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**Korea Branch, Royal Asiatic Society President’s Report for 1967**

*Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Society, December 13, 1967*

Three score and seven years ago, the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was founded by a few interested foreigners resident in Korea who were concerned with scholarly pursuit of things Korean. Since that time, the nature of the society has undergone considerable transformation, the activities of the organization have expanded, and yet the purposes for which the society was founded have remained constant in spite of two world wars, the Korean War, thirty-six years of Japanese occupation, and a changing spectrum of governments in Korea: imperial, colonial, dictatorial and democratic.

From a small elite group of foreigners who occasionally gathered together to spread knowledge of Korea in English, we have evolved into a considerably expanded organization serving a variety of needs; we have a sizable Korean membership and an even larger Korean audience, although much still remains to be done to fulfill our potential role in Korea; and we reach today an international clientele, holding the attention of scholars worldwide concerned with Korean affairs.

An annual report of activities can only be understood within the context of what has been done before. What we have accomplished could not have been done without the assistance of the officers and council members of previous years, and without the participation of the membership as a whole in our activities. The following summary should not therefore be interpreted in isolation. What has been done is the product of a long gestation period, and of longer plan- [page154] ning. It will hopefully provide another layer to the foundation on which greater plans and programs will be built in the coming years.

Recently I have been reading some materials on Korean history, and I came across the following excerpt from an article by that eminent western scholar on Korea, Homer Hulbert, in *The Korea Review* of August, 1901:

“The publication of the first volume of the Transactions of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society is an event of prime importance in the literary history of Korea. It is the first time that a distinct and avowedly critical study of Korean life and thought has been begun. There have been several popular attempts at placing the Korean before the world in his true colors, but we have

here the first serious attempt to deal with the facts from a purely critical standpoint. In the past we have seen in print many partial discussions and many exaggerated descriptions of things Korean. They have been interesting and entertaining but the object of the society whose publication we are now considering is something different from mere entertainment. The society stands for a just, balanced, dispassionate discussion of the many phases of Korean life. It is not the province of this society to make facts square with theories, but to make theories an outgrowth of a careful and exhaustive study of the facts. In cases where an inductive method is necessary an hypothesis should be adhered to just so long as it affords the best explanation of what few, isolated facts there may be in hand, and no longer. The Champion of a theory is a sorry spectacle to the true scientist. Facts are hard cash while theories are mere promissory notes, of ten discredited.”

We are still working towards the goals set forth in that article, but we have had an outstanding year in relation to [page 155] the publications of the society. Two volumes of the Transactions have appeared: Volume 42, long overdue, was published in January 1967, and Volume 43 on the New Religions of Korea has appeared today. Volume 44 is presently being assembled, and promises to be an exciting issue including, among other articles, the first detailed study of the administration of the Yi Dynasty ceramic industry in English.

We have also published four books during the current year. The first two books appeared in our Monograph Series: Professor Hahm Pyong-choon’s *The Korean Political Tradition and Law: Essays in Korean Law and Legal History*, and Dr. Spencer Palmer’s *Korea and Christianity: The Problem of Identification with Tradition*. Three thousand copies of Dr. Palmer’s book have been printed, and 2,000 copies of Professor Hahm’s. Both are selling steadily, and as yet we are just beginning to tap the overseas market for these works.

We have also published two volumes of the newly-inaugurated Korea Handbook Series of works designed for more popular consumption. The first of these, Dr. Paul Crane’s *Korean Patterns*, was originally published on August25, 1967 and the first edition of 3,000 copies was sold out in just over two months; a second edition of 2,000 copies has been printed, and is selling well. The second volume in the Handbook Series was Lee O. Young’s *In This Earth and In That Wind*: *This is Korea*, which was published in an edition of 3,000 copies. We hope that these two popular works will continue to be successful over the years, and will help finance our academic publishing program. Our plans for the future are exciting. We hope that during 1968 we will be able to publish the third of the Monograph Series, Professor Zo Ki-zun’s *Economic History of Korea*, translated by Mr. Morgan Clippinger. We also hope that the third volume in our Handbook Series, Dr. Allen Clark’s *Historic Seoul*, will appear during this year. [page 156] We have also arranged with Tuttle publishers in Tokyo to reprint, under Society auspices, a paperback edition of Bishop Richard Rutt’s *Korean Works and Days*, which will soon be available. Other manuscripts are already in hand and are being considered. Members are urged to suggest to the Council any possible manuscripts for publication in either series.

During 1967, the Society conducted 20 lecture programs. A list of these programs has been distributed to the membership and forms an attachment to this report. Approximately2,000 individuals have attended these meetings. Both members of the society and distinguished guests have lectured. We hope that they have helped provide materials for a better informed understanding of Korean affairs.

During the present year we have conducted 26 tours and special events, ranging from one day to five day trips. 1,153 people participated in this aspect of our program.

As of this date, the Society membership stands at 412, of whom 351 are resident in Korea, and the remainder are overseas members. We have attempted in the past year to increase our Korean membership, and it has grown from perhaps 5% to approximately 20% of our resident members. We hope that in succeeding years we can increase our contribution to our Korean audience and provide services to them which will encourage greater participation in our program. It has been my desire to try be of service to the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1967 and in previous years since my arrival in Korea. While I will be leaving Korea in January 1968, I hope to keep in close touch with the Society and its activities, and to be of service to the organization in Washington, D.C., where I will assist in Society activities for our overseas members.

David Steinberg

President

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**1967 Tours And Special Events**

The Society, during 1967, sponsored 26 tours and special events, ranging from one-day trips to long weekends. The dates, places visited, and number of participants follow:

Feb. 24-26: Ski four to Taegwallyong (25)

March 31-April 3: First Cheju Tour (27)

April 7-9： Cherry Blossom Tour to Chinhae and Chinju (90)

April 9: Nine Kings’ Tombs and Kumgok (50)

April 13-16: Second Cheju Tour (23)

April 30: Hoeam Temple (50)

May 7: Chong-myo (half-day tour) (60)

May 21: Nam Han Fortress (40)

May 26: Moon Watching Tour to Pogwang

Temple (50)

June 10: Kodal-sa and Silluk-sa (40)

June 18: North Mountain Fortress (50)

June 23: Pulgogi 011 the Han River (130)

June 24: Kanghwa Island (50)

July 1-4: Third Cheju Tour (26)

September 10: Ch’il-gung (80)

September 16: Hungguk Temple and ROK Military Academy (50)

September 24: Nam Han Fortress (30)

September 30: King Sejong’s Tomb and Silluk-sa (40)

October 7: Suwon and Yongju-sa (50)

October 21-24: Mt. Sorak (22)

October 22: Ch’angdok Palace (50)

October 28: Songgyun-gwan (10)

October 29: North Mountain Fortress (30)

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November 11: Chong-myo (30)

November 19: Temples around Seoul City (50)

**1967 Meetings**

The dates of 1967 meetings and special programs, the speakers, their subjects and places of meeting were as follows:

11 January (Wednesday)—Annual RAS Meeting, Electionof 1967 officers. NMG

1 February (Wednesday) —Panel Discussion(Dr. Chung Bom-mo, Prof. Hong Sung-chick, Prof. Kim Kyu-taik, David Steinberg)

“Problems of Political Socialization in Korea.” NMC

22 February (Wednesday)—Mr. Frank P. Baldwin

“The Korean Independence Movement.”NMC

15 March (Wednesday)— Dr. Han Tae-dong

“The Diamond Sutra—A Search for Enlightenment.” NMC

29 March (Wednesday)― Dr. Daniel Lee

“Some Problems in the Economic Development of Korea.” NMC

19 April (Wednesday)— Mr. Kevin O’Donnell

“The Peace Corps in Korea.” NMC

3 May (Wednesday)―Mr. Choo Yo-han

“Korea’s Economic Strategy for

the Next Two Decades.” NMC

17 May (Wednesday)— Dr. David Chung

“Matthew Ricci and His Influence

on Korea.” YMCA

24 May (Wednesday)—Prof. J. Chester Cheng

“Communism and China.” NMC

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24 June (Wednesday)—Mr. Lane E. Holdcroft

“Progress in Agricultural Development in Korea.” NMC

28 June (Wednesday) —Dr. Donald Frantz, Jr.

“Impressions of Korean Culture and the Korean People Through

Poetry.” NMC

30 August (Wednesday) —Mr. Boris Kazimiroff

“A Visit to Ceylon.” NMC

6 Sept. (Wednesday)—Mr. Vipin Chandra

“Indian Industrial Development.” NMC

21 Sept. (Thursday)—Dr. Robert A. Scalapino

“North Korea Today and the Communist Revolution in Asia.” YWCA

4 Oct. (Wednesday)—Dr. Kim Ok-gill

“Korean Women.” NMC

25 Oct. (Wednesday)—Dr. Kim Che-won

“Treasure from the Sakyamuni Pagoda at Pulguk-sa, Kyongju.” NMC

8 Nov. (Wednesday)— Dr. Sohn Pow-key

“A Prehistoric Excavation in Korea.” NMC

22 Nov. (Wednesday)—Bishop Richard Rutt

“Poetry of Chong Chol.” NMC

6 Dec. (Wednesday)—Mr. Arthur Kinsler

“Korean Shamanism.” NMC

13 Dec. (Wednesday)—Annual Meeting and Concert by Mr. Hwang Byung-ki. NMC

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The Annual General Meeting of the Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was held at the Auditorium of the National Medical Center on Wednesday, 13 December 1967, at 7:30 p.m. At that time an election of officers and members of the Council for 1968 was held. The meeting was followed by an unusual demonstration of the Kayagum by Mr. Hwang Byung-ki.

The 1967 members of the Council and officers were as follows:

Mr. David I. Steinberg President The Asia Foundation

Dr. Paik Nak-chun Vice-President Yonsei University

Dr. Lee Sun-keun // Kyung Hee University

Mr. Robert A. Kinney Secretary- Treasurer UNC/USFK

Dr. Kenneth Bunce Member USIS

The Honorable Roger Chambard // Embassy of France

Mr. Cho Min-ha // Academy House

Dr. Paul S. Crane // Presbyterian Medical Center

The Honorable Franz Ferring // The German Embassy

Dr. Kim Che-won // The National Museum

Mr. Lee Ku // 8th Army

Dr. Lee Yong-he // Seoul National University

Mr. Carl Miller // Bank of Korea

Dr. Mill Byung-key // Korea University

Dr. Samuel Moffett // Presbyterian Mission

Dr. Spencer J. Palmer // Brigham Young University

Bishop Richard Rutt // Anglican Church

Dr. Sohn Pow-key // Yonsei University

Mr. Benjamin B. Weems // 8th Army