki Sōji and Park Jeong-jin, *Kikoku undō to wa nan data no ka. Fūin sareta Nitchō kankeishi* (Tōkyō: Heibonsha, 2005); Tessa Morris-Suzuki, *Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's Cold War* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007); Kikuchi Yoshiaki, *Kitachōsen kikoku jigyō*; and Park Jeong-jin, *Nitchō reisen kōzō no tanjō 1945-1965. Fūin sareta gaikōshi* (Tōkyō : Heibonsha, 2012).

[7] The causes of this famine—referred to as the "March of Tribulation" (*gonanui haenggun* 고난의 행군) in North Korea—were due to both external factors (natural disasters and declining subsidies from sister countries), but also—and perhaps especially—to poor economic choices by North Korean authorities. Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, *Famine in North Korea: Markets, Aid, and Reform* (New York : Columbia University Press, 2007), 9.

[8] According to statistics from the South Korean Ministry of Unification, fifty-two defectors managed to reach South Korea in 1994, 148 in 1999, 1,139 in 2002, and 2,548 in 2007. Isozaki Atsuhito, "Dappokusha mondai. 'Kakekomi' no imi o chūshin ni," in *Kitachōsen to ningen no anzenhoshō*, ed. Okonogi Masao and Isozaki Atsuhito (Tōkyō: Keiō gijuku daigaku shuppankai, 2009), 141. We can therefore deduce that the annual number of defectors arriving in China is even higher.

[9] Along with this food crisis, the background of the defectors changed: whereas it once concerned mainly a few officials such as Ko Yeong-hwan 高英煥 (a diplomat posted in Congo-Brazzaville who defected in 1991) or Hwang Jang-yeop 黄長燁 (regarded as the official who theorized the Juche Idea, North Korea's official ideology; he defected in 1997), since the second half of the 1990s it has mainly consisted of ordinary North Koreans, especially for economic reasons. Moreover, these migrations do not always have South Korea as final destination: many North Koreans leave to earn money and return to North Korea a few months later.

II. "Humanitarian Considerations"

One of the first defector cases encountered by the Japanese government was that of Miyazaki Shunsuke 宮崎俊輔.[10] Miyazaki was born in Japan in 1947 to a Korean minority father and a Japanese mother. He moved to North Korea in 1960 when he was thirteen years old and fled North Korea in 1996, taking refuge at the Consulate General of Japan in Shenyang.[11] Whereas his testimony was published in Japan in 2000 in a book entitled *Kitachōsen daidasshutsu. Jigoku kara no seikan* (The Great Escape from North Korea: My Return from Hell), it was not until January 2003 that a Cabinet member, Minister of Foreign Affairs Kawaguchi Yoriko 川口順子, recognized publicly, albeit vaguely (in the Budget Committee of the House of Representatives), that the Japanese government "acted concretely" for those defectors who once lived in Japan.[12] In 2004 the Japanese Government mentioned for the first time the issue of defectors in its *Diplomatic Bluebook*:

> North Korean citizens escaping from North Korea to foreign countries are generally called "North Korean defectors". It is speculated that severe food shortage and economic difficulties constitute the motives for their escape. Particularly in supporting those who have Japanese nationality or are former Korean residents of Japan, the Japanese Government has been taking into account every sort of perspectives including the safety of people concerned and other humanitarian considerations.[13]

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[10] Miura Kotarō, "Dappokusha Nihon teichaku ni okeru sho mondai," *Kaigai jijō* 59, no. 12 (December 2011): 68. The *Yomiuri Shinbun*, in its morning edition of November 9, 2002, traces back the first return of a Japanese woman and her family to 1994.

[11] Miyazaki Shunsuke, *Kitachōsen daidasshutsu. Jigoku kara no seikan* (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 2000).

[12] Miura Kotarō, "Dappokusha Nihon teichaku ni okeru sho mondai," 69.

[13] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Gaikō seisho 2004 (Tōkyō: Gyōsei, 2004), 42.

This abstract, albeit briefly, defines the basic policy towards defectors adopted by the Japanese Government. Firstly, not all defectors are concerned, but only two categories: persons having Japanese nationality—Japanese women in particular—and Koreans who previously lived in Japan.[14] In practice, this second category is extended to the descendants of these Koreans. Secondly, the Government takes action for these defectors. Concretely, through its diplomatic and consular missions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) issues a travel certificate officially named "Travel document for return to Japan" (*kikoku no tame no tokōsho* 帰国のための渡航書) to Japanese nationals, and a "Travel document for aliens" (*tokōshōmeisho* 渡航証明書) to non-Japanese nationals allowing the holder to enter Japanese territory. These travel certificates are given to Japanese nationals after verification of the family register (*koseki* 戸籍) and to Korean people after checking the returnee lists kept by the Japanese authorities.[15] Thirdly, the Government invokes "humanitarian considerations (*jindōjō no hairyo* 人道上の配慮)" to justify such measures and is careful not to use the term "refugee (*nanmin* 難民)." One may think that this choice is due to two reasons, the first for internal and the second for international purposes. The Japanese government only very sparingly grants asylum to those who request it. Out of 30,145 filed requests since the introduction in Japan of a refugee recognition system in 1982 (the year when the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol entered into force in the country) until 2015, Japan recognized refugee status for only 660 of them.[16] Recognizing these defectors as refugees and welcoming them onto Japanese soil

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[14] The decision to allow those Koreans to return to Japan has been debated within the government. It was likely made in the late 1990s.

[15] *Yomiuri shinbun*, November 9, 2002 (morning edition).

[16] See the MOFA website: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/nanmin/main3.html (accessed on April 24, 2017). On the attitude of the Japanese government towards refugees in general, see Araki Osamu, *Refugee Law and Practice in Japan* (Aldershot, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).

would therefore create an inconvenient precedent and it is unclear how the Japanese government could justify the recognition of refugee status only to North Korean defectors who were former residents of Japan. On the contrary, the invocation of "humanitarian considerations" provides the Japanese Government with a discretionary power to assess the situation case by case.[17]

III. Japanese Missions in China: A Limited Scope for Action

The term "refugee" is also worth avoiding out of consideration for the Chinese authorities, which do not grant this status to defectors. While the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been a party to the July 28, 1951 Convention[18] and the January 31, 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees since 1982, it does not recognize North Korean defectors as refugees but simply illegal immigrants.[19] In doing so, Beijing reserves the right to expel them to North Korea under bilateral agreements such as the Sino-North Korean agreement on mutual extradition of criminals and defectors concluded in the early 1960s, the Cooperation protocol for maintaining social order and state security in border areas (1986), the Regulation on the control of border areas of Jilin Province (effective in

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[17] From 1982 until 2015, out of 30,145 asylum requests, the Japanese Government granted the permission of residence to 2,446, without granting refugee status. See the MOFA website: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/nanmin/main3.html (accessed on April 24, 2017).

[18] Article 33 of the Convention provides, "No Contracting State shall expel or return a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion."

[19] Kim Hyo-jin and Eom Eung-yong, "Hokkan ridatsu jūmin no hōteki chii to hogo," *Chūō gakuin daigaku shakai shisutemu kenkyūjo kiyō* 13, no. 1 (October 2012): 2; Yamada Fumiaki, "Kitachōsen dappokusha no kyūen to Nihon teichaku shien no jitsujō," *Meijō daigaku keizai keiei gakkai kaihō* 41 (June 2010): 9; Isozaki Atsuhito, "Dappokusha mondai. 'Kakekomi' no imi o chūshin ni," 152.

1998), and the Treaty on assistance in civil and criminal justice (2003). Furthermore, the PRC strengthened its legislation in 1997 by making assistance to defectors a "crime of disrupting administration of the border" (Articles 318 to 323 of the Criminal Law).[20]

In practice, the degree of implementation of these agreements seems to be conditioned by several factors, including state of relations between the countries concerned and Chinese internal agenda.[21] When extraditions are actually carried out, North Korean defectors are subject to a penalty depending on the gravity of the charge and circumstances (recidivism for instance). Article 221 of the North Korean Criminal Law (Revised version of May 2012) punishes a person who illegally crosses the North Korean border with hard labor for up to one year, and in cases of grave offense, with "corrective labor" for up to five years. If the defector was planning to flee to a foreign country, Article 63 applies, making this a crime of treason against the fatherland. This article allows the government to sentence people who "betrayed the fatherland and fled to a third country" to corrective labor for at least five years and, in the most serious cases, to a life sentence of corrective labor or even the death penalty and confiscation of property.[22] In fact, given the increase in the number of defectors, and with the exception of cases of significant political significance and "exemplary" executions, capital punishment appears to be less applied. However, for defectors found guilty of having fled for political reasons, of having received assistance from foreigners, of having been in contact with religious organizations, or of having wanted to travel to South Korea or Japan, the sentence imposed is particularly severe.[23]

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[20] Kim Hyo-jin and Eom Eung-yong, "Hokkan ridatsu jūmin no hōteki chii to hogo," 2.

[21] For instance, the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games were preceded by a crackdown on defectors from North Korea. Isozaki Atsuhito, "Dappokusha mondai. 'Kakekomi' no imi o chūshin ni," 146.

[22] Kim Hyo-jin and Eom Eung-yong, "Hokkan ridatsu jūmin no hōteki chii to hogo," 3.

[23] Yamada Fumiaki, "Kitachōsen dappokusha no kyūen to Nihon teichaku shien no jitsujō," 8.

Due to the Chinese position vis-à-vis these defectors, the Japanese diplomatic and consular missions' scope for action in China is actually very limited. While they can relatively easily assist their own nationals, the task is thorny for former Koreans from Japan and their descendants—who are non-Japanese—as well as for the Japanese wives who have renounced their Japanese nationality. Although diplomatic asylum is not expressly covered by the April 18, 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, two of its provisions—reflecting the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice[24]—however, apply to the case of defectors.[25] Firstly, Article 41-1 states that "it is the duty of all persons enjoying such privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State" and "they also have a duty not to interfere in the internal affairs of that State," which implies that in the absence of any custom or entitlement in local law a diplomat cannot indefinitely grant asylum to anyone whose surrender is lawfully requested by the local authorities of the receiving state. In this regard, since 2002 China has cautioned representations accredited to its territory, claiming that they had no right to protect citizens of a third country. Secondly, even if asylum is granted by the sending state without the consent of the receiving state, the latter must respect the inviolability of the mission (art. 22) and therefore cannot forcibly expel a defector. Consequently, the Japanese missions and the Chinese authorities have no alternative but to negotiate so that defectors holding a travel certificate are allowed to leave China. As an indication of the sensitivity of negotiations, these returns to Japan were kept secret by the Japanese government until the publication of Miyazaki Shunsuke's book (2000) as well as a *Yomiuri shinbun* article on November 9, 2002, which were

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[24] The Judgment of November 20, 1950 in the "Asylum Case" and the Judgment of June 13, 1951 in the "Haya de la Torre Case," respectively..

[25] Ivor Roberts, ed., *Satow's Diplomatic Practice*, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 110. The following lines concerning diplomatic asylum are also drawn from Roberts.

substantiated by the testimony of the head of the Tōkyō Immigration Office.[26] Miyazaki even recounts that he had signed, at MOFA's request, a declaration committing him not to reveal that the Japanese government had assisted him.[27]

IV. The Association and the Foundation

In Japan, the two principal NGOs focusing their activities on the issue of former returnees are the Association for the Defense of Life and the Rights of North Korean Returnees (*Kitachōsen kikokusha no inochi to jinken o mamoru kai* 北朝鮮帰国者の生命と人権を守る会; hereafter "the Association") founded in 1994 and the Foundation for the Rescue of North Korean Refugees (*Kitachōsen nanmin kyūen kikin* 北朝鮮難民救援基金; hereafter "the Foundation") established in 1998.[28] Each are non-state-funded, non-profit organizations, having volunteers as the vast majority of their staff. The first NGO, the Association, is now chaired by Yamada Fumiaki 山田文明 (b. 1948), who until his recent retirement was an associate professor at Osaka University of Economics. He has dedicated a large part of his life (and his savings)[29] to the former returnees. The Foundation, on the other hand, is currently chaired by Katō Hiroshi 加藤博 (b. 1945), a former journalist who worked for the monthly *Bungei shunjū* and the weekly *Shūkan Bungei*. He became aware of the problem of defectors when he was covering the issue of North Korean workers in Siberia, determining to establish the Foundation, along with a few others, to help them.[30]

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[26] See his testimony: Sakanaka Hidenori, *Nyūkan senki* (Tōkyō: Kōdansha, 2005).

[27] Miyazaki Shunsuke, *Kitachōsen daidasshutsu. Jigoku kara no seikan*, 231.

[28] There are other Japanese NGOs involved in the issue of "returnee" defectors such as the Japan Immigration Policy Institute (*Imin seisaku kenkyūjo* 移民政策研究所) chaired by Sakanaka Hidenori 坂中英徳, but the Association and the Foundation are the oldest, the most active, and most highly staffed ones.

[29] Miura Kotarō, "Dappokusha Nihon teichaku ni okeru sho mondai," 72.

These two NGOs play four major roles today. Firstly, they gather information about defectors and spread it through newsletters, a magazine[31] and conferences. The Association, for instance, held two conferences in April 2015 after its annual general meeting. The first was given by a defector whose mother had left for North Korea during the repatriation operations; the second by a former official of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (*Zai Nihon Chōsenjin sōrengō-kai* 在日朝鮮人総聯合会 / *Chongryon* 總聯), a pro-North organization which played a leading role in the repatriations by conveying an idealized image of North Korea.[32] The published information and testimonies contribute to piecing together the "scattered puzzle," as Tessa Morris-Suzuki puts it, of the repatriation operations. For instance, Kawashima Takamine 川島高峰, associate professor at Meiji University and member of the Association, gave an account in the Karumegi newsletter (no. 58, June 2004) of a declassified administrative document he uncovered listing the reasons why the Japanese Cabinet approved the repatriation operations in February 1959. This then secret document, which portrays the Korean community in Japan as a financial burden and a threat to public order, suggests that the Japanese Government was eager to get rid of these people. Miura Kotarō 三浦小太郎 (b. 1960), an essayist who calls himself a "pro-human rights rightist (*uyoku jinken-ha*)"[33] and is the current vice-president of the Association, has

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[30] Noguchi Takayuki, *Dappoku, tōhikō*, 18. See also Katō's biographical information at http://www.geocities.jp/simafukurou1/2004-11-20jinkenday/2004jinkenday.htm (accessed on May 15, 2017).

[31] About three times a year, the Association publishes a newsletter entitled *Karumegi* かるめぎ(Japanese phonetic transcription of the Korean word *Galmaegi* 갈매기: "seagull") and a magazine *Hikari sase* [Let There Be Light!] (Biannual until April 2015, annual since). As for the Foundation, it publishes a newsletter, simply entitled *Kitachōsen nanmin kyūen kikin nyūsu* 北朝鮮難民救援基金ニュース [News from the Foundation for the Rescue of North Korean Refugees] (about five issues per year).

[32] For a detailed account of this propaganda, see Kikuchi Yoshiaki, *Kitachōsen kikoku jigyō. 'Sōdai na rachi' ka 'tsuihō' ka*, 168-173.

undertaken important work on the memory of the repatriation operations, editing the correspondence of Jo Ho-pyeong 曺浩平 and his Japanese wife Koike Hideko 小池秀子, who both went to North Korea in 1962 with their relatives.[34] Most recently in 2016, he edited the testimony of Kinoshita Kimikatsu 木下公勝, a Korean who moved to North Korea with his parents in 1960, fled in 2006, and now lives in Japan.[35]

V. The Perilous Journey across Asia

The second role of the NGOs is to provide assistance to defectors upon arrival in China after having fled from North Korea. Although the headquarters of these NGOs are located in Japan, they have staff members or contacts active in China—sometimes themselves at risk of being arrested by the Chinese authorities[36]—to help these defectors. Ueda Tsutae 上田ツタエ, a Japanese woman who left Japan with her Korean husband in 1960, was helped in China by the Association and was able to return to Japan in 2003.[37] The Foundation, for its part, also assisted Mrs. X., a North Korea-born defector whose father was a Korean returnee. After several years hidden in China, she arrived in Japan in 2011. In February 2015, forty-three years old at the time, she was living in Tōkyō with her two-year-old daughter and her husband who refurbishes homes. She had been treated for hepatitis and was studying

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[33] Nomura Hataru, ed., *Kitachōsen riken no shinsō* (Tōkyō: Takarajimasha, 2000), 301.

[34] Miura Kotarō, ed., *Sō Kōhei Koike Hideko shokanshū*, 2nd ed. (Tōkyō: Sō Kōhei Koike Hideko shokanshū hensan iinkai, 2001).

[35] Kinoshita Kimikatsu, *Kita no kidoairaku. Yonjūgo nenkan o Kitachōsen de kurashite* (Tōkyō: Takagi shobō, 2016).

[36] Three of the protagonists mentioned in this article were arrested and placed in detention in China: Katō Hiroshi (Foundation), arrested in Dalian in October 2002; Yamada Fumiaki (Association), arrested in Shanghai in August 2003; and Noguchi Takayuki (Foundation), arrested in Nanning in December 2003.

[37] Ueda Tsutae and her daughter, interview by author, December 21, 2014.

law in order to start her own online business one day.[38]

When the situation is judged too complicated in China, the two NGOs can decide to take the defectors to a third country—often in Southeast Asia—and contact the Japanese mission in these countries. In Harbin, Noguchi Takayuki 野口孝行 (b. 1971), who resigned from his company in 2003 to work fulltime for the Foundation, took care of Yoshiko and Emiko, two sisters who left Japan in 1967 with their parents, escorting them to Cambodia via Vietnam. In Phnom Penh, Noguchi contacted the Japanese Embassy, which gave the two sisters a travel certificate. They returned to Japan in September 2003.[39]

The Japanese diplomatic and consular representations protect defectors only once they have ensured they have Japanese citizenship or are Koreans who used to live in Japan or descendants of these Koreans. These verifications may take several months, and as long as the defectors are not placed under the protection of the Japanese missions, they may, at any time, be arrested and escorted back to North Korea. Women also face the danger of being sold by smugglers and ending up in prostitution networks or forced marriage in Chinese rural areas.[40] One of the tasks of the NGOs consists then in acting as intermediaries between the defectors and the Japanese missions in China in order to initiate measures of protection and return to Japan.[41] The NGOs assist defectors in drafting the documents they must submit to the Japanese government to be accepted in Japan. These include a curriculum vitae, a background

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[38] *Yomiuri shinbun*, February 9, 2015 (evening edition). The text and photographs that accompany this article are from Taketatsu Atsushi竹田津敦史.

[39] Noguchi Takayuki, *Dappoku, tōhikō*, 15-238.

[40] Yamada Fumiaki, "Kitachōsen dappokusha no kyūen to Nihon teichaku shien no jitsujō," 8-10. Miyatsuka Sumiko, "Nihon ni okeru Kitachōsen nanmin (dappokusha) no jittai," *Nanmin kenkyū jānaru* 5 (2015): 83.

[41] One of their tasks was to bring the defectors into the diplomatic and consular missions. However, due to the strengthening of the Chinese controls at the entrance, several defectors were transported onto the premises of the missions using vehicles of the Japanese staff. *Yomiuri shinbun*, December 8, 2011 (morning edition).

information statement that should retrace the reasons and details of their escape from North Korea, as well as a letter addressed to the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting permission to stay in Japan.[42]

Once the Japanese missions had decided to offer protection to the defectors, they could accommodate them within their walls until the Chinese authorities allowed them to leave the country. However, the situation seems to have changed when five defectors had to spend six months (from August 2008 to March 2009) in the Consulate General of Japan in Shenyang, as the PRC refused to let them leave the territory. According to *Yomiuri shinbun*, in late 2010 or early 2011 a written promise committing the Japanese government to no longer protect defectors within its missions was submitted by the Japanese side to the Chinese authorities during the negotiations for these five people.[43] They could eventually leave China in April (two people) and May 2011 (three people). Questioned in the Diet, Foreign Minister Genba Kōichirō 玄葉光一郎 declined to make any comment on the existence of the document, simply answering, "The claim that Japan does not welcome defectors who arrived in China from North Korea [was] absolutely false."[44] Katō Hiroshi's testimony in this regard, however, is more explicit:

> The government will obviously not say whether it had written this promise or not. But in reality, the fact that we no longer can engage [the Consulate General of Japan in] Shenyang proves that this is indeed the case. Until then it had given protection to many people upon their request.[45]

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[42] Noguchi Takayuki, *Dappoku, tōhikō*, 35-37.

[43] *Yomiuri shinbun*, December 8, 2011 (morning edition).

[44] 179th Session of the Diet, House of Councillors, Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense, no. 6, December 8, 2011

[45] Katō Hiroshi, interview by author, September 10, 2012.

The Association, for its part, sent a letter to Minister Genba dated December 12, 2011, asking him to comment on the veracity of the *Yomiuri* information, to cancel the document if its existence was confirmed, and to declare his intention to continue to protect defectors within Japanese missions in China should the newspaper coverage be incorrect. This open letter addressed to the chief of Japanese diplomacy illustrates the third role of the two NGOs: being a pressure group. Katō Hiroshi (Foundation) says that he can find among parliamentarians valuable sponsors to plead their cause and push forward complicated cases:

> The environment of Immigration control centers in South Asia is hardly bearable, and [when defectors are held there after having fled China] a swift treatment of their case is wished; then it comes to us to engage them [the national MPs]. In these cases, we make sure that these national MPs themselves press for speeding up the processing of the case. That's how we do it. And it is effective. If we entrust the sensitive cases to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we could wait one year or two without them being resolved; so for these cases we engage influential national MPs.[46]

Katō says he engages "high-ups in the political world"—he mentions Abe Shinzō 安倍晋三, Suga Yoshihide 菅義偉, and Hirasawa Katsuei 平沢勝栄 from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)[47] and Nakai Hiroshi 中井洽 from the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ)—and claims it is relatively easy to have access to them. One common feature of these politicians is their interest in North Korean issues over the past several years, especially in the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korean agents during the 1970s and 1980s. Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe

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[46] Ibid.

[47] The LDP was in opposition during the interview with Katō Hiroshi.

Shinzō went to Pyongyang with Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō in September 2002 and attended the meeting during which Kim Jong-il admitted, for the first time and after years of denial, that North Korea had abducted some Japanese. Hirasawa Katsuei secretly went to China in 2004 to negotiate with North Korean officials about the abductees and dedicated a book to this subject.[48] Nakai Hiroshi, in turn, served as Minister in Charge of the Issue of Japanese Nationals abducted by North Korea during the Hatoyama (Sept. 2009-June 2010) and Kan Cabinets (June 2010-Sept. 2010).

VI. Public Assistance, Japanese Classes and a Strawberry Farm

The fourth and final role of the two NGOs lies in the support and care of defectors after arriving in Japanese territory. The Japanese Government does not officially publish the number of these defectors, but there were about two hundred in 2014 according to Katō Hiroshi, Yamada Fumiaki and Miura Kotarō.[49] Apart from Japanese women, defectors wishing to be accepted in Japan must have one guarantor in the country. For defectors left without relatives in Japan (or when these relatives refuse), it is the members of the NGOs who become guarantor.[50] As for the settlement of the defectors, the 2014 edition of the Japanese Diplomatic Bluebook stresses that, "in close collaboration with the different administrations concerned," the Government "implements measures to help them settle in Japan" (MOFA 2014, 23). Although primarily

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[48] Hirasawa Katsuei, *Rachi mondai. Tai Kitachōsen gaikō no arikata o tou* (Tōkyō: PHP kenkyūjo, 2004).

[49] Miyatsuka Sumiko, "Nihon ni okeru Kitachōsen nanmin (dappokusha) no jittai," 83; Miura Kotarō, "Dappokusha Nihon teichaku ni okeru sho mondai," 68.

[50] Miyatsuka Sumiko, "Nihon ni okeru Kitachōsen nanmin (dappokusha) no jittai," 83; Yamada Fumiaki, "Kitachōsen dappokusha no kyūen to Nihon teichaku shien no jitsujō," 15.

designed for the victims of abduction, the Law Concerning Measures to Address the Abduction Issue and Other North Korean Human Rights Violations (Rachi mondai sono ta Kitachōsen tōkyoku ni yoru jinken shingai mondai e no taisho ni kansuru hōritsu 拉致問題その他北朝鮮当局による人権侵害問題への対処に関する法律; Law No. 98 of June 23, 2006)[51] commits the Government to "take measures to protect defectors and provide them assistance" (art. 6-2) and to "endeavor to maintain close ties of cooperation with non-governmental organizations assisting, in Japan and abroad, such persons [abductees, defectors and victims of human rights violations]" (art. 6-1). In practice, however, this task is also delegated to members of NGOs, as Yamada Fumiaki states:

> After [an official of the MOFA] transferred a defector from North Korea to our organization or to his relatives at the airport, he will receive the same treatment as any foreigner entering Japan; it is not because he is a defector that the [Japanese] Government continues to take care of him or that he will be able to receive special assistance.[52]

Both NGOs support defectors in finding accommodation and work and in the various administrative procedures they need to complete. Defectors may receive Public Assistance and apply for low-cost public housing. Not all defectors, however, live on welfare. Miyatsuka Sumiko 宮塚寿美子, who conducted interviews with defectors in Japan, gives the example of one of them who worked hard enough to get a loan to buy

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[51] For an overview of the elaboration of this law, see Miura Kotarō, "Dappokusha Nihon teichaku ni okeru sho mondai," 68-69.

[52] Yamada Fumiaki, "Dappokusha no keizaiteki jiritsu shien e no mosaku. Ichigo Saibai ni torikumu mo, mada kōka wa kiri no naka," *Kitachōsen nanmin kyūen kikin nyūsu* 95 (July 2015): 6. Yamada reiterates here an observation that he already made in 2010 (Yamada Fumiaki, "Kitachōsen dappokusha no kyūen to Nihon teichaku shien no jitsujō," 15). Ueda Tsutae, presumably because she is Japanese, told us however that officials from the Japanese administration had assisted her in carrying out several procedures after her arrival in Japan. Ueda Tsutae and her daughter, interview by author, December 21, 2014.

a well-located apartment.[53] Helping them become financially independent by getting a job is the main objective of the Association towards the defectors living in Japan, says Yamada Fumiaki.[54] He also stresses the need for the defectors to acquire the command of the Japanese language to find a job in Japan, but also in order to free themselves from the "North Korean mentality":

> A big hindrance for defectors in finding a job, was the fact that they could not speak Japanese. In order to be freed from the mentality which had been instilled in them in North Korea, the defectors from North Korea needed new information for their change in awareness. Since these defectors were in Japan, this information was available in Japanese and, consequently, learning the language was a prerequisite for any change of mentality. Without that, they would always reason and act according to what they had learnt in North Korea.[55]

In 2011, the Foundation set up a Center for Japanese language, offering courses to defectors—some of whom, such as the children of returnees, do not speak Japanese at all when they arrive in the country. These courses were funded by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs amounting to 1.4 million yen in 2011 (120 hours; 12-13 learners).[56] Although they were free of charge, the Foundation had to stop organizing them in 2013 due to a lack of candidates.[57] Aware of the difficulties encountered by defectors in finding a job, Yamada Fumiaki launched a new initiative in 2014: a strawberry farm in the Ōsaka region:

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[53] Miyatsuka Sumiko, "Nihon ni okeru Kitachōsen nanmin (dappokusha) no jittai," 84, 89.

[54] Yamada Fumiaki, "Dappokusha no keizaiteki jiritsu shien e no mosaku. Ichigo Saibai ni torikumu mo, mada kōka wa kiri no naka," 6.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Katō Hiroshi, interview by author, September 10, 2012.

[57] Miyatsuka Sumiko, "Nihon ni okeru Kitachōsen nanmin (dappokusha) no jittai," 86.

> As for the work they could do, I thought about letting them manufacture something. If one makes something with one's own hands, one realizes the quality of what one makes; and as it is easy to do one's best to make good quality products, one can feel a sense of accomplishment after having made good product. And even unsociable defectors should be capable of manufacturing things.[58]

In July 2015, the farm employed six Japanese and three defectors; two other defectors would lend a hand from time to time on a voluntary basis. Three defectors had already stopped working at that time. In practice, the situation was difficult: besides the technical difficulties inherent in cultivating strawberries, the defectors working in the farm saw the amount of Public Assistance they received greatly diminish because of the wage they earned. This does not encourage people to work, laments Yamada Fumiaki who advocates reforming the system.[59] Miura Kotarō, while not denying cases of successful integration, gives the example of defectors working as caregivers and now financially independent. He clearly shares Yamada Fumiaki's observation.[60]

Miura, like Yamada and Katō, dedicated an important part of his life to helping defectors. He identifies five main elements that constitute impediments to their integration in Japan. The first is the difficulty for defectors to think about their long-term future. They have fled North Korea, often leaving family members behind, but also often for the very purpose of helping them financially. To give their families part of the money they receive—even if it is only public relief money—is therefore the priority of everyday life, to the detriment of efforts (learning the Japanese language) crucial for a smooth integration into Japan. The

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[58] Yamada Fumiaki, "Dappokusha no keizaiteki jiritsu shien e no mosaku. Ichigo Saibai ni torikumu mo, mada kōka wa kiri no naka," 6.

[59] Ibid., 7.

[60] Miura Kotarō, "Dappokusha Nihon teichaku ni okeru sho mondai," 68-79.

second obstacle is what could be seen as a disdain for the law. During the famine period in North Korea, those who respected the law and waited patiently for the rationing system to be restored died of starvation. Those who survived were precisely those who broke the law, *illegally* leaving North Korea and staying *illegally* in China. This habit of not respecting the law leads them to act in that way when they are in Japan (for example, by not declaring the income they earn while they are receiving Public Assistance). Thirdly, defectors are accustomed to the rationing system, which is one of the specificities of economic and social life in North Korea, and they tend to associate this system with that of public assistance in Japan. They have difficulty understanding why this public aid can be partially or totally withdrawn if they receive a wage from their work. Fourthly, the North Korean regime generates a climate of widespread suspicion that makes it difficult to establish solidarity within North Korean society. The defectors can hardly, at least in the first months or years of their stay in Japan, relinquish this atmosphere and trust the people around them, including the members of the NGOs. Finally, staying in China, albeit paradoxically, gives defectors a sense of freedom: they can be escorted back to North Korea at any time but money provides a special privilege allowing them to break free of the rules.[61]

For Miura, learning the basic rules of Japanese society is therefore a priority and he advocates greater involvement of the Japanese government in tasks—including psychological support—beyond what NGOs can do:

> First of all, what is henceforth needed for North Korean defectors beyond Japanese language learning, is to teach them how Japanese society works, the significance of Public Assistance, the principles of

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[61] Miura Kotarō, "Dappokusha Nihon teichaku ni okeru sho mondai," 74-76.

rule of law and sanctions for offenses, the existence of NGOs; in short, it is crucial to teach them the importance of the fundamental rules of society. Moreover, for defectors suffering from a profound psychological trauma (human trafficking in China, the terror of public executions and concentration camps in North Korea, distrust towards others), the help of specialized doctors or counselors is absolutely necessary, and moreover those specialists in some cases need to have some knowledge of the Korean language. This task is already beyond what NGOs can do today, and as long as the [Japanese] government does not tackle the issue of the settlement of defectors in Japan, the cases of failure will surely continue to increase.[62]

VII. Conclusion

This brief study shows that the Japanese Government agrees to provide special assistance to two categories of defectors who have fled North Korea: first, those whom it considers to be Japanese nationals—and in particular the Japanese wives who have left for North Korea with their Korean husbands or partners during the Repatriation Operation (1959-1984); second, the Koreans who were still living in Japan after the Second World War and who left to live in North Korea during these operations. This second category is extended to descendants. With the exception of defectors possessing Japanese nationality, the Japanese Government invokes "humanitarian considerations" to justify the permission granted to them to reside in Japan without, however, according them refugee status.

In Japan, two NGOs—the Association for the Defense of Life and the Human Rights of North Korean Returnees and the Foundation for the Rescue of North Korean Refugees—have devoted their activities since

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[62] Ibid., 76.

the 1990s to the cause of these returnees and their families. These organizations play four main roles. Firstly, they collect and disseminate information on repatriation operations, raising public awareness of the fate of returnees in North Korea. Secondly, they assist defectors who have arrived in China (or in other neighboring countries), act as intermediary between them and the Japanese diplomatic and consular missions, and assist them in the various procedures necessary for their admission onto Japanese soil. Thirdly, these organizations also play the role of a lobby, pressuring actors (politicians for instance) in a position to facilitate the return of defectors to Japan. Finally, the Association and the Foundation look after defectors who have arrived in Japan, taking care of their settlement, offering Japanese language courses, or even finding them a job.

This study also invites a departure from an overly simplistic scheme regarding NGOs as entities consistently acting *against* the state. While these organizations may indeed be critical of the actions (or non-action) of public authorities, they are nevertheless aware that Japanese diplomats accredited in China have a limited scope for action, since the Chinese authorities do not recognize North Korean defectors as refugees but simply as illegal immigrants. It is in this respect interesting to note that the President of the Association,[63] commenting on MOFA's response to his letter concerning the alleged document committing Japan to no longer protect defectors within its missions in China, stated on the website of the Association, "It is not our intention whatsoever to minimize the *hard work* (*go-kurō*) shown by MOFA during its negotiations [with China] on site."[64] It is precisely in these very terms—"Thanks for your *hard work*" (*go-kurō-sama*)—that the officials of the Japanese Embassy in Phnom Penh welcomed Noguchi Takayuki who

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[63] At that time, the Association was chaired by Miura Kotarō.

[64] http://hrnk.trycomp.net/news.php?eid=00743 (accessed on May 6, 2017; emphasis added).

arrived from China with two defectors in 2003.[65] This member of the Foundation was surprised enough to hear from MOFA these words filled with recognition to record it in his memoirs. Regarding the nature of relations between the NGOs and the Japanese missions abroad, Katō Hiroshi also states:

> I don't think that the Japanese government is very motivated to welcome these defectors. But it does not refuse what we bring in. I think that that may be its position on the subject. […] It is a very diplomatic approach […] It asks us not to say that it supports us [...] and states that it is appropriate to act in a calm atmosphere. I think these remarks apply to diplomacy in general.[66]

Although the activities of the two NGOs do not fall within the framework of "Track Two Diplomacy," a term coined by Joseph V. Montville with respect to "conflict resolution,"[67] the relation between the Japanese Government and these NGOs can be defined in terms of

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[65] Noguchi Takayuki, *Dappoku, tōhikō*, 237 (emphasis added).

[66] Katō Hiroshi, interview by author, September 10, 2012.

[67] Joseph V. Montville defines "Track Two Diplomacy" as "an unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations that aims to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human and material resources in ways that might help resolve their conflict." It is "in no way a substitute for official, formal 'track one' government-to-government or leader-to-leader relationships. Rather, track two activity is designed to assist official leaders by compensating for the constraints imposed upon them by the psychologically understandable need for leaders to be—or at least to be seen to be—strong, wary, and indomitable in the face of the enemy." It "seeks political formulas or scenarios that might satisfy the basic security and esteem needs of the parties to a particular dispute." Joseph V. Montville, "The Arrow and the Olive Branch: A Case for Track Two Diplomacy," in *The Psychodynamics of International Relationship*, vol. 2, *Unofficial Diplomacy at Work*, ed. Vamik D. Volkan, Joseph V. Montville, and Demetrios Julius (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1991), 162-163. As attractive as it may be, it is difficult to see how this framework (or even that of the "Multi-Track Diplomacy" developed subsequently by Louise Diamond and John McDonald in 1996) involving identified parties *seeking to resolve a conflict* between them could apply to the situation of North Korean defectors.

subsidiarity or *complementarity* rather than opposition. Subsidiarity applies with respect to the rare cases involving defectors of Japanese nationality, to the extent that the NGOs assume prerogatives traditionally assigned to diplomatic and consular missions: the protection of its nationals abroad. Complementarity applies to cases of former Korean residents and their relatives who do not have Japanese nationality. In this sense, NGOs are an indispensable link in supporting defectors in China but also in Japan by facilitating their social reintegration.

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The Local Dimension in the Industrialization-Democratization Connection: Scale, Opposition Demands, and Ruling Party Transformation in Taiwan and South Korea

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The Local Dimension in the Industrialization-Democratization Connection: Scale, Opposition Demands, and Ruling Party Transformation in Taiwan and South Korea

Taiwan and South Korea seemingly followed parallel paths from authoritarian industrialization to vibrant democracy in a few short decades. Differences can be found in the opposition movements and in the responses of ruling parties. In South Korea, opposition took a radical character, while the ruling party maintained top-down practices well beyond democratic transition. In Taiwan, opposition was less radical and the ruling party abruptly abandoned the practice of building clients during democratization. The explanation of this variation centers on differences in the scale at which authority and resources were distributed during industrialization. A greater dispersal of power and wealth to local units can lead, unintentionally, to an undermining of ruling party hierarchies but also to a more moderate opposition movement. Concentration of power and wealth can fuel confrontational opposition activism but also reinforce party hierarchies. Attention to scale can help refine arguments about the links between industrialization and political change.

Keywords: democratization, South Korea, Taiwan, opposition movements, ruling parties

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I. Introduction

Democratic transformations in Taiwan and South Korea unfolded alongside each other. This situation has made the two East Asian societies excellent subjects for comparative research on modernization and democratization. In both places, middle classes drove movements for democracy and authoritarian rulers eventually instituted elections that could yield turnover in power. Upon closer inspection, finer distinctions can be drawn between the two societies' opposition movements and between the responses of their ruling parties. In South Korea, opposition to the authoritarian regime took a radical character, while the ruling party maintained its top-down practices well beyond the democratic transition. In Taiwan, by contrast, the opposition movement took a less radical stance, but during the course of democratization the ruling party departed sharply from its previous methods of building clients. These differences are counter-intuitive: we might expect, in societies undergoing parallel socio-economic and political transformations, a more radical movement to produce greater change in a ruling party and a less radical movement to lead to less change. What explains these differences?

I suggest that the characteristics of opposition movements and the adaptations of ruling parties are linked to each other. These outcomes are significant for their place in the democratization process and because they relate to continuing features of these polities. The argument offered here speaks to the broader theme of links between industrialization and democratization. Claims about economic growth and the rise of middle classes have proven useful for understanding democratization in Taiwan and South Korea. Those arguments can help explain who participated in anti-authoritarian movements and why regime change was eventually likely. The purpose here is not to dismiss existing explanations of democratization in East Asia but to explore a way that understandings might be refined to account for another set of distinctions. What is at stake here is not whether a middle class engages in opposition activism nor whether a regime concedes, but the manner of opposition activism and the shifts within ruling parties.

My argument begins with inspiration from a theme in writings on Taiwan's political and economic development: the significance of local actors both for democratic transformation (e.g., Chu 1992; Tien 1996; Rigger 1999; Cheng and Lin 2008) and for industrialization (e.g., Gold 1986; Wu 2005). Local actors grabbed increasing influence, in part due to locally-based economic growth but also to institutions that linked local society to formal electoral politics. The local was a sphere of power change. Similar arguments have not been offered for South Korea. This difference may signal a deeper distinction in the trajectories of political development in these societies.

I argue that differences in the scale at which authority and resources were distributed during industrialization contributed to the divergence in opposition movements and in the fates of ruling party hierarchies. In Taiwan, dispersal of authority and resources to local actors was reinforced at several points. This pattern produced a diluted sense of class consciousness but also shifted power to the ruling Kuomintang's (KMT's) one-time clients, who forced the party leadership to seek new

means of generating support. In South Korea, greater concentration of authority and resources led to sharper class divisions but also to a relative weakness among local business elites who might otherwise have put pressure on the ruling party to change its methods of mobilization.

This essay has three purposes. First, it aims to refine existing explanations of differences in the way growth shaped democratic change in Taiwan and South Korea. In particular, by highlighting the significance of local forces, the argument adds to understandings of interactions between institutional and economic change. Second, it suggests an alternative hypothesis on the causes of radical activism and poorly-institutionalized parties in South Korea. This hypothesis emerges only from comparison. Third, and more broadly, it draws attention to the potential significance of scale of effective authority in shaping patterns of political change in industrializing contexts.

II. Scale, Political Institutions, and Economic Resources

Scale offers a fresh lens on differences in the political structures and economies of these two rapidly-industrializing societies. The design of political and political-economic institutions in Taiwan and South Korea reflects distinct scales at which power and resources were organized. I offer a scale-focused narrative of governance and growth in these two societies. Divergence can be found in the immediate post-colonial period, as new regimes managed distinct sets of problems. Later decisions and unintended situations led to the reinforcement of patterns set in the mid-twentieth century. In the following paragraphs I sketch the key points from a scale-focused account of change in these societies.

Regimes in South Korea faced different challenges to establishing order. In Taiwan, the KMT was culturally distinct from the population it sought to rule. Due to early missteps in running the island, which Chiang Kai-shek and his colleagues had initially assumed would be a temporary

basis, the KMT's Mandarin-speaking mainland-born leaders discovered that governing Taiwan would require compromises with the Hokkien- and Hakka-speaking island-born populace. The KMT installed local elections across Taiwan in 1950 in order to gain support from Taiwanese. These elections had no implications for islandwide governance but they did place the levers of local political economies in the hands of figures on the periphery of the regime. In return for discretion in local economic matters, elected officials—who joined the KMT in order to win office—would broker popular support for the ruling party (Chu 1992; Bosco 1994b).

South Korea's rulers, who had no sub-ethnic distinction from those they ruled, faced less pressure to offer a compromise. The Japanese departure had touched off popular uprisings on the Korean peninsula. Suppressing popular demands was the priority of, first, the American Military Government (1945 to 1948) and subsequent governments in Seoul. While the Republic of China (ROC) was under martial for nearly four decades, the Republic of Korea (ROK) held elections from 1948—with brief but significant periods of exception. Restrictions on who could participate applied to South Korea's elections, and elections became more rigid over time. After a coup in 1961, local elections were abolished. Districts for National Assembly seats were drawn so large as to make mobilization through social ties ineffective. Such a scheme suited both the country's military rulers and other elements in the political class, who for the most part lacked local roots. The regime engaged in less local-level mobilization of society than did the KMT in Taiwan. Both of these states on the front of the Cold War used tremendous coercion to rule, but Taiwan's rulers invested more heavily than South Korea's in a local-level compromise.

In both East Asian societies, political decisions contributed to the creation of capitalist classes. These decisions were also guided by scale considerations. The distribution of Japanese industrial assets is a case in point. Governments in both places had inherited enterprises left by the

former colonizer. In Taiwan, the KMT in the early 1950s linked distribution of these assets to land reform, which gave land to the tiller and stipulated maximum limits on how much land any household could own. The state paid landlords with shares in Japanese industrial assets. In one fell swoop, a traditional rural elite was wiped away and a new class of petty-capitalists was created (Gallin 1966; Cheng and Haggard 1992: 4-5). Laws forbid former landlords from seeking profits from traditional agriculture, so they had incentives to learn quickly to do business. In South Korea, by contrast, Japanese industrial assets were auctioned off to a small number of large firms. The Rhee regime gained political donations in return. This move, especially in a high-inflation context, expanded the wealth of the wealthiest industrialists. The political alliance of big business and state elites contributed to the concentration of industrial resources.

Subsequent situations and decisions reinforced these approaches to scale. By the 1960s, Taiwan's small and medium enterprise (SME) sector was leading an economic boom. The KMT regime had interfered little in SMEs. This attitude was partly a political strategy: the KMT preferred to have ambitious Taiwanese pouring their energy into small businesses than into high politics. The KMT was sensitive about large enterprises for fear of their potential political clout, but SMEs appeared an innocuous outlet. From the mid-1970s, the government actively promoted SMEs. In South Korea, the Rhee regime of the 1950s collapsed in 1960 in part because of criticism of corrupt links between Rhee's cronies and big business. The Park Chung Hee regime that followed the coup of 1961 promised to clean up government. While Park extracted support from big business in more subtle ways than Rhee, he continued to work closely with a few concentrated players. They provided an easy source of political finance, and he also had leverage over them for directing their investment. This relationship persisted through the 1970s and into the Chun Doo Hwan regime (1981-87).

As industrial booms hit these countries, patterns of resource

dispersal or concentration had clear economic and social effects. In Taiwan, the proportion of manufacturing employment in small firms of twenty workers or fewer increased while that in larger firms decreased. In South Korea, the largest firms occupied huge portions of output and contained much of the workforce. There was a geographic component to these patterns. Both places urbanized quickly, but in Taiwan smaller urban places grew, rural industry was common, village-to-town commuting occurred, and the largest cities grew moderately. In South Korea, rural industry faltered, former farmers left the countryside permanently, and the population ended up disproportionately in the big cities (especially in Seoul and the capital region).

This account converges with other observations about differences in the politics and political economies of these East Asian societies. A focus on scale, though, elucidates differences in political-economic linkages that have received less attention. In Taiwan, local elections and a permissive environment for small businesses were driven by similar political motives. In addition, as shall be seen, an SME boom in a context of local elections had implications for shifts in power. By the late 1970s Taiwan had many small firms throughout the island; lines between farmers, workers, and capitalists were blurred. It had political institutions that gave local influence to local elites, whose fortunes were expanding. In South Korea, both rural-urban divisions and worker-capitalist distinctions were sharper, and the benefits of growth accrued disproportionately to central rather than local leaders. Electoral institutions offered few intersections between formal politics and local society. In the next four sections I document the contributions these situations made two sets of political outcomes in each place: moderate versus radical middle-class opposition, and transformation versus stasis in ruling party hierarchies.

III. Social Class Identity and Opposition Activism in Taiwan

Growth patterns had implications for class formation and class politics. In Taiwan, distinctions between capitalists, workers, and farmers tended to be fluid: laborers could realistically become their own bosses and workers often continued to be farmers. Families straddled agriculture and industry, and rural and urban spaces. A variety of arrangements emerged for combining agricultural and industrial work. One anthropologist reports on a village where full-time farmers were scarce—but only ten percent of households had left agriculture entirely (Hu 1984: 66–68). When men commuted to factory work in nearby towns or cities, wives managed farm plots. Since the husbands tended the farm only on their days off, they were known as "weekend peasants" (Ch'en 1977: 84–86). This "part-time proletariat" (Gates 1979) moved fluidly between primary and secondary sectors.

The informal nature of employer-employee relations in small work units also dulled class identity. Tiny factories in villages had no licenses and no rights to issue contracts or invoices (Hu 1984: 96–97). Taiwanese labor law prohibited workers in enterprises of fewer than thirty employees from establishing labor unions. That gave small firms greater flexibility. Many of these firms mobilized family labor (Greenhalgh 1995). Patriarchal norms rather than legal codes informed management practices (Hsiung 1996: 29–30). Young women worked in factories and then quit when they married. But many married women took on work later in these small firms close to home. Some even subcontracted out and did work from home. In fact, by the 1980s, most female workers were in small factories, not in large firms (Hsiung 1996: 3–4). Rural factories depended so much on family ties that only factories with five or more employees hired from outside the kin network (Hu 1984: 98). These characteristics contributed to the weakness of the Taiwanese labor movement. A worker who is employed by a family member and aspires

to become a boss is unlikely to conceive of his or her interests as class interests.

By the same token, the capitalist class was a more diverse group. It was not exclusively an elite class that identified mostly with the state. Entrepreneurs who ran small firms acted beyond the purview of state control (Cheng and Haggard 1992: 9-10). Other social groups had less reason to have grievances with capitalists as a whole class.[1]

While these forces dimmed the class identities of Taiwanese, political institutions also encouraged the rising middle class to make demands within the sphere of electoral politics. Local elections provided an arena in which demands could be articulated. By the late 1970s, non-KMT figures from a new professional class began to gain some success in elections for county council positions. These leaders formed the *dangwai* or "outside the party" group. *Dangwai* politicians were independent candidates who became increasingly successful in elections in the late 1970s.

Middle-class anger was channeled into *dangwai* support. An important episode occurred during the 1977 elections. In the race for Taoyuan county magistrate, a non-KMT candidate was expected to poll well. His supporters, fearing vote-rigging by the KMT, took to protest in the town of Chungli. As the protest escalated, police violence did as well and culminated in the killing of three young people. Popular anger at the Chungli Incident brought non-regime politicians together under the *dangwai* label (Chen Mingtong 1995: 183). Two years later this pattern was repeated. Following US president Jimmy Carter's announcement in late 1978 that formal ties with the ROC would cease, the KMT postponed elections. In response, office holders associated with the *dangwai* petitioned the government to hold elections. One of them,

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[1] Solinger (2008: 107-109) notes that the aloofness of Taiwan's capitalists from the regime, when contrasted with the close ties between business and the party-state in China, suggests diverging political patterns on either side of the Taiwan Strait.

Huang Shin-chieh, then founded a dissident journal called *Formosa Magazine*. The periodical sponsored peaceful gatherings. When one of these gatherings was denied a permit to mark Human Rights Day in December 1979 in the city of Kaohsiung, organizers initiated a demonstration instead. The regime ordered military police to intimidate participants. Authorities then detained many prominent activists connected with the magazine and with the *dangwai*. The most shocking episode surrounding these detentions occurred in 1980, when activist Lin Yi-hsiung's young daughters and his mother were murdered in his home while he was under detention (see Lu 1992: 124–125). Lawyers, many of whom had previously not been political, jumped to defend politicians and activists put on trial by the regime.

While some founding members of the *dangwai* launched their careers in electoral politics and then moved into opposition activism, others started as lawyers and shifted into electoral politics. Future president Chen Shui-bian, for example, was a lawyer specializing in commercial law who became involved in politics through the Kaohsiung Incident. In 1981 he won a seat on the Taipei City Council. Chen was a key figure in both anti-regime activism and electoral politics. In 1986 *dangwai* politicians organized themselves into the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which went on to become the major opposition party. The composition of the DPP leadership makes clear the linkage between authoritarian elections and demands for democracy. Of the first ten DPP chairmen, serving from 1986 to 2008, eight won elected office prior to 1990. All had been connected with the Kaohsiung Incident; most were lawyers.[2] This group of educated activists had one foot in electoral politics before the transition to democracy.

The middle class formed the base of support for the *dangwai*/ DPP. Forces from two sources pushed Taiwan's new middle class toward non-

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[2] This information can be found in many sources, including references such as Copper (2010).

radical activism. On one hand, the muting of class identities meant that workers were unlikely to be politicized. On the other hand, competitive local elections provided a moderate outlet for opposition to the regime. There were opportunities to press the KMT on its own terms in these elections. The *dangwai*/DPP absorbed middle-class activism and directed it toward elections and toward expansion of elections.

IV. Social Class Identity and Opposition Activism in South Korea

In South Korea, both the class dimension and the institutional environment were different. While in Taiwan many people thrived by undertaking activities that linked rural and urban places, in South Korea young people and whole families abandoned the countryside and became full-time urban workers. Hagen Koo observes that geographically concentrated industrialization in South Korea facilitated full-scale "proletarianization" of workers. Permanent rural-urban migrations meant that working-class cultures and habits emerged to replace village-based practices (Koo 1990: 676; Choi 1989: 65–81). South Korea's quick urban transition contributed to the rapid formation of a city-based working class. Industrialization came with few feedback loops into the rural sector. Success came from throwing oneself into extra-local networks, not from returning or staying home.

Compared to Taiwan, more capitalists were more closely tied to the state and to elite power. The absence of a strong small business class meant that capitalists could be associated with the state. This condition could exacerbate class tensions.

The institutional environment in South Korea also pushed ordinary people toward radicalism. The rising middle class in South Korea could vote against the ruling party but the effect could only be limited. While Taiwan's local officials could wield influence in the local political economy, elections had minimal impact on governance. After Park

Chung Hee revised the constitution in 1972, the president was indirectly elected and National Assembly elections were designed so that the ruling party was virtually guaranteed a majority; even then, bills rarely began in the legislature. The opposition that did exist had been permitted, and it included many figures who emerged from the conservative politics of the 1950s.

Established electoral and party politics were thus limited as outlets for the demands of South Korea's growing working and middle classes (Lee 2011). In Taiwan, starting in the late 1970s, leaders of middle class activism entered electoral politics. In South Korea, activism and electoral politics were less closely linked. The Korean counterpart to Taiwan's Kaohsiung Incident, in terms of being a galvanizing moment in the movement for democratization, is the Kwangju Uprising of 1980. In May of that year, citizens of the southwestern city of Kwangju seized control of government offices. General Chun Doo Hwan, serving as de facto president, sent in the military to retake the city. The suppression was bloody, with hundreds if not thousands of Kwangju residents killed. The uprising followed Chun's seizure of power in the wake of president Park's assassination in October 1979. Unlike in Kaohsiung Incident, there was no direct link to electoral politics. Kwangju was a response by citizens to state encroachment. In the Kaohsiung Incident elected politicians responded to the postponement of elections, and the episode enhanced ties among non-regime activists who would later run for office. Kwangju, by contrast, radicalized regime opposition.

The Kwangju Uprising helped touch off a deeper political movement. The movement included diverse interests that were held together by a *minjung*, or common people, ideology that framed demands in a way that was meaningful to a variety of Koreans. This variety included workers, students, and church-based activists. The frame articulated pride in elements of mass Korean culture, history, and everyday life. As "a particular postcolonial engagement with history" (Abelmann 1996: 20), the *minjung* movement sought to find a Korean

subjectivity that had been lost in colonial subjugation and not regained with the immediate post-colonial impositions. Activists questioned the resolution of the ROK's founding conflict and, by extension, the basis of the state. As Koo (1993: 72) notes in writing about the surprisingly anti-establishment views of the middle class: "In South Korea, struggles about class actually mean struggles against the state." The *minjung* ideology mobilized people in a way that institutionalized party politics failed to do. In fact, some activists were skeptical of elections, because participants had seen how elections had served old elites. Activists pushed for fundamental reordering of the relationship between the state and the people.

Workers formed a component of the movement. The pattern of concentrated industrialization had created a strong working class identity. Furthermore, because workers knew that the state supported their exploitative bosses, their grievances could take a political character. Suppression of labor organizing in the 1980s led to politicization of workers (Koo 2001: 102–104). This treatment of workers differed from the paternalist attitude toward workers seen in Taiwan's smaller workshops. There was also a specific linkage between middle-class radicalism and worker activism. Students played key roles mobilizing workers. University students posed as workers and took jobs at factories. At night they would teach their coworkers basic subjects as well as political ones (Koo 2001: chpt. 5). These activities helped bring workers into the popular movement demanding political change.

The distinction between South Korea and Taiwan in the relationship between anti-authoritarianism activists and elections can be illustrated by comparing two former activists who became presidents. The figure in South Korea's democratization whose career was most similar to Chen Shui-bian's was Roh Moo Hyun, who served as president from 2003 to 2008. Like Chen, Roh was a lawyer who started his career in the 1970s. Roh made his name in property law. He had no links to politics until he decided to represent a group of students who had been arrested, tortured,

and charged as state enemies. Just as the Kaohsiung Incident politicized Chen, this case turned Roh into a human rights lawyer and political activist. However, while Chen went immediately into electoral politics, Roh did not. In the 1980s he remained an anti-regime activist without links to parties or elections. Neither the events that politicized Roh, nor the way he participated in politics were related to elections. Only after the transition did he and several colleagues enter party politics and run for office.

V. Industrial Resources and Political Hierarchies in Taiwan

Dispersed authority and resources also had an impact on ruling party hierarchies in Taiwan. Starting in the early 1950s, the KMT had cultivated local-level clients. The core actor was the configuration known as a local faction (*difang paixi*), a set of clientelist networks oriented wholly to competing in elections. Faction members ran for office, or endorsed particular candidates. They sought nomination from the KMT, but they also had roots in local communities. Factions were neither emanations from local culture nor state impositions but "rather the product of a particular state-society articulation at a particular point in history" (Bosco 1994b: 114). Factions provided the local networks and systems of legitimacy that facilitated grassroots electoral mobilization. Votes for the KMT came through loyalty to a community leader who was respected for his or her local status and contributions to the community, not from positive views of the KMT as an organization. Local loyalties were then transformed into KMT support as the party coopted faction leaders. Local factions formed a key component of the link from elections to legitimacy for the regime (Chu 1992: 28). This sort of mobilization was not ideological. The regime continued to repress open discussion of tension between Taiwan-born and mainlanders and to use schools, campaigns, surveillance, and coercion to inculcate Chinese

identities. Through elections, though, local leaders could improve their positions and claim to represent their communities.

The KMT had multiple tools for disciplining local factions. Besides designing institutions to ensure that local factions were powerless on the national stage, the KMT used informal means to check local power. Within districts, the KMT cultivated rivalries between factions. The KMT could alternate nomination between the two factions to balance one against the other. Propping up a weaker faction prevented a stronger one from becoming dominant and gaining leverage against the party. Where factions were similar in strength, the party might support the slightly more influential one so that the party could gain local prestige (Chen Mingtong 1995: 150–153). In order to prevent factional conflict from escalating, the KMT could make sure the county executive came from one faction while the chairman of the county assembly came from another (Chen Jishuo 1996: 80).

By turning to local factions, the KMT put itself in the position of having to negotiate with a set of actors on the regime's periphery. KMT leaders wanted to avoid becoming dependent on local factions, lest the latter learned to win elections without the party. The party name, after all, did little to get votes. In the 1970s the KMT attempted a strategy of nominating "good governance" candidates. The party picked educated Taiwanese who could make the party look more professional than candidates affiliated with local factions (Dickson 1996: 50–53). In 1972 this approach worked and the KMT won all elections. Five years later, however, the strategy backfired.[3] Of the seventy-eight provincial assembly seats, twenty-one went to non-KMT candidates; four non-KMT mayors were elected. In Taoyuan County, outside Taipei, a local faction representative who was disgruntled after not being nominated won the

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[3] In 1977 only fifteen percent of KMT nominees for magistrate/mayor came from local factions, down from sixty-five percent in 1968 and forty percent in 1972. See Chen Mingtong (1995: 183).

magistrate position as an independent. His candidacy touched off the Chungli Incident that mobilized *dangwai* politicians. The KMT discovered that it had to consider the power of local factions in planning electoral strategies.

Local elections also eventually exerted a "trickling-up pressure" (Cheng and Lin 2008: 166) on the regime to expand elections to higher levels of office. Successful politicians at local levels had aspirations for further power. Although the regime continued to use repression into the 1980s, the growing competitiveness of elections may have marked a turn toward "soft authoritarianism" (Winckler 1984: 482).

Local growth contributed to the rising power of local factions. Small entrepreneurs invested their wealth in politics in the 1970s. The SME boom had given them funds and as employers they could serve as patrons to community members. Many entrepreneurs held status in their communities, for example as temple committee members. These resources and networks helped local leaders gain leverage against higher levels of the KMT. With their newfound leverage, local factions could defect away from the KMT. They could run in elections as independents. The effect was to make elections more competitive. Competition, in turn, raised campaign costs. Rising costs, in the context of widespread prosperity, made it harder for the KMT to control patronage resources (Tien 1996: 18–20). Bruce Dickson (1996: 46–47) explains the effect: "Although co-opting local leaders expanded and consolidated KMT power on Taiwan, the practice of co-optation subsequently facilitated the KMT's evolution away from its Leninist origins." As Shelley Rigger (1999: 31) puts it, co-optation through elections "redistribute[d] power from the regime center to the grassroots by increasing the regime's reliance on the individuals directly responsible for delivering votes." Clientelism had made Taiwanese society "weak," but growth had the unintended consequence of challenging patronage hierarchies.

Competition within the KMT led blocs of politicians to turn to business for support. Yun-han Chu (1992: 143) found that among twenty-

four magistrates and mayors elected in 1989, eighteen received financial support from a business group. Business pushed its way up to islandwide offices, too. In the Legislative Yuan of 1989 to 1992, thirty-eight of 101 elected members were known to have business links. This shift signaled the KMT's declining leverage over those who aspired to power. Because of the growth in resources outside party control, party control over candidates declined.

Taiwan did, of course, continue to have large enterprises. The largest firms tended to be connected to, if not directly controlled by, the KMT. While these firms remained important for both the economy and for KMT rule, the pace of growth in the SME sector meant an expansion in resources beyond the scope of central KMT control. Even if politicians with a business background or supported by business formally allied with the KMT, local KMT candidates were usually not deeply integrated into party hierarchies. Their business interests were beyond the purview of the party. Further, with its strategy of switching nomination between factions, the KMT exhibited little loyalty to local politicians.

For the KMT, the rising competitiveness of elections meant that a component of its ruling strategy was deteriorating. By the early 1980s, the party could no longer rely on local elections for cultivating clients who, by running under the KMT banner, could generate legitimacy for the regime. Not only were local faction allies no longer dependable; ties with them also exposed the party to criticism. *Dangwai* politicians could challenge the KMT's record in collaborating with local faction figures who may have had underworld associations (Bosco 1994a). The KMT needed alternative strategies for garnering support. In the 1980s, the party oscillated between shunning local factions and allying with them. After the turn of the century, a scholar announced "the end of clientelism in Taiwan" (Wang 2006). The KMT's vulnerability in the face of empowered local clients contributed to the party's shift away from a clientelist party to one that mobilized on the basis of messages.

Another adjustment to the declining reliability of local allies was

the incorporation of more Taiwanese into the KMT. Mainlanders had dominated the KMT and state, with Taiwanese given access mostly to the realm of local elected office. Beginning in the 1970s, the KMT recruited and promoted more Taiwan-born people within the party and state. In 1976 three-quarters of new cadres were Taiwan-born. Between 1975 and 1985 the percentage of island-born county-level cadres rose from thirty-five to fifty-four percent (Dickson 1996: 55–57). Growth in Taiwanese officials was slower at more central levels but in 1984 president Chiang Ching-kuo appointed a Taiwanese as his successor. At the same time, there was a shift in leadership from revolutionaries to technocrats (Jiang and Wu 1992: 82-83). Meanwhile, as politicians who built careers winning local elections started to succeed in higher-level contests, political leadership shifted toward types whose strengths lay in managing election campaigns rather than in other areas (Cheng and Lin 2008: 166). These changes signaled a reorientation of the regime away from pursuing Chinese nationalist ideals and toward governing Taiwan's society. The changes had multiple causes, and the declining ability of local elections to deliver support to the KMT made this transformation more important in the KMT's quest for social support.

VI. Industrial Resources and Political Hierarchies in South Korea

The local forces that drove the subversion of ruling party hierarchies in Taiwan were far weaker in South Korea in the same period. On one hand, the political system offered scant opportunities for local elites to step into electoral politics. Local elections were not held after 1960. Constituencies for National Assembly elections were so large that the influence of any single county—the traditional unit of local social life—was marginal. South Korean rulers had not set up a system of clientelism like the KMT's. On the other hand, as we have seen, industrialization had not significantly expanded the resources of local elites. The local

business class that developed in Taiwan scarcely appeared in South Korea. Instead, ambitious people left the countryside for jobs in cities.

Given the weak ties between parties and any local elite, South Korea's parties felt little pressure from below. While the KMT by the late 1970s started to struggle to nominate the most competitive candidates, South Korea's ruling party faced no such difficulty. In fact, the party had so much leverage over would-be candidates that the party leadership could maintain top-down nomination practices—even years after the democratic transition. All of South Korea's major parties inherited top-down candidate selection procedures from pre-transition parties. Park Chung Hee's DRP had rules for selecting candidates but the formal procedures left space for central party leaders to appoint nominees directly (Sim and Kim 2006: 353). The DRP's rules were passed on to the subsequent ruling party, the Democratic Justice Party (DJP), which maintained them after 1987. When the DJP merged with two other parties in 1990 the candidate selection procedures followed. Successors to that party inherited the procedures. The opposition adopted rules that similarly did nothing to restrict interference from party leaders. Secret meetings of screening committees set slates of candidates. Whatever the stated rules, "In practice authority over nomination is monopolized in the hands of an imperial party head who monopolizes organization, personnel, and finance" (Yi Hyeon-cheol 2003: 42). Even when party reforms after 2000 created the appearance of institutionalized nomination procedures, central leaders could still influence the process. As a newspaper opinion piece put it, "All that's happened is that nomination screening committees have taken over the imperial role of the two Kims" [referring to former presidents Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung] (*Donga Ilbo*, March 18, 2008, 34). Industrialization in South Korea, in a political environment in which the ruling party had not depended upon a set of local clients, did not give rise to a set of vote-getters who could eventually challenge the ruling party electorally.

In the absence of electoral pressure from the local arena, South

Korea's ruling party had little need to adjust its organizational tactics before democratization. The KMT's ambivalence toward local factions from the early 1980s to the early 1990s had forced the party to reach out to new groups and, in so doing, to turn to new, appeals-based forms of mobilization. No similar dynamic could be found in South Korea. The ruling DRP and DJP could remain aloof, since representatives had nowhere else to turn if they wanted to win office. Candidates continued to need parties more than parties needed particular candidates.

Under these conditions, South Korea's ruling party could simply continue in its old, top-down ways. To be sure, the profile of the elite underwent change. Military officers left government. Former opposition figures, including activists, joined party politics. In 1990 the ruling party assimilated a large section of the former opposition through its incorporation of Kim Young Sam. This move contributing to the shifting of the basis of inter-party struggle from pro-regime versus anti-regime to other issues, including position on North Korea and regional identification. At the same time, parties did not revise their organizational structures or practices as the country democratized. The institutional frailty of South Korea's parties is infamous, as parties have collapsed and re-emerged every few years. Individual personalities have been enormously influential. Figures such as Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung had been in elite party politics since the 1950s, and they dominated their parties. While there are claims that cultural norms justify such domination (Helgesen 1995; Kim 1998), there must also have been a relative weakness among party subordinates to allow the leaders to assert such claims. Comparison with Taiwan reveals that South Korea's particular political institutions and concentrated pattern of industrialization made it easier for party elites to impose their will on their parties. In comparative perspective, the weakness of local economic and political actors in South Korea stands out as a factor contributing to stability in party hierarchies.

Even the introduction of local elections in the 1990s did little to

diminish these hierarchies. The major parties were almost immediately tremendously successful in winning elections at all levels. Candidates competed hard for support from one of the major parties. One scholar observed that "the party nomination system in local elections leads to one-side, vertical relationships between the center and the provinces" (Hwang A-ran 2002: 264). Had a strong local elite existed, parties might have encountered greater competition in local elections. Instead, centralized party hierarchies only extended into the local arena after democratization.

Another factor to which these differences might be attributed is the mode of authoritarian rule in each place. Since a Leninist party ruled Taiwan while South Korea's generals used parties only to win elections, one might argue that it is unsurprising that post-democratic parties in South Korea were less institutionalized than those in Taiwan. This claim has merit. If we look more specifically, though, at the KMT's transformation from clientelist organizer to platform-based electoral party, then more particular features of KMT rule and Taiwan's political economy must be given attention. It is not only that a party ruled but that the regime used local elections to cultivate local-level support and encouraged growth in small, local firms. Those specific features—and their absence in South Korea—can more precisely account for the variation under investigation here.

VII. Conclusion

In Taiwan and South Korea, the modernization theory expectation that growth would produce social forces demanding democracy came true. However, the nature of opposition demands and the adjustments by ruling parties differed. This essay has offered an explanation for these patterns, which are not captured in broader narratives of modernization and democratization. The explanation here centers on distinctions in the scale to which authority and resources were distributed. Early in its rule,

the KMT initiated a set of compromises that, in the context of rapid industrialization, would empower local actors and link them to formal politics. By the late 1970s, these empowered actors demanded more influence in national politics. In the space created by such demands, a rising middle class—in which identities as farmers, workers, and capitalists were blurred—pressed for greater say in formal politics. In response, the KMT was forced to alter its methods of building support. South Korea's leaders did not make the same initial compromise and, as a result, local elites were weaker and less connected to formal politics even as growth created more resources. As big cities and large firms prospered, people were pushed into more sharply-defined class categories and workers faced state suppression. Opposition activism took on a more radical character than in Taiwan. Although this resistance led the regime to liberalize, the ruling party faced little pressure to reform its top-down organization.

This study introduces a new hypothesis for explaining the poor institutionalization of South Korea's political parties. Previous studies of South Korea's democratization have not given attention to the weakness of local forces as a possible cause of features of the country's political transformation. Comparison with Taiwan suggests that this factor may distinguish South Korea's experience. The relative weakness of local forces meant that central party leaders have had relatively fewer obstacles to exercising power. This concrete situation facilitates the successful application of norms that empower individual party bosses. It would also help explain why, as some scholars argue (Choi 2005), continuities in party politics can be found from the late 1940s or mid-1950s to the democratic period—local forces did not push elite politics off its trajectory. The poor institutionalization of South Korea's parties may be underpinned by this history of weak local connections.

An implication of this study is to suggest that scale may be a useful dimension to explore in discussions of comparative development. I have outlined a framework that could be applied to contexts beyond the ones

examined here. Among developing societies, Taiwan's more dispersed pattern of authority and resources may be closer to the average than South Korea's more concentrated pattern. The ROK state has had a capacity that is hardly matched. Many industrializing countries in other regions, such as in Southeast Asia, have more far-flung territories and greater ethnic diversity. Such characteristics make dispersal of authority and resources more likely than concentration. Examining the consequences of variation in the extent of dispersal of authority and resources could yield insight into political outcomes that are more specific than those predicted in many discussions of industrialization and political change.

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Book Reviews

Exposing the Ills of Jingoist History
Review of *Hanguk godaesa wa saiibi yeoksahak* [Ancient Korean History and Pseudo-historiography]

By Jeolmeun yeoksahakja moim [The Society of Young Historians].
Korea: Yeoksa bipyeongsa, 2017.

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I.

"Pseudo-history (*saiibi yeoksahak*)" has been an important issue among Korean historians since last year. Also known as "alternative history (*jaeya sahak*)," this historical approach is primarily defined by is its jingoistic character. Pseudo-historians, represented by the likes of Yi Deok-il, denounce mainstream historians as succumbing to the influence of "colonialist historiography" established under the period of Japanese rule. They portray themselves as presenting the "legitimate" history of Korea by tracing their intellectual origins to Sin Chae-ho (1880-1936), whose research on ancient Korean history functioned as an "impetus of resistance" against the Japanese.

Chiefly dealing with the so-called subject of "early ancient Korean history (*Hanguk sanggosa*)," which typically refers to the period before that of the "Three Kingdoms (*Samguk sidae*)," pseudo-historians have relentlessly advocated for more "patriotic (*aegukjuui jeok*)" historiography. In this regard, they are particularly preoccupied with substantiating the

territorial boundaries of the Gojoseon Kingdom. According to their arguments, Gojoseon was not merely confined to the Korean peninsula but was a "great empire" stretching into Eastern China and the surrounding area, whereby the land composing China's Liaoning province was once entirely a part of Gojoseon. Consistent with this claim, they also assert that the Han Chinese Commanderies (Korean: *Hansagun*), including the Lelang (Korean: *Nangnang*) Commandery established following Gojoseon's demise, were located in Liaoning province and not on the Korean peninsula as is commonly thought. Finally, some among these jingoist historians advance the preposterous claim that the Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla Kingdoms were not limited to the Korean peninsula but extended into continental China as well.

II.

It is no secret that Korea has traditionally been restricted in responding to great powers such as the United States, China, or Japan with respect to commercial friction, diplomatic disputes, historical discord, and so on. In reality, force was never a viable option and this precluded the attainment of any decisive advantage. Those in power, then, have routinely been susceptible to charges of submitting to "humiliating" agreements and have met with popular resistance. Jingoist historians are thus able to seize on a popular sense of injustice to advance their cause. Emphasizing the "perpetuity and splendor" of the Korean nation, they contrast the prevailing conditions on the Korean peninsula with a glorious past.

Pseudo-historians are mainly concerned with purging the "colonialist perceptions" prevalent in mainstream historiography and advancing their own brand of nationalist historiography, which they view as Korean historiography's "original current." In the past, this effort generally involved attempts to substantiate Gojoseon territory with reference to forged texts (*wiseo*) such as the *Dan gi gosa* and the *Hwandan gogi* produced by adherents of *Daejonggyo* (Religion of the

Divine Progenitor) in the early twentieth century. More recently, pseudo-historians have strived to imbue their arguments with greater credibility through analyses of literary texts and archaeological artifacts. But the fruits of these labors yet exceed the bounds of accepted modes of historical analysis, more closely resembling fiction than academia. Rather than uncovering the realities of the Gojoseon period, pseudo-historians merely project current nationalistic objectives and expectations onto a distant past.

Nevertheless, the popular influence of such historiography endures. Pseudo-historians are able to manipulate public opinion by colluding with politicians and the media. Meanwhile, their claims have a simple, clear and common appeal. What Korean would object to the idea that Korea was once a great empire in the time of Gojoseon? Would any oppose the mission to cast off the legacy of Japanese colonialism and establish a "proper" historical consciousness?

Be that as it may, the production of rigorous academic research cannot be based on the hopes of the public alone. It is unacceptable to claim that Gojoseon was a "great empire" without evidence, as well as to unconditionally deny all research produced by Japanese historians during the colonial period—some is well substantiated. Jingoist historians, however, have maintained their claims by consistently appealing to the sensibility and support of the general public.

The arguments of jingoist historians pertaining to ancient history have no scholarly value whatsoever. Within academia, it is a foregone conclusion that such third-rate arguments warrant no discussion. In fact, scholars have tended to avoid debate with these historians since they generally respond with groundless arguments, personal attacks, and by manipulating public opinion. Meanwhile, jingoist historians attribute this state of affairs to the fact that established historiography is yet mired in the influence of colonial historiography.

III.

The quality of democracy and human rights in Korean society regressed under the Lee Myung-bak and Park Geun-hye administrations. Chaebol-centered economic growth demonstrated little sign of further breakthrough and labor and social welfare issues came to occupy the political agenda. Completely disregarding this need for social change, the Park administration consistently adhered to divisive politics under the monopolistic control of national affairs by unelected officials before succumbing to impeachment.

In order to consolidate the basis of its support, the Park administration avoided confronting prevailing contradictions, turning to nostalgic representations of a glorious past. The historical claims of the New Right, beautifying pro-Japanese history and the developmental dictatorship of Park Chung-hee, have been particularly prominent, and such regressive historical thinking played a decisive role in the approval of middle and high school textbooks by the national government. Meanwhile, the influence of jingoist historical perspectives on the Park administration was by no means small either—the president went as far as to quote from the *Hwandan gogi* in her speech commemorating National Liberation Day (*Gwangbok jeol*) in 2013.

Jingoist historians like Yi Deok-il have been even more explicit in displays of solidarity with the ruling government in the effort to establish headquarters for the so-called "National Movement to Eradicate Colonialist History (*Singmin sahak haeche gungmin undong bonbu*)." This movement pressured the Northeast Asia History Foundation (NAHF) to cancel its funding to the "Early Korea Project (*Godae hanguk peurojecteu*)" affiliated with the Korea Institute of Harvard University. As well, its consistent attempts to sabotage the Northeast Asia Mapping Project (hereafter "mapping project") carried out over a period of eight years eventually led the NAHF, which had provided funding, to reject the project's findings. The movement attacked these two projects particularly

by denying the claim that the Lelang Commandery was located around what is now Pyeongyang in North Korea and not Northeast China. It asserted that established history had inherited and perpetuated this view from colonialist historiography.

The failure of the mapping project dealt a particularly harsh blow to the discipline of history in Korea. Despite the fact that this was a meaningful undertaking focusing the efforts of some of the most capable historians in the country, the project was discontinued on the absurd grounds of alleged excessive cartographic errors. On the surface, this appeared the tragic result of collusion between the NAHF chairman and a number of personnel with backgrounds in geography, where all involved lacked any specialized knowledge of Northeast Asian history. However, this was in fact an incident revealing the systematic political influence of jingoistic historical perspectives over the NAHF.

IV.

The Society of Young Historians (*Jeolmeun yeoksahakja moim*) was formed by prominent young historians specializing in ancient Korean history no longer able to tolerate the behavior of jingoist historians such as Yi Deok-il. Under conditions in which even supposedly "progressive" politicians and media accept the distorted historical views of those such as Yi Deok-il, this organization has set out to present scholarly criticism of jingoist history that might attain popular support. *Hanguk godaesa wa saiibi yeoksahak* (Ancient Korean History and Pseudo-historiography) is the result of these efforts.

The book labels jingoist historians such as Yi Deok-il "pseudo-historians (*saibi yeoksa hakja*)." This is a term much more aggressive than that applied in the past, "quasi-historians (*yusa hakja*)," explicitly emphasizing the deceptive and spurious nature of such historiography. The majority of the chapters in the book are based upon articles originally published in *Yeoksa bipyeong* (Critical Review of History), a

Korean historical journal, in 2016. This courageous movement of young historians outraged by the behavior of pseudo-historians has received a great deal of attention even among their senior counterparts. It has thus resulted in formal responses to pseudo-history among academics, as exemplified in the "Citizen Lectures on Ancient Korean History (*Hanguk godaesa simin gangjwa*)."

The actions of pseudo-historians can be largely understood in relation to the Park Geun-hye administration's publication of official school textbooks, a move carried out in conjunction with the discarding of the mapping project. These incidents revealed that pseudo-historians have taken on a clear political role, ignoring prevalent social issues and contradictions and cooperating with the ruling government to preserve its vested interests. Considering such conditions, the determined efforts of the young historians have served to suppress and scale back the activities of pseudo-historians.

Although pseudo-historians counter that that these young historians are simply acting at the behest of their advising professors and seniors, their particular brand of jingoist behavior has indeed been somewhat subdued of late. This shows that active resistance and criticism is a better remedy than silence for dealing with the pseudo-historical movement. *Ancient Korean History and Pseudo-historiography* is significant insofar as it is the fruit of such effort. It serves as a guide to the general public, allowing them access to a balanced historical account so as not to be taken in by jingoistic historiography.

V.

The book is divided into three sections. The first section is composed of three chapters, covering the emergence and activities of the pseudo-historical movement, criticism pertaining to Japanese colonialist historiography and the prospects for more forward-looking historiography, and extreme nationalism in official school textbooks over

the years. There are seven chapters in the second section, dealing with the following: the location of the Han Chinese Commanderies; claims that the Han Chinese Commanderies were located on the Korean peninsula; the origins and permutations of the *Imna* annexation theory (*Imna ilbonbu seol*), which claims that an ancient kingdom in the southern part of Korea known as Gaya was ruled by Japanese settlers; the current state of research on the Lelang Commandery; the fictitiousness of astronomical observations recorded in religious texts such as the *Dan gi gosa* and *Hwandan gogi*; changing perspectives with regard to Dangun, the legendary progenitor of the Korean nation; and the potential for new interpretations of Sin Chae-ho's histories. Finally, the third section is composed of a discussion among members of the Society of Young Historians with respect to the "true nature" of pseudo-historiography, the popularization of history, the psychology of a public yearning for a history of a great and vast empire, and the values that Korean historical research should strive for beyond the paradigms of nationalism and development.

For decades, Korean historians have considered silence the most effective response to pseudo-historiography. This was a strategy meant simply to disregard the poor scholarly standards and results of pseudo-historians. In any case, it was difficult to endow Pseudo-historians' criticism of mainstream historiography with any genuine scholarly credibility due to inadequate interpretations of historical materials and reference to forged texts such as the *Hwangdan gogi*. Meanwhile, if by chance pseudo-historians were brought into forums of debate, they were prone to engaging in slander and inflammatory remarks rather than scholarly deliberation. The book's first chapter, "Pseudo-historiography and Historical Fascism (*Saibi yeoksahak gwa yeoksa pasijeum*)," describes these behaviors in detail.

Among mainstream historians, the strategy of silent disregard for pseudo-history and a focus on the publication of academic papers with little effort to convey ideas to the general public has effectively

communicated the wrong signal to the general public, tacitly facilitating the popular dissemination of pseudo-historical views and the legitimization of the claim there is a need to purge Korean historiography of colonialist influence. This situation has only been exasperated by the prevailing reality of a nation wedged between great powers, conducive to the ready acceptance of the view that the Korean nation was once a vast empire among certain segments of the public. In particular, pseudo-historians' chief strategy to gain popular favor involves the juxtaposition of their own historiography, that succeeding the nationalist historiography of Sin Chae-ho, with mainstream historiography succeeding colonialist historiography established under the Japanese Empire.

Considering such circumstances, *Ancient Korean History and Pseudo-historiography* is an important work because it is the first to comprehensively and aggressively criticize pseudo-historiography. It presents a piercing exposure of pseudo-historical research, which lacks in empiricism and is distorted so as to bring about desired conclusions. The book also bluntly criticizes pseudo-historians for seeking to legitimize their claims purely through acceptance among politicians and the media rather than scholarly effort, as well as for seeking popular support while asserting the fictitious need to overcome "colonialist historiography." Finally, it points out how distorted, biased perceptions preoccupied with the substantiation of territorial claims are but a variant of the colonialist historiography pseudo-historians are so apt to criticize.

The book also warns of the dangers of jingoistic nationalism as espoused by pseudo-historians. Particularly, it demonstrates how the field of "early ancient history," concerned with the likes of Dangun and Gojoseon, also provided the representative subject matter by which jingoistic tendencies in official middle and high school textbooks were strengthened under successive dictatorial regimes in Korea. To counter such tendencies, the book provides an accessible overview of the state of research with respect to the main areas of concern for pseudo-historians, including Dangun, Gojoseon, the Han Chinese Commanderies (including

Lelang), and the *Imna* annexation issue, which was a major area of concern for colonialist historiography. Thus, the book exposes the fabrications and academic malpractice of pseudo-historiography with reference to current academic research.

VI.

The tendency of people to support pseudo-historical arguments can largely be divided into two categories. On the one hand there are those on the extreme right, who dream of establishing a "great" Republic of Korea emulating the history of the ancient period in which the Korean nation supposedly composed a vast empire. On the other, there are those who are progressive, reform-minded, and passionate about realizing social justice. Of course it is not uncommon for one to demonstrate each of these inclinations, but those in the latter category generally desire to mitigate prevailing social contradictions and establish a more just community.

Now is the time to sever the links between pseudo-historiography and progressive, reform-minded citizens. To do this, historians must adopt a more active role in conveying the fascist character of such historical views. It is critical that they not devote themselves solely to abstruse scholarly pursuits but carry out a role of intelligibly communicating the fruits of academic research to the general public. And though they have moved beyond the restrictive paradigms of growth and development and the state and the nation, they must continue to contemplate the definition of history.

While the pseudo-historical movement appears to have taken a moment to catch its breath, it will take more for such ideas to lose their grip on the public. Those with power and influence who adhere to such ideas may evolve in any number of ways. Therefore, pseudo-historiography must be me met with an active and sustained response. It is the duty and responsibility of established historians endowed with

scholarly authority and honor to stem the tide of pseudo-historiography contaminating historical awareness.

The Tokyo Three: Life and Choices of Tokyo Students Hong Myeong-hui, Choi Nam-seon, and Yi Gwang-su [Donggyeong samjae: donggyeong yuhaksaeng hong myeong-hui, choe nam-seon, yi gwang-su ui salm gwa seontaek]

By RYU Si-hyun
Korea: San cheoreom, 2016

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I. Introduction

The Tokyo Three is a lucid account of the modern history of Korea. It is related through the experiences of three of Korea's most important early twentieth-century intellectuals, Hong Myeong-hui, Choi Nam-seon, and Yi Gwang-su, who ceaselessly agonized over the fate of the Korean people. They were educated in Tokyo, a "space in which they were exposed not only to modernity, but nationalism" (70). They are thus often referred to as "The Tokyo Three (*Donggyeong samjae*)." While there are many other well-known works delving into the lives of these intellectuals, such as Kim Yun-sik's *Yi Gwang-su and His Era* (*Yi gwang-su wa geu ui sidae*), this book sets itself apart through its focus on all three, exploring their relationships and antagonism with each other. Furthermore, it is no mere biography but a work of intellectual and

cultural history.

The four volumes, organized in chronological order, are respectively titled "Meeting (*mannam*)" "Nation (*minjok*)," "Thought (*inyeom*)," and "Choices (*seontaek*)." Each volume is composed of five to six chapters, all of which accessibly outline the prevailing historical context in relation to discussing the protagonists. Meanwhile, the ample number of footnotes and references, as well as a chronological table entitled "The Tokyo Three and Their Era (*Donggyeong samjae wa geu ui sidae*)," testify to the work's scholarly merit.

This book successfully "interprets the times through the eyes of its representative intellectuals (10)." In particular, it raises several critical issues underexplored in the existing literature. Due to its comprehensive scope and chronological structure, however, it perhaps does not delve into each topic as deeply as one might desire. It is thus worth commenting on and adding a few critical notes with respect to each of the topics presented.

II. Neurasthenia and Drifting

The author uses words such as "suffering (*beonmin*)," "neurasthenia (*singyeongsoeyak*)," and "insomnia (*bulmyeon jeung*)" to describe the mental state of youth in the colonial period (90). As the Japanese Empire absorbed Korea, Hong Myeong-hui gave up his studies in Japan due to "neurasthenia" and returned to Korea. Choi Nam-seon, too, was known to suffer from neurasthenia, and Yi Gwang-su, of "mental fatigue (*jeongsin jeok piro*)." As Itagaki Ryuta reveals in his analysis of the colonial experience in Sangju, North Gyeong-buk province, it was not unusual for doctors to diagnose local intellectual youth suffering from "depression" with "neurasthenia."[1] More generally, Frantz Fanon

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[1] Itagaki Ryuta, *Hanguk geundae ui yeoksa minsokji –gyeongbuk sangju ui singminji gyeongheom–*

determined neurasthenia to be a common mental illness among colonial regimes. One can thus reaffirm this tragic consequence of colonialism in the stories of these three Korean intellectuals, a point that is not overlooked by the discerning eye of the author.

What precisely might have caused intellectuals to suffer such an ailment? Yi Gwang-su compared Korea's colonial fate with that of a "girl in the hands of her step-mother" (100). This analogy invokes the image of Kim Ok-ryeon, the protagonist in Choi Jeong-un's *The Birth of the Korean* (*Hangugin ui Tansaeng*), who was able to go to escape the "fires of hell" in Korea to study in Japan with the help of a Japanese general following the loss of her family in the Sino-Japanese War.[2] Under colonial rule, knowledge and learning were never assured. Thus did Choi Nam-seon bemoan, "Alas, there shall be no one for us to call 'senior' [*seonbae*]" (89), and did Yi Gwang-su lose confidence and grow restless passing his days as a teacher at Osan School (88). This state of affairs, engendering instability in academic reproduction, may be referred to as "colonial academism."[3] This would have been one factor underlying the suffocating and mentally straining environment faced by intellectuals at the time.

One of the book's distinguishing characteristics pertains to its treatment of the link between neurasthenia and drifting. Hong Myeong-hui left Korea in the fall of 1912, stopping off in Shanghai before moving on to Southeast Asia, where he lived between 1914 and 1917 in cities such as Singapore. Around the same time, Choi Nam-seon referred to Yi Gwang-su, who was wandering in and around China, as a "drifting duckweed (*bupyeongcho gateun sinse*)" (103). Designating drifting the

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[Ethnographic History of Modern Korea: Colonial Experience in Sangju, North Gyeong-buk Province], trans. Hong Jong-wook and Yi Dae-hwa (Korea: Hyan, 2015), 395.

[2] Choi Jeong-un, *Hangugin ui Tansaeng* [The Birth of the Korean] (Korea: Miji bukseu, 2013).

[3] Hong Jong-wook, "'Singminji akademijeum' ui geuneul, jisigin ui jeonhyang" [The Shadow of 'Colonial Academism, an Intellectual Turn], *Sai* 11 (2011).

"trend of the times (*sidaesajo*)," Yi Gwang-su left Korea with the intention to forget it. But the reality was that no matter where he went he inevitably crossed paths with other expatriate Koreans. If it was neurasthenia and aimless drifting afflicting intellectuals, then, it was diaspora afflicting the general people. Nowadays, many young Koreans dream of leaving Korea, bitterly referring to their homeland as "hell Joseon (Korea)." This invokes a strong feeling of déjà vu with respect to the colonial period.

III. Activities in the Homeland

This book reaffirms the significance of those who remained home to engage in political activities and writing amid the colonial period. Upon Hong Myeong-hui and Choi Nam-seon's release from incarceration, which had resulted from their involvement in the March 1st Movement, Yi Gwang-su returned to Korea from Shanghai. He later recalled in his memoirs, which he wrote after liberation, "I thought it convenient to be abroad when engaging in the revolutionary movement of a sovereign nation, but that one had to be home to engage in the independence movement of a colonized nation" (145). Asserting the "legalism" of such action, he advocated for self-rule in Korea. Meanwhile, Choi Nam-seon served on the Korean History Compilation Committee (*Joseonsa pyeonsuhoe*) and as a member of the Jungchuweon, an advisory council to the Government-General, in the late 1930s. As the support of Yi Gwang-su and Choi Nam-seon for Japan increased with the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, Hong Myeong-hui moved to Changdong, Yangju gun, Gyeonggi province to live close to those who thought as he did, such as Kim Byeong-ro and Jeong In-bo. This was a form of "domestic exile."[4]

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[4] H.S. Hughes, *Pasijeum gwa jisigin: jiseong ui daeidong, 1930~1965 nyeon ui seogu sahoe sasang*

The author borrows the words of Yi Gwang-su to question the significance of these intellectuals' activities in colonial Korea. But he is also quick to condemn the "inexcusable conduct" of Yi Gwang-su with reference to his work for *Maeil Sinbo*, a propaganda organ of the Government-General. Yi Gwang-su's *The Heartless* (Mujeong), serialized in *Maeil Sinbo*, is widely regarded as the first modern Korean novel. If he had by chance not written for *Maeil Sinbo*, then, Korean literary history would undoubtedly have been quite different. Under colonial rule, the modern existed unevenly, and it was often the case that one could experience modernity only by cooperating with the Japanese. Hong Myeong-hui daringly denounced opportunism and led the Singanhoe movement, but even that was not free from criticism regarding "compromise" with colonial realities.[5] Here perhaps one may borrow from Namiki Masahito: The tendency, he argues, to condemn domestic politics and thought while granting legitimacy to the national liberation movement abroad reflects a "refugee conception of history (*mangmyeongja sagwan*)."[6] Even while the differences between Yi Gwang-su's advocacy for self-rule and Hong Myeong-hui's Singanhoe movement are clear, it is also necessary to appreciate the real limitations faced by intellectuals in Korea at the time rather than simply condemning legalism.

[The Sea Change: The Migration of Social Thought, 1930-1965], trans. Kim Chang-hui (Korea: Hanul, 1983), 27.

[5] Han Sang-gu, "1926~1928 nyeon sahoejuui seryeog ui undongnon gwa singanhoe" [Socialist Movement Discourse and Singanhoe, 1926-1928], *Hangusaron* 32 (December 1994).

[6] Namiki Masahito, "Chōsen ni okeru 'shokuminchi kindai-sei'.'shokuminchi kōkyō-sei'. tainichi kyōryoku—shokuminchi seiji-shi.shakai-shi kenkyū no tame no yobi-teki kōsatsu—['Colonial modernity', 'Colonial publicity', Collaboration with Japan in Korea: Preliminary Consideration for Historical Research of Colonial politics and Society]," *Kokusai kōryū kenkyū* 5, Ferisujogakuindaigaku kokusai kōryū gakubu (May 2003), 2.

IV. The "Nation-level Unit"

The author uses the term "nation-level unit (*minjok danwi*)" several times. Perhaps it is one that originates in *My Confessions* (*Na ui gobaek*), in which Yi Gwang-su wrote of the "retreat from the independence movement in the homeland in an attempt to preserve the nation as a unitary entity" (176). The author describes how, after taking a leading role in the likes of the March 1st Movement, Yi Gwang-su and Choi Nam-seon brooded upon the idea of the nation as a unit before ultimately moving away from it. The "nation-level unit" appears to establish the agency of the "nation (*minjok*)." But it looks as if Yi Gwang-su had from the very start been more concerned with "civilization (munmyeong)" than nation. It also appears that this is why the author's analysis, which considers whether Yi Gwang-su was consumed by the concept of civilization, begins to falter (111, 114). Miyajima Hiroshi critically characterizes this ideological bias, which peripheral intellectuals are disposed to, as "civilizationism" and "nationalism."[7]

If one accepts Miyajima's categorization, then Yi Gwang-su tended toward "civilizationism." Writing that "Darwin's theory of evolution is fit to replace the Bible" (107), Yi Gwang-su deferred to the superiority of Western and Japanese civilization, going as far as to embrace fascism. But respect for power is inevitably accompanied by a sense of inferiority. Yi Gwang-su once declared that "he made Koreans the strongest and most glorious people in the world" (117), but "upon encountering a 'true Westerner [he] withered" (95), and he came to lament his fate to be born a Korean. On the other hand, Choi Nam-seon could be seen to have a propensity for "nationalism." Yun Chi-ho described Choe Nam-seon's fixation with uncovering the origins of Korean culture as a "cancerous

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[7] Miyajima Hiroshi, "Sai' o jikaku shita mono no kunō -Chōsen shisō-shi no saikentō-" [Suffering of those who Realized the "Between": A Re-examination of Korean Intellectual History], *Gengo bunka* 15, no. 1, Doshisha University Language and Culture Education Research Center (2012): 21.

degeneration," which was precisely the kind of criticism one espousing civilizationism would levy against one espousing nationalism.

However, Choi Nam-seon's nation did not consist of the people as they were—it was something abstract and malleable. Thus was he able to eventually support the assimilation of Korea into the Japanese Empire under the banner of "one Shinto to unite the East." Neither did Yi Gwang-su look upon the people as a substantive entity. Thus did his mistrust of the people reveal itself in his 1922 treatise, *National Remodeling* (*Minjok gaejoron*). Furthermore, "civilizationism" and "nationalism" lacked any content by which to criticize colonialism. Referring to the Korean nation, Yi Gwang-su stated that it was, "As a population, one of the great nations of the world" (133), and he urged them "not to be like the wild tribesman of Taiwan but to have courage" (120). In addition, one can even detect a form of colonial sensibility in Choi Nam-seon's claim that the Buyeo people had crossed the sea from Korea to found a unified state in Japan (157). As long as one embraced "civilizationism" or "nationalism," it was difficult to draw upon any ethical principles to criticize colonialism not characterized by "survival of the fittest."

Miyajima has pointed out the importance of a "third position," representing neither "civilizationism" nor "nationalism" but the "persistence in peripheral positions." In that case, perhaps it is possible to detect such a position in Hong Myeong-hui's criticism pertaining to Yi Gwang-su and Choi Nam-seon, a point considered in the final section.

V. Family Background and Attitude toward Modernity

Each of these three came from very different backgrounds: Yi Gwang-su grew up under conditions so harsh he would adopt an "orphan consciousness"; Choi Nam-seon had roots in the Jungin class, and his upbringing was so modern that he observed the solar New Year holiday; and Hong Myeong-hui came from an old and distinguished Yangban

family. What made it possible for them to meet and socialize with each other was the time and space in which they lived, known as modernity. This may be the most important point presented in this book, but it is certainly one fully reflected in its title. However, as the author himself points out, the paths of these three were often at variance. Although he enviously referred to Hong Myeong-hui as a "child of an illustrious house" (58), Yi Gwang-su's preoccupation with modern civilization precluded any reasoning criticism in this regard. Meanwhile, Choi Nam-seon became absorbed in a fictional tradition isolated from reality, thus avoiding modernity.

In that case, inheriting a great family name from his father, who committed suicide in opposition to the annexation of Korea, what kind of modernity might Hong Myeong-hui have experienced? Even while suffering from the neurasthenia afflicting many other colonial intellectuals, Hong Myeong-hui actively imbibed Western knowledge and culture and was exposed to new perspectives in his travels around China and Southeast Asia. Upon returning to Korea, he threw himself into the Singanhoe movement after participating in the March 1st Movement, eventually serving two prison sentences as a result. Finally, in the 1930s, he devoted himself to research about Korea. Thus, though this was the Hong Myeong-hui that would recommend the poetry of Byron and the novels of Natsume Sōseki to Yi Gwang su (59), it was also the very same Hong Myeong-hui that never forgot Korea.

Hong Myeong-hui wrote *Im Kkokjong*, colonial Korea's representative historical novel. Regarding this work, he recollected, "No matter the event or character, whether as description or atmosphere, I did not borrow one shred from another, but endeavored to present Korea in its purity." However, he also revealed that this was all "thanks to the new imagery" of Russian literature (188). Kajimura Hideki, who has focused on the resistance of the Japanese and Korean peoples, affirms the importance of "properly digesting the most benevolent aspects of 'modernity,' thus dispelling any inferiority complexes held within the

mind" in order to achieve liberation from imperialism.[8] Hideki's words invoke the thought of Hong Myeong-hui, who proudly stood upon the firm ground of tradition while actively absorbing the fruits of Western civilization, thus developing a critical view of modernity.

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[8] Kajimura Hideki, "Chōsen kara mita meijiishin" [The Meiji Restoration as Seen from Korea], in *Kajimura hideki chosaku-shū dai 1-kan Chōsen-shi to nihonjin* [Kajimura Hideki, vol. 1: Korean History and the Japanese] (Japan: Akashi shoten, 1992 [March 1980]), 147.

The Road to National Ruin, Censorship!
Review of *War and Censorship: Re-illuminating Ishikawa Tatsuzō [Jeonjaeng gwa geomyeol: isikawa dasseujo jaejomyeong]*

By KAWAHARA Michiko. Translated by YI Sang-bok and OH Seong-suk
Korea: Malgeun saenggak, 2017

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I.

What if someone were to oversee the writing of this review? If its writer was put on trial and found guilty due to its content, what manner of work would he produce in the future? ~~Would not it be full of sentences like this one~~? [redacted]? Or perhaps nothing but blank space? What kind of work would that be? Or knowing censorship might bring on his publisher's bankruptcy, what kind of an article might that writer produce?

Meanwhile, what would the publishers and editors—businessmen as well as intellectuals—do to protect the company from this fate? Sensing the watchful eye of the censorship authorities, would they not offer the author some form of "guidelines"? Would not the writer be induced into strenuous labor to avoid, by chance, any violation of the excessively abstract and arbitrary guidelines of the censorship authorities?

Would not there be contradictions with respect to the pursuit of commercial viability and that of conforming to censorship guidelines?

For that matter, what is left in a censored work, replete with omissions and redactions, to engage the reader? Fully aware of the operations of state censorship, publisher approval, and even the "self-censorship" of the author himself, how would the reader respond to such a work? Would not one be inspired to "read between the lines" to decipher the author's original intent? In fact, would not writers, editors, and readers each endeavor to challenge the "prevailing taboos," as stipulated by the censorship authorities, in any way they could?

It is in this respect that a written work's adventure, as it passes from writer to publisher to reader, is quite remarkable. Of course, the "unseen helpers" decisively contributing to the production of a written work inevitably accompany censorship's negative effects.

II.

Ishikawa Tatsuzō (1905-1985) wrote in a time characterized by strict censorship. The first recipient of the Akutagawa Prize and a pioneer in serialized novels published in newspapers, he was a modern Japanese writer perhaps best known for his "slips of the pen" in 1930s Japan, amid the Second Sino-Japanese War. It is Ishikawa Tatsuzō's daring and controversial writings that are the subject of Kawahara Michiko's book, *War and Censorship*.

When the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, Ishikawa Tatsuzō departed for China as a special correspondent for *Chūōkōron* (*Central Review*), a monthly literary magazine. He reported on soldiers stationed in Shanghai and Nanjing before returning to Japan to write the long-form novel, *The Living Soldiers* (*Ikite wiru heitai*). Intended for publication in the March 1938 edition of *Chūōkōron*, this novel vividly described life among a military unit as it moved from the North of China toward Nanjing. The unit was composed of recruits who had been

teachers, Buddhist monks, and doctors. Ishikawa described how they succumbed to mental and physical breakdown amid battlefield training. He also reported on depraved and incompetent behavior among them, relating scenes of pillaging, femicide, "comfort stations," mental derangement, friendly fire, and so on.

Knowing that such a novel would fail to comply with censorship authorities, the *Chūōkōron* editors opted to redact and remove many of the book's contents themselves. Nevertheless, the Home Ministry prohibited the book's publication. In fact, Ishikawa and the *Chūōkōron* publishers and editors were charged with "disturbing the peace," in violation of the "Newspaper Law," and were eventually found guilty and sentenced in the courts.

III.

Kawahara Michiko, who has also been a journalist, reveals that he began work on his book in the aftermath of the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, wherein he encountered a trend in "self-censorship" among Japanese journalists. His sense of identity as a journalist undoubtedly affected his uncovering and analysis of Ishikawa's struggle with censorship. Kawahara met with Ishikawa's eldest son, Ishikawa Sakae, whereby he procured and publicized documents related to Ishikawa's trial record, journal, and testimony, as well as the Newspaper Law and other unpublished documents. He was also able to deeply explore Ishikawa's suffering.

It is this aspect of Kawahara's account that is particularly significant. Ordinarily, research pertaining to censorship is limited to analyzing censorship guidelines or inferring instances of censorship via documentary evidence. Kawahara's work transcends these limitations with reference to materials allowing the reader to attain a sense of the thoughts, feelings, and reaction Ishikawa had with regard to his encounter with censorship.

IV.

Another important aspect of Kawahara's book pertains to the manner in which censorship, ironically, is revealed to undermine itself. In a time of war, the Japanese state prohibited, regulated, and concealed a vast array of information related to the war in the name of protecting "military secrets." Information with respect to rural impoverishment, national financial ruin, war crimes, and lost battles was also censored based on the fear that it might disturb the "peace." The Japanese people were thus mobilized to participate in a war they knew very little about. But did the state successfully cover the eyes and ears of the people? And did this effort truly serve to strengthen their patriotism?

The contradictions and irrationalities generated by the war would not go unnoticed by policing words and letters alone. Above all else, the disparity between what was said and what was perceived deepened in this censored reality. Censoring the truths conveyed in Ishikawa Tatsuzō's novel, tantamount to a war correspondent's report, rather served to sew doubt and suspicion throughout Japanese society. Absurd rumors spread like wildfire, exacerbating misgivings regarding what the war was truly about.

In addition, soldiers returning from the field were shocked to learn the degree to which information regarding the war was being covered up at home. The "casual manner" of the average citizen, in contrast with bleak scenes of battle crowded with dead, aroused an uncanny rage in these soldiers. Considering these conditions, Ishikawa Tatsuzō stated at his trial: "When Nanjing fell, I could not but take part in the festive atmosphere of the lantern procession. But I also desired to see the frontline because I believed I had to convey to the people the truth of this war." Ishikawa thus wrote his novel describing the horrors of the war in an effort to reduce the cognitive disparity between the homeland and the frontline. However, the state that habitually employed censorship and concealment bluntly denied his "earnest patriotism." Above all else,

Ishikawa was dismayed to be condemned as unpatriotic by the state.

V.

Why did Japan suffer defeat in the Pacific War? Why did it relentlessly march down the road to ruin? Many researchers in the field of "Japanese Studies" have preoccupied themselves with these questions. It was the wartime policy of the Japanese state to mobilize, control, and censor countless literary and media figures under the banner of a "patriotic press." This was a Japanese state in which words and writing were converted into propaganda en masse. It is an ironic story, but amid the production of such propaganda society came to be characterized only by greater opacity, distrust, and rumors. Would it be an exaggeration to claim that censorship of the free human spirit caused the state and society to wither away and embark on the road to ruin?

VI.

Unfortunately, this was not a scenario limited to wartime Japan. Following Japan's defeat, though expected to grant unconditional and unrestricted freedoms, the "liberal" US occupying forces quickly took up the reins of censorship. In fact, censorship was then conducted through methods even more elaborate and cunning, with all evidence of redaction and erasure removed before publication.

What can be said of censorship today? Revelations regarding blacklists and antiquated rhetoric used for cultural control at the very heart of 21st century Korea have shocked the Korean people. There are those that stubbornly deny the power of free expression to enrich and empower the nation. There are also those who voluntarily "surrender" to such conditions, asserting the need to adjust to "censorship guidelines" defining commercial viability in the publishing and broadcasting marketplaces.

Kawahara Michiko's *War and Censorship* is a study of events unfolding under the extreme conditions characterizing wartime as much as it is a simple and honest portrayal of Ishikawa Tatsuzō's misfortune. And without a doubt, it is a work revealing censorship's capacity to engender self-regulation and the ruin of society and the state.

Park Chung Hee and Modern Korea: The Roots of Militarism 1866-1945

By Carter J. ECKERT

Moscow: Nauka Press, 2014

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London School of Economics and Political Science

Park Chung Hee ruled over Korea through the 1960s and 1970s and became one of the most important and controversial figures in Korea's Cold War history. The central question of Eckert's book, however, pertains to the period prior: How did this leader come to be? In order to answer this question, the author divides the book into two parts. The first part discusses historical context, looking back to the 19th century to find the origins of militarism in Korea. The second part examines Park's life up until 1945 in order to understand how his worldview was shaped

The first two chapters explain changes in Korean attitudes toward the military. As briefly explained in chapter one, Koreans looked down upon martial virtue throughout the Joseon dynasty. Whether one was the highest government official or lowliest commoner, in fact, military officials were an object of scorn. However, this attitude underwent a dramatic change in the 19th century. A number of events, including naval collusion with France and the dispatch of the Observation Missions to

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Japan, convinced Korean leaders of the importance of military might.

Chapter two seeks to situate such attitudinal change in the context of worldwide events. Martial virtue pervaded everyday life in Europe and the U.S. at the time, and it was against this backdrop that Korean bureaucrats and intellectuals started to emphasize the importance of the military. By the 1920s, Koreans were taking the initiative to promote martial virtue, though the Japanese sought to exclude Koreans from any forms of military education. This point highlights that even before Japan "imposed" militarism after the Manchurian Crisis, Korea was already proactively embracing martial virtues.

The remaining chapters discuss the significance of three institutions for the development of Park Chung Hee: *Daegu botong hakkyo* (Daegu Normal School), the Manchurian Military Academy (MMA) and the Japanese Military Academy (JMA). Chapter three discusses Park's life at Daegu Normal School, where he taught after graduating. While life there was extremely regimented, Park was actually very fond of such a lifestyle. After the Manchurian Crisis, there was a greater need of military officers and Koreans were given the opportunity to receive military education. Unsurprisingly, Park enrolled at the MMA, and later the JMA, and was eventually recognized as a "model cadet."

Chapter four presents an analysis of how the MMA cultivated a sense of special identity and intimacy with respect to the imperial institution as well as martial virtue among cadets. The academy was located in a remote area, physically isolated from the rest of the world. This separation was reinforced by the use of different attire and language, which gave the cadets a sense of unique social standing. Close links were forged with the imperial institution through regular visits by the emperor and high military officials to the academy. Most importantly, the cadets were constantly exposed to warrior traditions through books and media, whereby the military was glorified.

Chapter five discusses how political upheavals were revered by the general public in the 1930s and how "rebellion" became an important

part of Park's identity. Beginning with the Meiji restoration—essentially a rebellion against the existing government—Japan had experienced a number of insurrections in the 1930s, including the Manchurian incident, the May 15 coup in 1932 and the February 26 coup in 1936. The participants of these incidents were regarded as "patriots" and equated with the leaders of the Meiji restoration. Koreans also viewed rebellion positively. While the general public criticized the 1884 coup (*gapsin jeong byeon*) for its failure, the action itself was condoned. Furthermore, Korean newspapers depicted the February 26 coup in 1936 rather favorably.

Chapter six reveals that Park had an anti-capitalist attitude, linking this to his training at the MMA. Socialist, nationalist and communist ideas—all of which were against capitalism—were rampant in the MMA. The Japanese military itself had traditionally looked down on capitalism, and this view only worsened with the great depression; the military blamed the capitalists for Japan's economic collapse. This attitude was also prominent among the young officers who led the coups in the 1930s, many of whom ended up teaching at the MMA. They believed in a state-controlled economy, emphasized heavy industries, and prioritized state over individual interests.

Chapter seven discusses how the MMA emphasized action and willpower. Having been influenced by a certain school of the Prussian military, the Japanese army preferred aggressive action rather than defense. The MMA itself was staffed by war veterans embodying such principles and its cadets were taught that any material shortcomings could be overcome through willpower. Unsurprisingly, Park would reiterate the importance of action and willpower during his leadership in the 1960s and 1970s.

The last chapter explains how punishment, acute attention to details and absolute obedience were part of cadet life. Multi-tiered surveillance not only involved superiors closely observing cadets but cadets observing each other. This practice was taught as a virtue and passed on

from one class to another.

This book is an important contribution not only to Korean Studies but also cultural history and Cold War history as it seeks to understand the origins of an important figure in Cold War Korea and his political ideals. Notably, the author draws extensively from archives in Korea, Japan, China and Russia to present a more comprehensive depiction of the conditions in Japan, Manchuria and Korea at the time. While Park himself is no longer alive and did not leave behind enough records to allow verification of certain aspects of his life (such as his past ties with socialism), the author meets this challenge through use of eye-witness accounts of Park's colleagues and those who lived through that particular era. Finally, recognizing that Park Chung Hee remains an important topic, it provides a welcome addition to the yet insufficient breadth of English literature in this regard.

The book also serves to arouse the reader's curiosity with respect to the life of Park Cheong Hee. The attempts to link events in Korea with trends in Europe and the U.S., for example, lead one to wonder if any European or American figures might have influenced Park's worldview or Korean militarism in the manner of Japan. And since the book only covers his life up until 1945, one may wonder what exactly Park did when he became leader of Korea and how the arguments in the book are related to such actions. Perhaps the answers to these questions and more will be revealed in the second volume of this ongoing project.

Ecological-Environmental History of Joseon [Joseon ui saengtae hwangyeong sa]

By KIM Dong Jin
Seoul: Pureunyeoksa: 2017

—

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> A greater part of historical tradition shared by Koreans today is based on memories newly invented in the fifteen to nineteenth centuries. Such memories are closely related to changes in …the ecological/environmental conditions of the Korean Peninsula, which changed drastically in the fifteen to nineteenth centuries…However, there is little research on the overall characteristics of such changes, which regulated the everyday lives of Koreans. This is why we need to pay attention to the ecological and environmental history of Korea. (7)

This book is written with a unique historical perspective focusing on the interplay between humans and nature. Divided into four parts, it seeks to weave an ecological-environmental dimension into the understanding of premodern Korean thought and practices.

Part one, "Macroecology: Wildlife and Domestic Animals," examines the fauna of the Goryeo and Joseon periods, paying special attention to animals that had significant meanings for people, either as wild animals or livestock—such as tigers, leopards, deer, buffalos and cows. It analyzes their geographical distribution, trends in population

variation, and interactions with people. Part two, “Farmland Reclamation: River banks (川防) and Slash-and-burn Fields (火田),” examines the two major ways of acquiring agricultural land that were widely practiced during the Joseon period. Part three, “Mountains, Forests and Streams (山林川澤): Zone Protection (封禁) and Public-private Collaborative Governance (與民共之),” provides an overview of the status and use of Joseon’s forests and streams that functioned as the center of community lives. Part four, “Microecology: Biological Transaction and Infectious Diseases,” describes the positive, as well as negative, interactions between humans and microorganisms. Overall, the book analyzes long-standing traditions and practices from a twenty-first century perspective, as the author mentions in the prologue: “By looking into past human activities and ecological-environmental changes, I sought to find a historical answer to a popular question about the future, believing that the answers to future problems lie in the past.”

For instance, in describing Joseon’s use of lumber, not only does the author look at kinds of trees and how they were used, but he also identifies demographic and social factors that affected the use of lumber and their impact on forest ecosystems:

> The proportion of coniferous tree used as building materials saw a dramatic increase during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, a period of much development in Joseon. During this period, population increases led to more clearing of farmlands and the formation of new communities around them. These communities, in turn, allowed easier access to, and accelerated damage of, the surrounding forests. As people used the forest to raise domesticated animals and gather food, firewood, and fertilizers, various organic matters were lost, lowering the fertility of the forest soil. (150)

While such insights are surely facilitated by the author’s ability to access and understand materials written in classical Chinese, his will and

capacity to bridge historical and environmental studies and the sheer time he likely spent in this intellectual pursuit are also evident. The book's rich characterization of the ecological status of Joseon is assembled from 116 different primary materials written in classical Chinese, including *Nongsajikseol* (Explanation of Farming 農事直設) and *Sejong Sillok Jiriji* (Cultural Geography Recorded in the Annals of King Sejong 世宗實錄地理志). Primary sources also encompass various documents ranging from policy recommendations by Joseon bureaucrats to a book of poetry written by Joseon literati. Believing that Joseon historical records were produced according to the principle of "*Suribujak* (Describing without fabricating 述而不作)," the author successfully encapsulates the essence of such technical descriptions and delicate emotions.

As a result, the reader can understand, for example, how wetlands, flood plains and forests, long the domain of wildlife, transformed into spaces where human communities might obtain the necessities of everyday life during the Joseon period. One of the founding principles of Joseon, namely, "Sharing the benefits of nature through public-private collaborative governance (山林川澤與民共之)," resulted in the dramatic expansion of human living spaces where "the barking of the dog resonates with the crow of the cock (鷄狗之聲相應)" and "the smokes of neighborhood cooking fires mingle (人煙相望)."

This was a process of technological innovation characterized by explosive increases in the use of animal labor in agriculture—increasing 150 times from the early to late Joseon period, right before annexation by Japan. Meanwhile, the competition over living space became intense. In early Joseon, for instance, there were frequent clashes between humans and tigers on the flood plains, a traditional wildlife habitat gradually turning into rich agricultural ground (97-98). But the reclamation of flood plains, hitherto forbidden zones for humans, also allowed for such bucolic moments as "looking over the spring streams from the locust tree just outside the East gate" (167; an excerpt from Yi Mungeon, *Mukje Ilgi*

(Mukje Diary, 默齋日記), March 27, 1561).

Perhaps most indicative of the book's significance, it reminds one of *Green History of the World* (1991) by Clive Ponting, a pioneering book in the field of global environmental history. In particular, the two works each present a narrative of humans dominating the natural ecosystem as they make progress in agricultural technologies, using tools and domesticated animals, and the backlash resulting from destroyed wildlife in the form of micro-bacterial diseases.

In sum, the book presents an extensive analysis of Korean environmental history focusing on ecological changes during the Joseon period that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative data framed by an interdisciplinary and consilient perspective. However, readers may find the work ends rather abruptly, without presenting a conclusive analysis of human-nature interaction. More recent works on environmental history, such as Brian Fagan's *The Little Ice Age: How Climate Made History 1300-1850* (2001), suggest that the relationship between humans and the environment is not linear-causal but interactive. Although *Ecological-Environmental History of Joseon* does not explicitly claim that human impacts are the sole factor affecting the environment, it pays little attention to other long-term variables, such as periodic climate change.

Perhaps if the book incorporated a concluding chapter suggesting the diversity of environmental factors shaping human-nature interaction, a more comprehensive analysis may have been possible, neatly tying together the descriptions and analyses of each chapter presented in this otherwise seminal book on Korean environmental history.

Notes for Contributors

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