

TRANSACTIONS



ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

Korea Branch

Volume 88 – 2013

COVER: The seal-shaped emblem of the RAS-KB consists of the following Chinese characters: 權 (top right), 域 (bottom right), 菁 (top left), 莪 (bottom left), pronounced Kŭn yŏk Ch'ŏng A in Korean. The first two characters mean “the hibiscus region,” referring to Korea, while the other two (“luxuriant mugwort”) are a metaphor inspired by Confucian commentaries on the Chinese *Book of Odes*, and could be translated as “enjoy encouraging erudition.”

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of the
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
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Czechoslovakia in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission

Personal memoirs and experiences of the first Czech and Slovak
soldiers and diplomats on the Korean peninsula *

Alex Švamberk

Czechoslovakia played an important role after the Korean War to help keep the truce on the Korean peninsula and to fulfill the Korean Armistice Agreement. Czechoslovakia was one of four countries in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC), which ensured that both sides would respect the ceasefire terms. It continued to monitor the ceasefire until 1993, when it was forced to leave its post by the DPRK. This ended uninterrupted presence of Czech and Slovak members in NNSC, which – though with little publicity home and abroad – lasted almost 40 years.

This study will trace the experiences of the first Czechs who served with NNSC and shortly existing Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) in their early years, from the spring of 1953 into 1956, the period that covers the first two Czechoslovak deployments to the Korean peninsula.

In 1953, when the fighting in Korea ceased, both warring parties proposed two representatives to the newly established NNSC. The United

* An abbreviated version of this text was published as “Czechoslovakia and the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in the 1950s. Work and Experiences of the First Czechs and Slovak Helping to Keep the Truce on the Korean Peninsula” in: Hong, Seungju – Olša, jr., Jaroslav – Sa, Jongmin (eds.): *The Korean Peninsula after the Armistice as Seen by Czechoslovak Delegates to the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission 1953-1956*. Seoul: Seoul Museum of History 2013. A list of the photographers will be found at the end of the text.

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Nations Command (UNC), under US leadership, chose Switzerland and Sweden; while the Korean People's Army (KPA) (of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, DPRK) and the Chinese People's Volunteers Army (PVA) selected Czechoslovakia and Poland. The same four countries, under the chairmanship of India, participated in the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC). Its duty was to guarantee the right of the prisoners of war to freely decide whether they would return in their homelands or stay in the countries in which they already had been interned.



The Commission at work (FAB)

Both Commissions had a very important role: to supervise the withdrawal and exchange of soldiers as well as the removal and exchange of armaments and army materials in ten ports of entry created in accordance with the armistice agreement. Five – Manpo, Sinanju (now Anju), Chongjin, Sinuiju, and Hungnam – lay in North; and five – Daegu, Incheon, Busan, Gunsan, and Gangneung – were in the South. In each was a Neutral Nations' Inspection Team with members from all four countries. Members counted departing United Nations soldiers and Chinese volunteers along with their weapons. They checked the exchange of arms to be sure that the warring sides had not replaced any with more modern weapons and inspected supplies so that neither side attempted to conceal arms in them. They not only carried out routine checks but also investigated claims about infringements of the armistice agreement. Mobile inspection teams a. o. visited North Korean airports, where they

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searched for secretly imported MiG fighters. They also investigated reports of a dogfight over North Korea and other breaches of airspace on one or the other side.

The NNSC originally was to carry out its work for a few months or at most a few years until North and South Korea had signed a peace agreement, but it still exists sixty years after the war. Several hundred Czechoslovaks were members of the NNSC over time, most of them in the early years, when amount of work was much greater. The largest deployment was the first, which had 300 participants. The tasks and size of the commission changed as majority of foreign soldiers left the Korean peninsula. When the commission started on 1 August 1953, it had ten Neutral Nations' Inspection Teams (NNIT), one in every port of entry, and ten Mobile Inspection Teams. In each team were deputies of the four participating countries. In September 1955, reductions in the number of ports from ten to six meant that there were only three inspection teams on each side of the demilitarized zone. Then, each team had only one country that represented the North and the South instead of all four countries. On 9 June 1956, another reduction to the commission left only 14 members from each country. The inspection teams ceased to function, and the NNSC only studied materials it received from the Military Armistice Commission (MAC). The next reduction in 1960 left only nine members from each country, and the reduction in 1978 resulted in only six members and as of now, there are only two members from each from the remaining two countries (Sweden and Switzerland) permanently residing in the DMZ.

The NNSC gained a great deal of international respect. It was an honor for Czechoslovakia to participate in the work of the commission because it was a multinational body that the international community and the United Nations accepted. Czechoslovakia and Poland sometimes faced criticism that they were not genuinely neutral, like Sweden or Switzerland, and even that they served as the extended hand of Moscow. It is important to understand, however, that neutrality meant nothing more than the fact that the selected country had not fought in the Korean War. The United Nations itself was partial since the UN Security Council had agreed to send international forces to the Korean peninsula to help the South to repulse the North Korean invasion. In the NNSC, Czechoslovakia and Poland defended primarily the interests of the North Koreans and Chinese volunteers, and in many respects, in the similar way the Swiss and Swedish members stood up for Americans, that is, the United Nations Command.

Establishing the Commissions

In the first weeks of 1952, during the long negotiations to establish a truce in Korea, the diplomats finally accepted the four countries, including Czechoslovakia, which would participate in overseeing the ceasefire. During the negotiations both sides made big concessions. The Americans agreed that North Korea could have a contested military airport. North Korea and China abandoned the idea that the Soviet Union was to be one of the observers of the ceasefire and instead nominated Czechoslovakia and Poland. Simultaneously, the UNC chose Switzerland and Sweden to be on the NNSC.

In April 1952, the Czechoslovak authorities began to prepare a special group they were to deploy in Korea. The army inaugurated so-called “Action B” – under the leadership of Brigadier General František Bureš (1905-?) – and secret “Unit 9999”. At the peak of the Cold War, everything surrounding the mission was classified, even though the Czechoslovaks were to participate in an international body. The Czechoslovak organizers not only selected diplomats, officers, and translators for the mission but also drivers, radio operators, guards, and soldiers who were maintenance specialists, cooks, and even cobblers.

The training started on 1 May 1952, at the army base in Komorní Hrádek, and even the chosen participants did not know the full nature of their preparations. The translator Václav Pražák (1928-), who shortly before started his compulsory military service, remembered the hectic atmosphere: “Suddenly there was a phone call from the personnel officer in a department in Tachov ‘You’re going tomorrow to Smaragd. You don’t know what it is? It is the Ministry of National Defense.’” Pražák had to take a test in English and complete an interview. In the end, a captain told him, “This would be a task [an opportunity] for you to do something for the republic. I cannot tell you what, I cannot tell you when, I cannot tell you how and where, but the republic needs is calling you. When you nod [in agreement], gradually you will learn what and how.” Because Pražák agreed, in a short while he again was called.

Suddenly came the order to go to the Central Army Building in Prague. There was a horde gathered together of those who were to become interpreters, but I still did not know that. We got on a bus, it was already evening, and we departed. We did not know where we were going. We drove about 40 kilometers, and there was a castle. It was Komorní Hrádek, the military recreation center, where they brought together the future interpreters. The next day, we had parachute training, we climbed,

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we shot with pistols We said to ourselves that they will throw us somewhere as paratroopers, as saboteurs. Then they told us “pack, we’re leaving.” They took us to Ruzyně to the barracks. Around us were soldiers, who said, “hey, that is the group that is going to Korea.”

The army carefully prepared the soldiers for their mission. They received a great number of warnings about protecting themselves from dangerous diseases, and they learned English. In September, after the diplomatic talks had reached an impasse, they had to return their newly-tailored uniforms and their equipment to an army warehouse because the authorities had dissolved the military group. The draft of the armistice agreement was completed in September, but without articles regarding prisoners of war. North Korea and China demanded that all soldiers return to their native countries. South Korea, meanwhile, wanted to offer all Koreans the possibility of staying in their country and wanted to give all the Chinese volunteers who wished the opportunity of going to Taiwan. The UNC maintained that only 70,000 North Koreans and 5,100 Chinese volunteers wanted to return to their native countries. Beijing and Pyongyang strongly objected. The negotiations reopened in the spring of 1953, after India proposed to relocate all prisoners of war into the demilitarized zone under the protection of the newly established NNRC. There the POWs were to state their intention to return to the North or to stay in the South.

In April, the Czechoslovak defense minister, Alexej Čepička (1910-1990) issued an order to reactivate the special group for the NNSC. On 3 April, he noted the following:

Based on the recommendations that I received through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on the basis of the changed international situation, which gives legitimate hope for an early ceasefire in Korea, I ordered the activation of a special group for the control of the armistice in Korea. The formation of that special group began on 1 April 1953. This group will be the same size and built in the same manner as it was last year, that is, in conjunction and with the help of some members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This group will have supplies for a period of four months (aside from fuels and lubricants).

Some of the members had to be called up anew because they had completed their two-year compulsory military service. Everything was done quickly. The defense minister added that “assuming that no other complications occur and that the reservists can be called [to active duty], I expect the assembling of personnel will be complete on 20 April 1953.

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After the final preparations are verified, it will be possible to count on the group being at full alert on 25 April.” The soldiers again were vaccinated, and they studied the draft of the armistice agreement.

The warring sides signed the armistice on 8 June 1953 in Panmunjom in what became the heart of the Demilitarized Zone. The NNRC, which included Czechoslovakia, Poland, Switzerland, and Sweden with India as the presiding country, was to solve the issue of repatriation. North Korea agreed in part because of the fear of renewed air raids on infrastructure. Nevertheless, problems with prisoners of war erupted again at the end of the month when 27,000 POWs “broke away” from camps in South Korea. Sweden and Switzerland pulled out of the NNRC and only returned to the commission when the United States guaranteed that South Korea will obey fully the armistice agreement. Negotiations resumed on 10 July, and on 20 July the demarcation lines were established.



A few members of the first group of Czechoslovak NNSC and NNRC in full arms before their departure from Prague for Panmunjom (July 1953) (SAP)

The commander of the Czechoslovak team, General Bureš, issued the order on 17 July to activate the special troops for Korea. The chronicle of the first contingent of departing soldiers described events between 19 and 20 July: “The order was given to load the main transport. The comrades fulfilled it enthusiastically, perfectly, and in less time than the plan had intended. That work was not so simple. After all, we loaded 73 Tatra trucks full of cargo, 25 Willies [lend-lease Jeeps from the Second World War], two ambulances, three staff busses, four Tatraplán cars, and 25 motorcycles. We even took vehicles for the repatriation commission.” On Wednesday, 22 July, 270 soldiers left Prague.

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First group of Czechoslovak NNSC and NNRC members march through Prague before their final departure to Korea (July 1953) (SAP)

They had to travel for more than three weeks on the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Trans-Manchurian Line. The transport crossed the border with China at Zabaikalsk/Manzhouli, continued to Harbin, and finally reached the border with Korea on the Yalu River.

An advanced team of Czechoslovak representatives left Beijing for Korea on 26 July, just one day before the signing of the armistice agreement. The diplomat, turned Lieutenant Colonel, Mečislav Jablonský (1925-2010), who was a member of this delegation, remembered his selection and told about his first impression of the destroyed country:

I worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I was on business in Beijing, and one day I was called to Prague and told to report to the General Staff. There they trained me, dressed me in a military uniform, and gave me the rank of a Lieutenant Colonel because I was to go to as the secretary of the delegation in Panmunjom. We went at some point in June to Korea, where we had to sign the ceasefire agreement. For the signing we waited perhaps a month in Beijing. On the day of the signing, we boarded a train and from there went in the direction of Korea. We arrived to find rather difficult conditions. We rode slowly across the bridges because they were bombed and only had been temporarily rebuilt. Pyongyang was completely destroyed. We saw how the people crawled out of dugouts and looked curiously at those who were riding in the train because that was perhaps the first train to arrive after the ceasefire. Then we went to a point perhaps 40 kilometers from Kaesong, and from there we had to go by jeeps because the tracks went no further.

Jablonský participated in the establishment of the NNSC, which

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on 1 August 1953 began functioning. “I was the very first person who took part in the discussions,” Jablonský wrote more than 50 years later, “because the secretaries prepared the first session of the commission. Together with one each from Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland, we were in Peace Pagoda and discussed how we were to organize ourselves. It was fortunate that the Swedes had a career diplomat who had worked with the UN and who was familiar with administrative and secretarial matters. He put together the whole thing.” In Korea, the Swedes had the experienced diplomat General Sven Grafström (1902-1955), who had served as Sweden’s ambassador to Mexico and the United Nations, and Dr. Paul E. A. Mohn (1898-1957), who had helped Folke Bernadotte (1895-1948) with negotiations between the Arabs and Jews during the war in 1948.

The NNRC was established later, on 18 August, but in the first weeks, more attention was on the crucial work of the NNSC. The Czechoslovak interpreter in the NNRC, Zdeněk Nejedlý (1930-), described the role of the repatriation commission, which on 15 October started its work:



Only children, yet prisoners of war (SCH)

Our mission was to determine the opinion of the prisoners as to whether they want to return home or whether they want to stay in the country where they had been held as prisoners. All of it had to do with American policy, which proclaimed the principle that a prisoner has a right to say whether he wants to return to his home country or not. The Indian who presided [over the commission], said through a Chinese or Korean interpreter, “if you want to return to DPRK, you go out that door,” and pointed to one of the doors of the tent. “If you do not want to go back and stay where you are, go out that door,” he said, and again he pointed.

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As Nejedlý noted, most of the prisoners did not visit the NNRC because it was not obligatory. “The condition was that the prisoner must be capable of going before the five-member commission” not that he had to do so. Many Chinese and North Korean prisoners did not want to be repatriated, but many others were under great pressure not to return them to their native communist countries. Their captors not only urged and sought to persuade but also tortured and sometimes murdered them. Unfortunately, this was not merely communist propaganda but brutal reality, and Nejedlý commented about the tormentors in the camps:

None of the prisoners dared to say in front of their fellow prisoners that he wants to return. If they realized [that someone wanted to return], they – it cannot be called anything else – murdered them. They killed them, cut them into pieces, and threw them with the excrement into the manure pile. I saw a case in which India tried prisoners who were imprisoned in South Korea and who had committed unbelievable atrocities against those they had found who had wanted to return. The Indians gave these people a stiff punishment, but they said that they will not take the sentenced with them to India. They did not want to turn over the murderers to the North Korean and Chinese, so they ended up released. They were in prison only a few weeks or months.

The interpreter and historian Pražák, who was an NNSC member, also mentioned the abuse. He saw that returning prisoners “were not that miserable,” but they were very happy to be back. “When they arrived by vehicle, they brought them on GMC trucks. They sang Korean military songs, and they appeared to be coming back with great joy. I saw once how, when they came home, they tore off the uniforms they had received and threw them from the vehicles. They arrived only in T-shirts and shorts. When the North Korean officers received them, they dressed in uniforms.” Pictures also show returning Chinese volunteers with tattoos of the Chinese Nationalist flag, an effort to force them to go to Taiwan instead of returning to the mainland China.

All the questioning finished on 23 December 1953, and the repatriation commission completed its task on 21 February 1954, as planned. At the end, there were two reports of its work. The Swiss and Swedish members wrote the minority report; the other was the result of the joint authorship of the Czechoslovak, Polish, and Indian members, who noted the killing of POWs, the agents provocateurs, and the hurdles the commission encountered.

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Chinese People's Volunteers prepare to return home (MYN)

The Work of the NNSC

The two final reports that marked the conclusion of the repatriation commission's work anticipated problems that were to occur with the NNSC. Jablonský described the evolution of the situation:



“Warszawa” cars of Polish NNSC and “Tatraplán” car of Czechoslovak NNSC during the meeting in Joint Security Area (1954/55) (FAB)

In the beginning, things went reasonably well. The first weeks, and it is possible to say the first several months, the work was rather normal. The groups prepared to leave, then the groups began to work... After, of course, contradictions between the North and South began to develop, with both sides doing things purposely. The Americans wanted us to help control the North in ways that would be very sensitive to the Koreans and the Chinese, who, in turn, wanted us to do things similar things regarding the South. That was a problem because, in the

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Commission, we blocked the demands against the North – we along with the Poles. Then, for the South, the Swedes and the Swiss blocked things at the request of the Americans. Thus, we came to a standstill.

The biggest problem was the even number of members in the commission—both sides had two representatives, and there was no fifth, independent member, as in the NNRC. All four countries served the sides that had sent them to the NNSC, and that paralyzed the commission's work. Frequently, the NNSC did not reach a joint conclusion and sent the UNC Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC or simply MAC) two different reports. At times, the NNSC was unable to sign protocols about arms exchanges because the Poles and Czechoslovaks claimed that the Americans had exchanged some planes for slightly modernized versions, even though the armistice agreement did not ban the practice. "There were routine meetings, during which it was stated that nothing occurs out of the ordinary and that things progress properly, but they killed the occasional request from one or another party that came to the commission. That was all," said Jablonský in the spring of 1954 about the circumstances at the time. In the spring of 1954, General Josef Hečko (1907-1969), a hero from the Second World War who had fought against Nazis in fierce battles on Eastern Front, had the same feeling about the situation in the MAC. In his report to Prague of 22 July 1954, he wrote: "I concluded that the inspections of our group are totally formal and insufficient."



Swedish and Polish NNSC members controlling Chinese People's Volunteers in Sinuiju (18 January 1956) (MYN)

Some of the members expressed similar concerns. One from the second group, Václav Kučera (1932-), who was inspecting the rotation of soldiers at a dock, remembered that:

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They counted the soldiers who came to rotate the unit. [There were] perhaps 500 soldiers: 150 Turks, 200 Englishmen, and the rest Greeks. These left, and the same number of soldiers arrived. There always were bands that played, and a person could realize more than once that had they pressed [the hand tally counter] according to how the drummer beat the drum and not according to whether the soldier stepped on the blue or green or white [sorting] lines. So everything always depended on the partner, who immediately turned aside [and ignored the inaccuracies], and the numbers [in the end] were the same.

His colleague, Josef Souček (1928-) added: “In Incheon, we went to check Seoul airport, where it was reported how many military and combat aircraft had arrived, how many of them had remained, and how many had departed. Of course, it was impossible to check. On paper, it seemed formal [and correct], but that formality [and correctness] had its own meaning, and our presence had its consequence.” Jaroslav Komárek (1925-), the commander of the counter-intelligence group in Czechoslovak NNSC, expressed the same feeling: “Without fail, to ensure that the situation did not worsen—that was important. Beyond that there was some kind of control of what is happening there.” The translator Jaromír Švamberk (1926-2007) evaluated the role of the commission in his memoirs. “Outwitting us was simple, but it had to be modest,” he wrote. “Did it go, aside from some incident here and there, as far as some kind of new war in Korea? So a quiet and moribund mechanism of an agreement about a ceasefire always can prove [to have], so to speak, its own permanent life.”



Returning prisoners of war (SCH)

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Members of the NNSC did not count only departing UN soldiers and Chinese volunteers. They also investigated incidents and violations of the armistice agreement, especially the reports of illegally imported arms. “In Busan, an imported shipment of mortars came to the Americans,” quoted Jablonský. Komárek added: “In the boxes were imported, disassembled mortars—barrels separate, sights separate. [One only had] to assemble them. That was too much, even for the Swedes and Swiss.”

Jablonský mentioned another case which illustrates the problems the commission had:

In Incheon there was a problem with one boat on which munitions were loaded that we had discovered. It stirred up things because it went beyond the Americans. A mission of the secretariat from of all the delegations came from Panmunjom in order to solve the matter on the spot. Of course, we did not solve anything because we encountered the interests of both sides. We worked for nothing because there was no interest in resolving the thing in the end.



Farewell to Chinese People’s Volunteers at Sinuiju train station (January 1956)
(MYN)

On the other side, the Americans had the impression that North Korea secretly had imported MiG fighters over the Yalu River, and an aerial reconnaissance mission and radar observation of air traffic over North Korea confirmed their suspicion. The US general in the Military Armistice Commission, L. D. Carter, wrote in 1955:

On the day of the signing of the KAA (Korean Armistice Agreement),

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UNC took aerial photos of each airport in the territory under the control of the KPA/PVA (Korean People's Army / People's Volunteers Army). These photographs show that, at the time, the KPA/PVA had no aircraft or useable airport in their territory. Air operations in North Korea were under constant radar surveillance from the signing of a truce until the present. The radar observation system found only seven sorties between 28 and 31 July 1953. This low level continued until October 1953, when air activity in North Korea increased. The rise accelerated greatly.

The American assumptions proved to be correct when, on 21 September, the North Korean pilot No Kum Sok (1932-), flew his MiG-15 to South Korea and landed at Gimpo Air Base. He testified that North Korea secretly had imported dismantled MiG fighters. In October, the UNC asked the NNSC to send Mobile Inspection Team 4 to the Uiju airport near Sinuiju. Swedish and Swiss members mentioned that some of the MiGs there appeared to be new, but the commander of the airstrip refused to show them any documents about the planes. They neither could confirm nor deny their suspicions.



Arrival of the Inspection Team by train in Onjong-ni (SVM)

MiG fighters also were involved in a serious incident on 5 February 1955, when 12 American Sabre F-86 fighters from the 335th Fighter Squadron that were escorting a reconnaissance RB-45C Tornado became engaged in a dogfight with eight MiG-15 fighters near the coast north of Pyongyang. When the Tornado turned back and flew along the west coast to the south, the MiGs attacked the formation of American planes. The North Korean pilots started shooting. The Sabre jockeys scuttled their auxiliary fuel tanks, faced the North Korean attackers, and shot down two of them.

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Examination of fuel tanks during NNSC investigation in Onjong-ni (KOM)

During the battle, they intruded into North Korean air space, which elicited a strong North Korean reaction. Of course, the North Koreans had hard physical evidence – the auxiliary tanks. Four days later, the North Korean general in MAC, Lee Sang Cho (1915-1996), delivered a letter of complaint to the MAC that charged the American pilots with aggression.

The NNSC sent the Mobile Inspection Team 5 by train to examine the Chinese and North Koreans' claims in Onjong-ni, specifically to examine the fuel tanks that had fallen in North Korean territory. "In the most disgusting nasty winter, we went with an efficient fighter pilot from Korea and Lieutenant Colonel Franta Filouš [1924-] to investigate somewhere west of Pyongyang," the translator Švamberg wrote in his memoirs. He added that the team members first tried to get physical evidence: "From pieces, we were able to put together partially some auxiliary fuel tanks, but others managed to be preserved as they fell, so we had physical proof that the American planes were over land." In their draft report, the members of the Czechoslovak-Polish Mobile Inspection Team 5 concluded that "eight additional fuel tanks that the group inspected are more or less of the same type. There are of two measurements. On the basis of the inscriptions on the tanks, the group declared that they are additional tanks used in jet aircraft. According to the tables of producers, the group concluded that they are for the aircraft F-86."

Collecting the fuel tanks was much easier than getting testimonies from villagers and farmers, wrote Švamberg:

When the local authorities found out that we wanted to stop people in the village square and ask them questions, they saw to it that nobody

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appeared outside. One man, who was standing nearby, recited word for word from an official news release: American airplanes illegally had flown over an area in the provinces of South Pyongan and North Pyongan and had attacked our country. When our pilots flew to defend the air space [of the country] and drove away the attackers, the enemy planes cast off their additional fuel tanks, which fell on the soil of our republic. He had it perfectly memorized, like a schoolboy, even though the actual description of the event consisted of true facts.

The Swedish and Swiss members were not satisfied and started to hunt for unbiased witnesses. The radio operator Jiří Černý (1931-) described one encounter with North Korean citizens:

So we went by car to somewhere on the coast. There were Koreans working in the field, so we ran there – mainly the Swedes and Swiss were running. Dressed in their military uniforms, they ran toward the peasants – furthermore, in unknown military uniforms. When the peasants saw that a band of unknown soldiers were running toward them, they began to flee. When they caught up with the peasants, the Swedes and Swiss asked them the same [questions].

Although they were able to find unbiased witnesses, it did not help them very much. The peasants spoke only Korean, so members of the inspection team had to use a North Korean translator. Černý added that “there was our Korean interpreter who interpreted everything. No one had a Korean interpreter, only us. They interpreted everything into Czech. Then, our interpreter interpreted it from Czech into English.” The Swiss and Swedish members felt that the interpreters did not interpret accurately the peasants’ testimonies, so they used a very unconventional way of communication. “It seemed to the Swedes and Swiss that it was staged, so they instead wanted the peasants to show them what had happened. So the peasants attempted to show them what actually had happened with gestures, but just the same, [the Swedes and Swiss] were not very satisfied,” Černý stated. The inspection team also visited a North Korean air base and interrogated two pilots who had participated in the battle. They repeated the same phrases. The NNSC spent many weeks in discussion to determine who started the incident because both sides had broken the armistice agreement. The Americans admitted that their fighters were over North Korean territory, but they said that they had been attacked over international waters. North Korea continuously repeated that the Americans had intruded into their air space, so they had to defend themselves and repel the intruders with gunfire. The NNSC never reached

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a definitive conclusion and sent two different reports to MAC. The Americans were disappointed, but that did not mean that the NNSC had failed. This kind of air battle never took place again, and the investigation opened the door to sending more inspectors to the North to prove the claims that Pyongyang secretly had imported jet fighters.

For more than a year, the NNSC had sent out no mobile teams, but shortly after the ferocious February 1955 dogfight, the North accepted three other teams in March 1955 to check their airports in exchange for two inspections of airports in the South. Mobile inspection teams visited six North Korean airports and discovered many suspicious circumstances. In Daejeon, inspectors spotted a number of tracks from fighters that had landed, but they did not see any MiGs there. Major Dušan Rozehnal (1921-?) wrote in his secret report to Prague what he had seen:

[There was evidence that flights had taken place] on the road and in the covered tracks of tires, even though the administrator claimed that no airplane was off of the runway since the armistice. He maintained that it was from aircraft tow vehicles and courier aircraft. [The administrators] promised to present evidence that the conspicuous track that had been covered was not the result of an airplane but a tow vehicle. Upon the return of the group after lunch, however, the track had been obliterated, even though the group had requested that [the administration] preserve it.

The North Koreans stopped one of their soldiers who wanted to testify before the inspection team members. In his dispatch to Prague about how the North Koreans dealt with this awkward situation, General Hečko wrote, “He was declared insane.” Hečko was very critical of the North Koreans and complained that they had not accepted his advice. In his March report, he wrote:

There are gross deficiencies in Daejeon. Workers in Daejeon displayed a reckless and irresponsible approach to things. According to my information, the Korean comrades still do not appreciate the full seriousness of the situation and they disregard the advice of their Czechoslovak and Polish comrades. The complications at that airport did not have to occur if they had informed us in a friendly manner about the situation and had left there a certain number of older MiGs and if the liaison offers had conducted themselves better. The failure was that [our] friends changed their line from day-to-day in important issues. [The Czechoslovak command referred to the Chinese and North Korean officers as friends (přátelé)].

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In the end, the teams found no direct evidence of the importation and assembly of MiGs after the ceasefire had come into effect.

The two inspection teams went to the South also did not discover any infraction of the armistice agreement. They could not determine anything, as General Hečko's dispatch indicated: "The mobile teams were unable to prove the accusations of [the North Korean] General Lee Sang Cho. It turned out that the allegations of our friends were unfounded and vague. Our friends apparently overestimated the accuracy of their information and the ability of the mobile inspection teams to have a propagandistic effect on the population in the South, which had no contact with the members of the team."

Sending teams to the South had mainly propagandistic goals, which is apparent from the locations they chose to select for inspection. The translator Nejedlý noted that "they took us to Chinhae, a small town on the southwestern tip of Korea. We were to discover there a secret warehouse of weapons. Once there, I heard and then confirmed that it was the summer residence of President Syngman Rhee. Certainly, that was why the North Koreans selected [the location]. The group did not agree on all they wanted to check, and it found nothing,"

In their final report, the members of the NNSC were able to reach a joint agreement and concluded that all teams did not prove the suspicions of either the North or the South, although the Swedes and Swiss members included in the conclusion that suspicion remained regarding the North Korean and Chinese side. The Americans were very disappointed and again felt that the NNSC had no value, as they had said before.

Protests against the Czechoslovak and Polish Members

The South Koreans were suspicious about the Czechoslovak and Polish members of the NNSC. Seoul did not want them in the South to observe the withdrawal of soldiers and armaments from North Korea because the South Koreans feared that the Czechoslovak and Polish members were communist spies. Ironically, the second group of Czechoslovak NNSC members did not even have a local cell of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, quite a standard feature of every, regardless how small it be, state-run body. The commander of the second Czechoslovak group in the NNSC, General Hečko, even noted in his final report that "a serious shortcoming is that there is no [Communist] party organization in the delegation."

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Sign at the gate of the US army camp at Gunsan during the demonstrations (KEL)

A number of Czechoslovak delegates even were not members of the Communist party, including some high-ranking officers. “That was perhaps my case,” wrote Jaroslav Keil (1931-), who was in the third group, “because I was not in the party. It certainly surprised me at the time. I thought that they will select only members of the Communist party. Evidently, they had a shortage [of qualified persons].” Diplomatic experience or knowledge of foreign languages played a bigger role in the second group than merely devotion to the Communist ideals.

The first public protests against the Czechoslovaks and Poles emerged at the end of 1953 and were against the activities of the repatriation commission. Because the NNRS worked in the DMZ, the targets were the Czechoslovak and Polish members of the inspection teams in the ports of entry in the South. The population had trepidations regarding the prisoners of war, the last of whom appeared before the commission just before Christmas Eve. Furthermore, the South Koreans were anxious to conclude the process. Pražák remembered his fears that the protests, which had erupted over the POWs, could escalate:

There were demonstrations against the Reparation Commission with claims that it did not fulfill its function efficiently. Nevertheless, the Indians who headed it were absolutely serious. [The demonstrations] were photographed, even with some of the banners. We met on Christmas 1953 – we were in the South in Daegu – and we were shaking because we thought that the war might begin again. We asked ourselves what then and where fate would take us. The fears subsided after Christmas, when things settled down again. It was very tense because there were thousands of prisoners.

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Anti-NNSC demonstration (unknown location) (KOM)

The situation became calm as the thorny issue of repatriation came to an end. Protests broke out again in the summer of 1954, when negotiations in Geneva about a peace agreement and the unification of Korea collapsed. Both sides were obstinate and made no concessions. The conference in Geneva ended on 20 July, and in the first days of August, people in the South demonstrated against the Czechoslovak and Polish members. The second group of Czechoslovak members of the NNCS, under the command of General Hečko, faced the strongest protests. There were mass meetings and demands that the “red spies” must immediately leave South Korea. Members in Busan and Gangneung were the targets of gunfire and grenade attacks. At the time, Nejedlý was interpreting in Busan, and he later described one incident:

Around six in the evening, we went to dinner. We met on the way to the dining room. My Swedish colleague stopped me to ask me something, so I was a bit delayed. When the Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks went through the dining room door, someone behind a wooden fence, which was a distance of about three meters away, shot at them from with a large-caliber American pistol. If I am not mistaken, they said at the time it was a 45 caliber. They stood in the doorway, there were several shots, but no one was injured. The bullets flew around the dining room. They showed them to us afterward. So we thought about it, and I think about it even today: was the shooter skillful because he did not hit any of those people or was he just a terrible shot? He was hiding right behind the fence. There was a narrow little street, and that person was lost in the nearby slums. The Americans sounded the alarm, but no one ever found anybody. However, they - demonstrating their power - parked an armored vehicle at the entrance.

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US army on alert during the anti-NNSC demonstrations in Incheon (KOM)

Demonstrations took place in all five ports of entry in the South. “I met with demonstrators in Gangneung and in Daegu,” recalled Kučera, a member of the second team. “They were very, very unpleasant – scream, scream, scream! The demonstrators got to the fence around our barracks. Of course, they did not get any further. Afterward, the MPs drove them off rather fiercely.” Another Czechoslovak member of the NNSC, the translator and interpreter Václav Rydyger (1928-), summarized in his diary:

From 2 August, the NNSC activity occurred in a new period, one in which there was a substantive reduction in the freedom of movement. That day, four members of the Czechoslovak delegation were shot at while going to a dining room in Busan (Hill Top). The perpetrator hid behind a fence a distance of about ten meters from the dining room. All three shots missed. One large-caliber bullet was found in the wall of the dining room. On 3-4 August, three homemade bombs were thrown into the Czechoslovak-Polish compound in Gunsan. In Incheon, port workers went on strike and attempted to go on the narrow road to Wolmi Island, where the inspection team was housed. The MPs, however, held them back. In Daegu a large crowd of protestors with banners came by bus and foot to the entrance of the compound. They shouted slogans and threatened a small group that was returning from an inspection at the airport. A gang then went to the second entrance of the barracks, from where one could see the compound. The MPs quickly had to use their batons to clear the road. They had to call in armed reinforcements with an armored vehicle.

Most of the Czechoslovak members stated that the demonstrations were not spontaneous but were organized, as Švamberg, who was at the time at

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Wolmi, wrote in his memoir:

During a very carelessly organized demonstration at the entrance to the road leading to the island, young men in dark blue suits directed the crowd, which was screaming. The crowd of demonstrators in the streets showed that Korea is a populous country. It was not pleasant for anyone, the office of the US Army liaison officers included. A tank came to the compound, with its machine gun pointed on the city. It indicated the current state of alert. We were unable to go in jeeps, and we had to resort to air transport. Helicopters arrived and took us to the local airport K-12 and the airport at Seoul K-14.

Like the other members, he described how the Americans, who made the arrangements for the inspection teams in the South, established new security measures. Members had to stay in their compounds and no longer could leave outside them, as they had done before in Busan. Komárek, who handled counter-intelligence in the second Czechoslovak group, observed that “in the camp, where we resided, stood tall watchtowers with machine gunners. Around it were strung high [walls of] barbed wires, and on the wires were tarpaulins, so that nobody could see out.” He continued:



One of many anti-NNSC posters (KOM)

“We stopped going normally by jeep for inspections, and we started to fly with helicopters. Furthermore, the windows were clouded or blackened.” The NNSC symbols were removed from all means of transportation so that people were unable to recognize who was inside.

Some security measures were so strong that many Czechoslovak members viewed them as oppressive, which is what General Hečko

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intimated in his dispatch to Prague at the end of August:

“ ‘Precautions’ in some places, such as in Incheon, took on a ridiculous form. The liaison officer there unilaterally introduced a new procedure for requisitioning transportation and protection for inspections. A half hour before departure, the team had to fill out a special form in duplicate. In the end, even to go to the officers’ club, which was perhaps 50 meters from the living quarters of the team, it was necessary to have an escort. Meanwhile, the members of the inspection team had to sign in at the entrance of the living quarters with the MP in the guard booth.

Demonstrations were only one part of a wide range of pressures on the “communist members” of the NNSC to force them out of South Korea. Seoul tried to prove that the Polish and Czechoslovak NNSC members were spies and used photography, the favorite pastime of the Czechs and Slovaks, against them. The Korean press published pictures of the Czechoslovak soldiers took in the South and singled Captain Václav Verner (1928-), who allegedly tried to get information about the photographs he took. The South Koreans probably obtained the films from the Americans because a Czechoslovak soldier in the South processed film and negatives in the photographic laboratory in the American compound. That in itself proved that Verner was, in fact, nothing than an avid photo amateur, who wanted his films to be perfectly developed (which was not possible in the North), and not a secret agent since no spy would develop openly his covert photographs in his enemy’s laboratories.

In his report to Prague on 14 September, General Hečko wrote that the Czechoslovak members took pictures as did the Swedes and Swiss. He also noted that Verner was unable to obtain any information because he only spoke Czech. In fact, the ignorance of languages was one of the biggest problems of the Czechoslovak soldiers. Many Czechoslovak members took pictures because it was the first time they were abroad, and they wanted to preserve some memories of such a faraway and exotic land. Most of them never visited any foreign country, and they never saw the ocean or big ships because Czechoslovakia was a landlocked country. Pražák told how he took a picture in Busan:

I just arrived there, I was still in a daze because, for the first time, I was in proper port, and a large ship arrived. We said, “guys, let’s get to the port, we need to take a picture.” Well, there were about three of us along with our American escorts. When he walked around the port, everywhere there were signs that photography was forbidden. We agreed that we would do it anyway. So we stood to be photographed with a ship

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behind us. All at once, one of the MPs called, “Ale jo, jen si to tejkněte” [Yeah, just take it!]. In Czech! His parents had emigrated [from Czechoslovakia]. At home they spoke Czech, and he still could speak Czech, even though he had a strong American accent.

The radio operator Vladimír Vlček (1930-) remembered that there was no problem taking pictures of weapons, even of Sabre jets, and it was even possible to go into the cockpit. He was invited to visit a radar station where American operators monitored air traffic over North Korea.

The wave of protests in South Korea was so huge and some of the attacks were so serious against that the Czechoslovak armed forces addressed the difficult situation in letters to the families of the NNSC members to assure them that their relatives were well. General Hečko also received a warning from the Chinese that there was a serious threat of an attack. He wrote to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign affairs:

My friends [the Chinese and North Koreans] warned me of the danger that the supporters of Syngman Rhee or Chiang Kai-shek could assassinate Czechs and Poles. The danger was especially high in some parts in the South. There are armed groups of terrorists who have been trained and are responsible for carrying out attacks at the appropriate moment. For everyone, I forbade contact of any type with the local population, photography, and departure from the residential area for any reason, other than inspections. I ordered everyone to remain close to the Swedes and Swiss.

Threats also appeared in the South Korean press. The South Korean government informed everyone officially on 26 August that “the Korean parliament wants to request the immediate dissolution of the NNSC because of spying.” The newspaper challenged the UN Command to eliminate the NNSC and threatened that if it did not do so, “the Republic of Korea will have to take steps in the interests of its own safety.” The press published similar articles in the next months, and the situation escalated again near the end of 1954 because the UN General Assembly did not solve the Korean problem. The United States repeated that the guarantees of security for the NNSC that were embodied in the armistice agreement. Finally, Seoul had to withdraw its demand to expel the Poles and Czechoslovaks. An official release on 20 December 1954 stated:

From the time that President Syngman Rhee postponed its decision to throw out the Reds, since they will not leave voluntarily, the windows of light aircraft, which transport the communists from Panmunjom to their

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posts in South Korea, have been covered. As soon as they arrive in South Korea, Poles and Czech[oslovak]s are restricted to their residential areas, provided that they are not conducting inspections of the arrival and departure of personnel and materials of the UN.

Various kind of pressures and demonstrations continued until the middle of 1956, when both sides decided to terminate the activities of the inspection teams because most of the foreign soldiers had departed from Korea with their weapons. The translator of the third team, Jaroslav Keil, described the last wave of mass protests in the summer of 1955:

The vast majority of demonstrators were children 14 to 15 years of age, who, at the command of their instructors, probably their teachers, obediently lifted their hands in uniform rhythm, as though someone had shown them what to do. All the while, they were screaming at us, largely with incomprehensible slogans, of which we knew only one: “Chekko, Paran kara!” [Czechs, Poles go home]. Days later, when the number of demonstrators declined, modern technology filled their absence—a radio car, [that is] a truck fitted with a microphone and a speaker. At that time, the call for us to leave was broadcasted not only in Korean but also in wretched English and horrible Russian. At one point, when the demonstration exceeded its normal intensity, the base commander suddenly ordered the members of the team to move into an underground shelter near the airport.

Duty in Difficult and Harsh Conditions

Deployment on the Korean peninsula not only meant sensitive and complicated work for a commission that constantly encountered hurdles because both sides had their own intentions that were diametrically opposed to each other. It also was difficult because Korea was a destroyed country that lacked basic infrastructure. Czechs and Slovaks had to face many complications, from an extreme climate, with its very hot and humid summers and cold winters, to dangerous diseases. The low quality of water and food heightened the threat of intestinal infections, diarrhea, and dysentery.

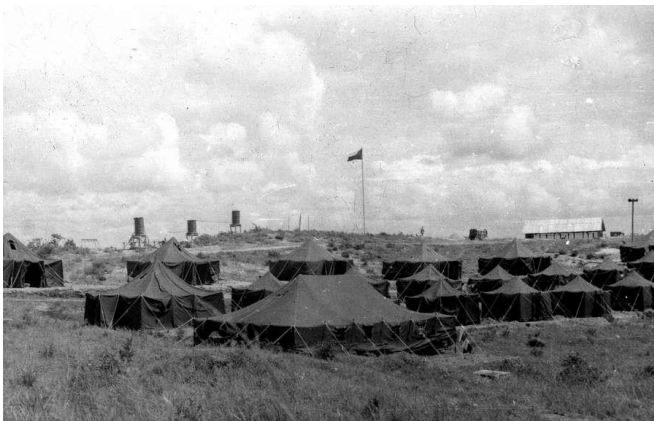
Josef Barták, the doctor for the first group, mentioned the lack of drinking water in his final report: “The greatest need was for something to drink. In the first days, not even tea was available. We placed an emphasis on cultivating the habit of never drinking water that was not boiled.” The driver of the first group, Mojmír Sapák (1930-) confirmed what Barták stated: “Nobody was supposed to drink anything. They could drink only

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boiled water, or they made tea.” The motorcycle liaison and courier Jaroslav Schystal (1929-) explained how he quenched his thirst: “When we arrived in Kaesong – we arrived there in the day, after the rain finished – the sun was beating. It was like in a laundry at 95 percent humidity. We gathered our energy. In the meantime, our kitchen was lost, so we had nothing to eat and mainly nothing to drink. We found some cans of pickles. I was one of those who drank [the brine], and then I had problems.”

Further complications resulted in the first few days because the transports only brought the goods gradually. The first night, the soldiers had no tents, and they had to stay in a partially destroyed warehouse. Problems with accommodation remained throughout November 1953, and the commander of the first group, General Bureš, wrote:

We came to truly bad conditions regarding accommodations, which we gradually put in order. For example, in the building in which we lived, I already caught six rats directly in the room, and that was the best-maintained building in all of Kaesong. The windows and doors either are nonexistent or are leaking. When there is a wind, the pictures we brought fall from the wall. For example, we have been unable to obtain beds here because neither the Koreans nor Chinese use beds, nor do they know what they are. The houses here, if any exist at all, look the same as we used to see in Gypsy settlements in Slovakia. They are beams erected on stones [and have walls of] woven wicker covered with mud.



The very first tented camp of Czechoslovak NNSC in the DMZ (1953) (SCH)

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The tented camp was not suitable for a long deployment during the course of a hard winter, which began in November. Bureš asked his superiors to send him wooden houses with beds, but Prague refused because of costs. The issue was not only comfort. The entry of 4 November 1953 in the official diary of the first group noted that “there are already very cold nights. This morning, we were rather surprised when we found that the water in the sink was covered with an icy crust. The heavy frost remained on the grass and trees until later in the afternoon.” Three days later, members were able to move into the new wooden houses that the Chinese soldiers built. And soon they also have their first joint Czechoslovak-Polish club building as well as an adequate place to eat. That solved one of the biggest problems of the first Czechoslovak group.



Entrance gate to Czechoslovak NNSC camp in the DMZ (1954/55) with a sign
„Our Aim Is Peace“ (MYN)

The Czechoslovak Ministry of National Defense made every effort to provide its personnel with all they required. The soldiers brought the essentials they anticipated needing in trucks and jeeps, including flour as well as canned lunch meat and sausages to last for four months. Nobody thought the armistice would last for years, let alone decades. The expectation was that the commission would conclude its work in three months. The biggest fear came from the threat that the armistice would end and that the Czechs and Slovaks would be in a faraway land in the middle of a newly erupted conflict. The group was prepared for a different scenario than what they faced in the end: an armistice that seemed to be indefinite and work that was more diplomatic than military. They needed skills for delicate negotiations, something for which a knowledge of foreign languages was more important than military ability. General Bureš

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wrote to Prague at the end of 1953 that “the original assumption of our government and the Ministry of National Defense was that we will be here for a maximum of four months. That time limit has been exceeded, and there is no way to guess how long it will be until the task is complete.”

The Chinese side gradually took over supplying the food. The second doctor from the first group, Zdeněk Vacek, wrote that “from 1 December 1953, the Chinese side took over the care of the group and gave us food supplies, based on the variety of products to which our tastes had become accustomed. Chinese canned meat and chicken are sweet, and even the bacon and ham have a sweet taste.”

The Invisible Enemy

Vacek mentioned persistent and serious problems with hygiene. Various intestinal parasites and diarrhea were a constant threat for all members of the Czechoslovak delegation. Disinfection was essential, although it sometimes changed the taste of food, which displeased the soldiers. Doctor Vacek reported that:

We soaked fruits for twenty minutes in a pink permanganate solution, we did not use fresh vegetables, and we washed meat before cooking it in a solution of permanganate. We received fresh meat – both beef and pork – from the local slaughter house, which was in very bad condition. Thanks to the proper care of the meat after it came from the slaughter house and then during its preparation, no diseases were dragged into the compound.

Doctor Vacek also described the situation in Panmunjom, where there was a Czech cook. The recollections of the driver in the same group, Zdeněk Khol (1932-), corroborated what Vacek had to say: “I also transported from the warehouse sweetened water [that is, clear soda pop], as they call it, *saida*. The Koreans who loaded it at the warehouse had brooms and ran around swatting rats. They were so skillful that when a rat crawled up the wall, one of them would catch it by the fur and slam it [on the ground]. They were skilled at it, and they did not shrink from it. Then they picked them up by the tail to carry them away. In that moment, I was sick.”

It was much worse in the five North Korean points of entry, according to the interpreter Pražák, who was not only in Busan and Daegu but also there:

The worst eating in the last two months was in Sinuiju, where there was

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a Korean cook. Sometimes the smell of the food was not fresh. Perhaps twice there I was ill, but we were not surprised when we saw how poor the people were there. The majority of us got some kind of parasite. That was impossible to avoid, especially among those who were in the North, and at the end of my stay, I was in the North. I got some kind of parasite – roundworms or something – but they cured us.

The situation was much better in the South, where the US Army provided food. Members of the NNSC ate in the officers' canteen, and they received the standard army meals. They sometimes did not like the taste of sweet bread or of maple syrup on a slice of ham, but the food was not tainted.

Some of the Czechoslovak members, because of their youth and desire for adventure and new experiences, tried Korean food, and some of them liked it. "Kimchi cabbage had an excellent taste. And the eggs – those so-called rotten eggs – we loved them to death. They were so good; they only looked disgusting," remembered Komárek, who also tasted snake and dog. "During one reception, there was cut meat. One took it with a fork and fried it in oil. We did not know it was dog. When we found out, it did not bother me. It was very good. The same was true with worms. We thought that they were a crispy snack. It was good, so we ate it." Komárek also noted that there was a serious problem with hygiene:

We saw that the kimchi was in large ceramic jars outside under the eaves. Inside [the jars] was stomped-down cabbage that was full of flies. The same was true with the meat and fish. It all was excellent, but such preparation! We always clean fish properly. There they remove the inner organs, but they leave on the heads. We took a piece and ate it. How it was prepared, nobody knew. Because of this, the majority had roundworms or pinworms. I struggled with roundworms for half a year. It was horrible. Several had roundworms that were like snakes.

Intestinal parasites and different kinds of diarrhea were common, but nothing was serious. On the Korean peninsula, there were many more dangerous diseases, like tuberculosis, yellow fever, and spotted fever. The commanders introduced a number of precautions, and members were vaccinated against serious illness. In his final report, the doctor of the first group, Barták, wrote:

In 1952, we vaccinated all members [of the Czechoslovak group] against the following: typhoid fever, paratyphoid A and B, and tetanus with a total of two injections in six-week intervals; cholera with two injections

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during the course of nine days; typhus with three injections in five-day intervals; and bubonic plague with one injection. Against smallpox, there were one to three applications. In 1953, we inoculated again against typhoid fever, paratyphoid fever, tetanus, cholera, and typhus. The inoculation against cholera was ineffective, so we ordered vaccine directly from Beijing.

Regrettably, vaccination cannot prevent all diseases, and some soldiers contracted tuberculosis. The biggest peril was malaria, and averting it was difficult. “All contracted malaria, even though it might have been in a latent stage,” reported Vacek, the other doctor. He added that “the camp was in a terrain rife with malaria – rice paddies.”

Many soldiers learned how dangerous this disease was when they saw Koreans with it. “We saw how one worked the rice paddies. He was deep in the water and had an attack. He left the buffalo in the water and lay down on the dike. First he had a heavy fever and shook. In a while, he was sweating, and his whole body was covered with beads of sweat. After about 20 minutes, he got up and continued to till,” described Pražák, who had observed the entire drama with fright. They used mosquito nets at night, and Pražák noted that “if I hear a single mosquito buzzing around me, I cannot fall asleep. In the morning, we washed in pairs. That way one could see that the other had a mosquito on his back and could kill it.” They regularly received antimalarial medication. Doctor Vacek wrote that “we protected ourselves against malaria with the preventive atebine in doses of two tablets two times each week. We ordered paludrine, which we received in Mukden, and we took it in the same dose as the atebine. Paludrine does not cause same digestive difficulties as atebine. We began these preparations nine days before we arrived in China, the anticipated habitat of the anopheles mosquito.”

Unfortunately, not all soldiers were as cautious as Pražák. Though mild malarial outbreaks in the southernmost part of Slovakia rarely occurred in the 1920s and 1930s, the doctors in Czechoslovakia had minimal experience with malaria, so it was easy to underestimate the danger. Soldiers could not imagine how serious the consequences could be for forgetting to take the unappetizing antimalarial medication. Some did not take the pills because the medication made them ill, according to the counterintelligence commander Komárek. “They did not take the paludrine, and many boys threw it away instead of swallowing it. When we realized that they did not take it, we had to find a way” to ensure that they did. The goal was to get the new treatment called chloroquine from the Americans that required only one pill each week. The Czechoslovak

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delegation requested that the Americans provide them with chloroquine, but the American command placed unrealistic conditions on its delivery. The Czechoslovak team would have to write an official letter asking for the drug, stating that the Chinese and North Koreans were unable to supply them with medication against malaria. For Czechoslovak authorities it was impossible to comply with the demand as the Americans could have used such a letter as propaganda against their *friends* in the North since the armistice agreement required both sides to provide for all the necessities of the NNCS members in the territories under their control. The Czechoslovaks had to find an unofficial way to obtain the better drug.

Unfortunately, some of the members contracted malaria. A few went to the Soviet Union for treatment, but there were cases in which the symptoms recurred after they had returned home. Zdeněk Khol, a driver in the first group, was one who suffered from malaria. Another was Kučera, who enjoyed sports, especially soccer. Years later, he remembered how he had entered the hospital in Prague with malaria:

When I returned in 1955 to the factory from Korea, it was the height of the preparations for *spartakiáda* [a regular mass gymnastics games organized in socialist Czechoslovakia every five years from 1955 to 1985], so I was actively involved and exercised. Somehow, I overdid it, and I passed out on Strahov. They took me to [the hospital in neighboring] Motol, where they told me that I had jaundice but that I also had a temperature. Then a doctor came, spoke with me, and said, “So you did not say that two months ago you had returned from Korea.” They tested me and immediately transported me to Bulovka [hospital specialized in exotic and rare diseases]. For almost two years, I had to take atebine. It was difficult because, in the beginning, we were not even able to have children.

Finally, he had children, and for his entire life, was married to another member of the NNSC from Czechoslovakia, the typist Jiřina Oujezdská (1933-). The Czechoslovak command had asked them to marry in Korea, but he refused.

Colonel [Stanislav] Balda [1910-] tried to convince me: “Sergeant, you should marry here. It would support the activity and work of the inspection group a great deal. We would arrange it. There are Poles, we [Czechoslovaks], Swedes, Swiss, and from the northern side the Chinese and Korean representatives That would be a wedding!” Even though he tried and tried to convince us, and even though we cared for each other very much to this day, we did not go through with it. I loved

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my mother very much, and I could not imagine marrying in Korea and mom would not have been there.

Under Pressure

Kučera was a rare exception. Most soldiers had no close personal connections in Korea, and they were under strong psychological pressure because they were deployed thousands of kilometers from their homes in a totally different environment and without direct contact with their loved ones. They had no chance to phone their families. They only could depend upon the mail, and letters took weeks to arrive.

Over time, deployment became protracted, and the soldiers did not know when they would return home. Their psychological condition worsened, even though their superiors had selected them carefully for duty. Doctor Vacek observed some of the psychological problems, including:

Neurasthenia and psychoneurosis – a substantial workload with unusual mental work in an unusual environment with a great sense of responsibility, separation from one’s family, and sexual abstinence. Of considerable importance is the uncertainty of the length of stay here. Finally, the constant complaints reflected in the letters from Czechoslovakia of family members, who expected an earlier return of their nationals, according to the promises the authorities in Czechoslovakia gave about the length of stay in Korea.

The worst came on 26 November 1953, when Colonel Vajda attempted to commit suicide. General Bureš wrote to Prague on 30 November that “from an examination of his correspondence, it is possible to assume that one of the reasons was his personal situation, specifically the relationship of his fiancée, who had sent rejection letters to him from Czechoslovakia, claiming that he had not indicated how long he would be in Korea. She also threatened him with infidelity.” The situation was even more complicated because Vajda shot himself in the South, in Incheon, and he immediately was transported to an US hospital ship, where American doctors saved his life. The Czechoslovak command feared that the Americans might persuade him to change sides, as General Bureš wrote in his dispatch:

There was a serious danger of provocation on the side of the Americans, who assigned him a Czech-speaking doctor and nurse on a hospital ship in Incheon. Certainly, as soon as he gained consciousness, they wanted

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to get from him a statement in which he would request asylum.

Vajda's defection would mean the work of the entire delegation would be impaired. He was informed of all the secret meetings and of the investigations of the NNIT [Mobile Inspection Team] that were sent at the request of the Americans to North Korea. In one case, he was the commander of the team. Recruiting him was a difficult political struggle. Today, on 28 November at 1:00 PM, the Americans transferred him, bringing him in a hospital helicopter from Incheon to Panmunjom, and from there, our ambulance took him to a Chinese hospital in Kaesong. We had to give the Americans a written statement that we take all responsibility for his transfer and for his health (it remains serious)!

The first group was not the only one that had to face a prolonged stay in Korea. The situation repeated itself with the second group, although its commander, General Hečko, unsuccessfully had requested that Ministry of National Defense not extend the deployment: "Dreams of going home for Christmas have quickly disappeared," Švamberk, the translator from the second group, wrote in his memoir. The radio operator from the same group, Vlček, added: "They extended [our stay] for a half year. I have that letter, with the signature of the chief of the General Staff. It appeals to my wife so that we both understand that it is in the interest of the republic, socialism, and peace and that the costs are high."

Some of the members stayed in Korea for more than a year, a list that did not only include experienced diplomats. The military command in Prague at times seemed to forget which professionals were necessary in Korea. "I am the longest-serving member of the supervisory committee in Panmunjom. I was not there for six months but for 16 months," recalled the cook Václav Borovec (1931-). He continued:

During the celebration, which was a week before departure, everyone at the gala dinner rejoiced that the relief group already was in Moscow [and on its way to Korea]. In the morning, the general told me that no replacement is coming for me, so they have me down for another half year. I showed the general a letter stating that my mother is ill. He showed me his letter that his wife also is ill. So I was not the only one in such a situation.

Finally, he got to see his mother again, but his girlfriend was unable to wait so long. She married another man.

The financial commitment to send fresh soldiers to Korea together with the reality that the preparation for each group took time were two

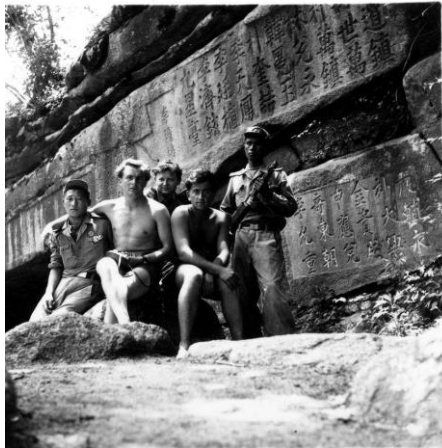
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important factors in the decision to extend the soldiers' time in Korea. Furthermore, it was difficult to find people who had enough experience for the mission and – from the point of view of socialist authorities - were reliable and trustworthy. A measure of the success of the Czechoslovaks in the matter of personnel selection is the fact that nobody defected to the West, which was not the case with the Poles.

Personal Views about Korea

Deployment in Korea was an incredible experience for all Czechs and Slovaks, regardless of whether they were members of the commissions, worked as doctors and medical staff in one of Czechoslovak hospitals, or helped as experts or technicians with the reconstruction of the war-torn North Korea.. Because of the World War II, most of them never left their native country, but on this occasion, they found themselves on the other side of the world.

They confronted a totally different culture with a unique history and distinct customs and food. Everything was different: landscape, plants, weather, and architecture. Astonished members gazed at the shrines with hundreds of Buddha statues and took pictures of ancient sculptures and tombs from the time when Kaesong was the capital of the Goryeo Kingdom. They wanted to know more about the people around them, so some of the members became interested in Korean history.



One of many weekend trips to historical sights near Kaesong (1953/54) (SCH)

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The Czechoslovaks were bewitched with the amazing landscape that was full of rugged hills and outcroppings and where the colors rapidly changed with the season. The bright green rice paddies of the summer turned to a sea of golden rice straws in a reddish-brown soil in the autumn. White snow covered the landscape in the winter until the spring thaw, when the brown earth turned to a violet pink as the azaleas came into blossom. The Czechoslovak soldiers also watched astounding folk dances that the army art ensembles performed with their gorgeous costumes.

Also attractive were the traditions, especially the weddings, when the brides, sitting in closed litters, were carried to their grooms. The Czechs and Slovaks were surprised with the traditional clothing, for example, with the skirts that began under the breasts that resulted in a small bodice. They also were astonished that the Koreans buried their dead not only in cemeteries but in other places.

In an article for the weekly factory magazine *Sokolovák* under the title “Land behind the Barbed Wire” (*Země za ostnatým drátem*), Kučera wrote:

In the countryside, they commonly bury their dead in their field, in their garden, or on their land. The graves have the appearance of earthen mounds. Other times, on small earthen mounds, stones are erected that have tops with various shapes. Only the rich are able to build a wooden construction, usually with four columns that carry a curved roof in the shape of a pagoda. Otherwise, there are all kinds of burial grounds, that is, a larger number of graves together, on the slopes of hills, in forests, and in the knolls. These are freely accessible to anyone.



Friendly party after a music performance at the Czechoslovak NNSC club in the DMZ. Note that North Koreans were not yet shy of foreigners (1954/55) (MYN)

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All of those who went to Korea from Czechoslovakia never forgot what they saw. Their discoveries were firmly imprinted in their minds. Their views were much more complex than those of the officials. Reality took them out of the black-and-white world of propaganda that was prevalent because of the divisiveness of the Cold War, when the socialist bloc countries depicted the heroic North Korean people as fighting for peace and socialism against the American imperialists and their so-called “South Korean puppet henchmen”. The personal experiences and independent observations created more of a detailed, complex, and altered picture. Members quickly discovered that the US soldiers were just guys like them with common problems and ordinary interests and concerns. In some ways, they were more naive. They sometimes had different tastes, but they did not like war, they did not want to die, and they did not want to kill or conquer. Those views were contrary to communist propaganda the Czechs and Slovaks were influenced by at home.

Occasionally, their observations corresponded to the official line. All members of the first two groups immediately recognized the horrible effects of the war. They saw the destruction as soon as they crossed the Chinese-North Korean border. The results of US bombing raids against the infrastructure, especially dams and bridges in the North was clearly visible. “By far the worst experience was when we crossed the Yalu from China to Korea. That bridge was bombed several times,” recalled Pražák from the first group. “The train had to go slowly, and there were all kind of squeaks. We said, ‘Comrades, this is going to end badly. These cars will fall with us, and we will be in the water.’ Still, we crossed it.”

Černý, who came to Korea a year later, in June 1954, with the second group, also described the bridge over the Yalu:

Across a major river, like the Yalu, the bridges were long, perhaps 300 meters. The Americans cut that bridge exactly in half because the border was there. The second half on the Chinese side remained. They did not risk destroying it. The bridges were repaired in a horribly provisional fashion. Where they could, they [repaired] them using logs. From where they got them, I have no idea. Perhaps the Chinese brought them. The branches were haphazardly thrown one on the other. It was not construction as we know it. It was something like a sparrow’s nest. On that they placed the tracks. There, one had to go very slowly.

Pražák continued his story:

The road to Kaesong was horrible. Around the tracks were continuous bomb craters, which were full of water during the rainy season. They

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were beautiful to see, but how those tracks were bombed! Coming toward us was a hospital train with wounded Korean soldiers and Chinese volunteers. Every car had on it ragged flags, torn from the war and riddled with bullet holes. That was incredible. The villages around the railroad tracks were nonexistent. The people lived in dugouts.

The sights of the destruction in Korea strongly affected Pražák, even though Czechs and Slovaks were familiar with the effects of the bombing raids and heavy artillery fire because of the final battles of the World War II. During his deployment, Pražák met a wounded soldier: “We had an old man in Hungnam who swept the floors. One fine day, we got into a discussion using our hands, and he said where he had fought on the front lines. He removed his shirt and showed us how his back was burned. When the Americans used napalm bombs, he was in the trenches, and the napalm burned him. He had scars all over his back, and it was not a pretty sight.” Other Czechs and Slovaks took pictures in the hospital of a child with napalm burns.

The commander of the first group, General Bureš, also wrote in his report to Prague about the effect of the battles: “If you look on the map, there are cities and villages. In reality, however, they do not exist. In several places, it is difficult to recognize that, in the area where we are driving, a village stood. What remains are only the rivers and roads, although [the roads] are destroyed. In the end, the explosions even reduced several hills by a few meters.”



Destruction in Chongjin (PCK)

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The destruction was so great that the members of the second group also recognized the results of the bombing, despite the enormous effort to reconstruct North Korea. In his memoirs, the translator of the second group, Švamberk, wrote:

It already was one year after the war in Korea, but it looked like the war had ceased yesterday. The entire route from north to south was bordered with beads of craters from bombs that had hit the fields, as if the aviators had dropped them on individual villagers in the fields. The only remains are flooded pits in the rice paddies. It is possible to recognize the villages because the chimneys protrude from the dugouts. The cities are gone. Only here and there, chimneys peek out of the leveled wreckage and ruins. Several are smoking. There has been peace for more than a year, but the ruins truly remain throughout [the country].

During a recent interview, Schystal concluded from the amount of destruction that the conflict was not only between the two Koreas:



Destruction in unspecified location in North Korea (1953/54) (SCH)

Along the way, there was a large number of wrecked locomotives and cars. What the Americans destroyed during the day was immediately rebuilt as soon as it grew dark or they stopped flying. There were new rails, and along them ran supply trains. They either arrived, or they did not. Those [that did not] were the wrecks along the side of the tracks. The bomb craters were plus or minus five meters from the track. One could live there through the night until morning. At that time, they had to pack up [and leave]. Then the Americans came and destroyed what

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they could. It actually was a matter between China and America. The Koreans were the second-rate actors in the drama.

The war damage was so extensive that the North Koreans needed help on every level. Nurses and doctors from the Czechoslovak hospital in Chongjin often went to isolated areas, where they treated and vaccinated children. Engineers came to reconstruct dams. Everybody tried to assist in any way possible, even the NNSC members, to some extent. Švamberg wrote in his memoirs how they helped a newborn girl stay alive. “Our predecessors [that is, the first deployment of Czechoslovaks] saved the child with rations of condensed milk, which she did not get from her mother in its natural form. In such circumstances, children normally died, and this intervention still elicits admiration and gratitude.” Children played a big role in Korean society, wrote Kučera: “None of us who were in Korea will ever forget the Korean children. They were everywhere, and there are a great number of them born. Therefore, the Korean landscape without children is something unimaginable. The average number of children for each family is perhaps five or even more. A family with ten children is not rare.”

The drivers helped quite a bit. Czechoslovak-made Jawa motorcycles were able to survive the harsh roads on a daily basis without much problems. And the Tatra 128 trucks that the first group took were real workhorses, and the Koreans appreciated the use of them. Khol, a driver, remarked that “128s were good vehicles. They survived everything. They had an excellent engine.” He added that the Americans were surprised with their performance, as they have never heard about and saw that Czechoslovak-built truck, and admired them after one Czech driver in Panmunjom showed them how the truck was able to handle a steep slope. “When our soldiers arrived with a Tatra, the Americans crawled under the vehicle and photographed it because they saw no chassis, only a load-carrying tube.” All the Tatra trucks had swinging half-axles on the load-carrying tube, in which was housed the drive shaft. This concept accounted for Tatra’s success for half a century all over the world, including winning six Paris-Dakar Rallies in truck category. The drivers noted not only the lack of technology in Korea but also the absence of simple tools. The driver Sapák remembered:

We went to the inlet for river sand because they were building a new nursery or school. For one shovel to load the sand, there were three men. One worked the shovel and operated the handle. The shovel was tied to a rope, which the other two held. The shovel dug into the sand, the two

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pulled it out, and they dumped it into the truck. They did not even have wheelbarrows. Women with baskets on their heads carried material from the sand pit. Furthermore, they were singing while they did it.

The translator and later on leading Czech Koreanist Vladimír Pucek (1933-) added that women with baskets on their heads not only carried sand or soil but also heavy stones, which “easily could crush the head of the baby” that several were carrying on their backs.

General Bureš described the bad situation in his dispatch: “The technical outfitting of the civilian inhabitants and the army is very primitive. For example, there are not enough shovels because materials are loaded on the trucks with the help of farm shovels [that is, spades]. They do not know what a wheelbarrow is for carrying stones and sand. All the material is carried to and fro, specifically on the backs of the workers.” The war did not usher in all of the difficulties since poverty and underdevelopment was a historic problem, which the four decades of Japanese domination and exploitation since Japan’s annexation of Korea in 1910 did not changed. Khol said, “they had nothing there. There were bombed, empty, dusty streets. Malaria raged there. Everything seemed to be backward.” In January 1956, František Mynařík (1933-) noted in his diary that “after 15 days, we are leaving Sinuiju! I recognized at least partly how the people live here in the 20th century! The houses are made with mud and are without any kind of sanitation for the adults, children, and elderly. In the streets, women walk with heavy loads on their heads. In bags, they have flour, millet, and corn. Even small children carry heavy bags wrapped with rope that cut into their shoulders. They know no other life! Today we were with General [Václav] Tauš [1910-?] and Doctor Major [Vladimír] Borek [1921-] in the school we are sponsoring. Several pupils have the symptoms of tuberculosis.” He saw Korean teens dying of tuberculosis. In July 1956, he wrote in his diary about his visit to the Czechoslovak hospital in Chongjin:

Our surgeon invited me to be present during an operation. I received a white gown and everything else that was necessary. I stood in the corner, but the surgeon called me directly to the operating table, where he had prepared a girl about 16 years old for a procedure on her lungs. I have to admit that I was out of sorts not just when he opened her with a scalpel but when he stitched her. Those stitches simply cannot hold! When I went to visit the girl the next day, she was doing well. However, with that experience, my suffering did not end! Dr. Macek, from Brno, invited me to the morgue. They were doing an autopsy on a roughly 15-year-old Korean girl, who had died of tuberculosis.

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Death was an imminent part of postwar existence, as the driver Khol recounted:

I saw a woman lying on the ground for a half day with children sitting around her. The flies were crawling on her because she already was dead. At the time, it would not have bothered me, even if I had been eating rations, because a person gets used to so many things. I calmly sat in the car, and I watched. A person becomes so numb that it does not matter. It simply does not matter. One can take it. Here, when someone sees someone, or rather when I go to the funeral of some acquaintance, I have that on my mind for a long time. There it somehow it did not bother me until later, when I had dreams in which the experiences gradually returned.

Many times, the Czechs and Slovaks felt as though they were in an ethnographic museum, as though they not only traveled to a faraway land on the opposite side of the Northern Hemisphere but also back in time. “There on the banks of the River Yalu, tens of women were doing laundry by pounding it with rocks from the river bank,” described Kučera with the help of Jan Dolina in an article for *Sokolovák*. He linked what he saw to the distant Czech past: “History breathes, even in the national dress of Korea: short coats and wide, white pants tucked into white socks, all normally without buttons or pockets. It is like Chinese clothing from the 14th century (...) Underdevelopment was visible everywhere, continued Kučera: “In the South, as in the North, simple villagers built their own dwellings from reeds and twigs bound together with rice straw and mud.” He also described how peasants cultivated their fields in the manner of their medieval ancestors:

To this day, South Koreans plow their fields with a pointed branch or agriculturalists dig up the entire field with hoes. Reaping also is done by hand and without a scythe. They use only small sickles, rather it is better to say slightly curved knives. Threshing is done either with a flail (even that is not known everywhere) or by driving cattle over the crops. Only with rice do they use very simple, small threshing machines powered by someone pedaling.

Khol also mentioned that the Koreans did not know flails, so the soldiers brought some from Czechoslovakia. At first, he was surprised to see that they had brought the flails: “I said, ‘why a flail?’ and there I saw how they beat the crops. Someone held a bundle of sheaves across a large rock, and

another beat it with a stick.” As Khol stated, “I was interested how they live and farm. I noticed how they planted rice.” He also observed their system of canals and irrigation. Other members remarked how farmers used very simple tools to make their work easier. Rope with knots helped to keep the same distance between rows of rice. The small steps of those who held either end of the ropes kept the distance between the plants in each row. Khol noted the importance of human power at every stage—seeding, planting, cultivating, harvesting, threshing, and sometimes milling, but buffalo turned the bigger millstones. Manual work also was important for irrigation in hilly areas: “A stream of people carried water up the slopes. There was no foot pump. They just had a sling across the forehead, a hod on the back, and they carried [the water]. They had no pump—nothing. They simply had to carry the water 20 meters up that slope.” Once they reached the top, they poured out the water, which “trickled and then cascaded across the shelves [or steps]. They had it well thought out.”

Other than growing rice, ocean fishing attracted the Czechs and Slovaks because it was something they never had seen. In Chongjin, they watched fishermen hunting crabs, and in Busan and Incheon, they saw how people dried fish and squids. They sometimes visited the fish market, although for most of those from Czechoslovakia, the smell was unbearable. “Fish form about half of the nourishment in the South and the North. The seas that wash the shores of Korea are rich in all kinds of life. There are tens of types of fish here. They catch crab, lobster, as well as octopuses, which commonly reach a diameter of two meters,” wrote Kučera in one of his articles for *Sokolovák*.

The NNSC members had an interest in other aspects of the lives of ordinary people. Soldiers also were curious about how Koreans made their typical noodles, and they watched how people ate them from a bowl in the market. Another oddity was ginseng, and they were surprised how the Koreans cultivated it. “They grew ginseng roots in something like a hotbed. They covered it with rice straw, probably because it needs shade and not full sun,” Sapák stated. “It was valuable. Only the general received some, I think it was bottled in alcohol.”

On many occasions, they remarked about the great cultural differences between them and the Koreans. Švamberk mentioned that the Koreans did not eat cheese. “We also tried to offer them processed cheese in a can, but the dear Koreans indicated that they do not eat spoiled milk.” The soldiers tried to help malnourished Koreans with fish they occasionally electrocuted in a lake but also with army rations of luncheon meat or chocolates. Khol remembered some advice they had received for

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these situations: “They even warned us that when we want to give them chocolate, we can, but we have to tear the wrapping and not just give it to them unwrapped. Our chocolate once appeared in the market. When the boys got the chocolate, they went and sold it immediately.” Poverty was so great that sometimes the Koreans even tried to steal. Khol, who sometimes went to their cinema, recounted the problem of petty thievery:

I was curious about what they were showing. Their theater was provisional. There were posts in the ground and boards fastened to the posts. When I sat on those benches, I had to hold my pockets, otherwise they would steal everything. My friend, who was with me, was constantly without his [cigarette] lighter. They always took it from him because he was not careful with it. When I went to the market, I looked around countless times. When I was in their shops, I had to hold my pockets.

To prevent all these problems, North Korean soldiers usually escorted the Czechoslovak members of the NNSC if they went somewhere. The cook Borovec explained why it was necessary:

After the groups’ duties concluded, we could go to the market in Kaesong to buy something, but the selection was poor. It was like going to a shootout because before us were two body guards, behind us were another two, and between them was our group of six to ten people. It was as though they were leading us to jail. We were unarmed, and the North Koreans were responsible for our safety.

Most of the time, the Czechoslovak members were under the surveillance of different North Korean and Chinese units, as Vlček explained:

I was a telegrapher for some time at the (Czechoslovak) embassy in Pyongyang, but after 14 days, they wanted me back in Panmunjom. I returned by an overnight train. I got on the train in the evening, and across from me sat one or two Koreans. [One Korean and I] both spoke Russian poorly. A Chinese officer came by, I greeted him, and he answered. Soon I nodded off. In the morning, I awoke with a bite on my neck. That Korean [opposite me] showed me. He got up and pulled back the covering. Behind it was a swarm of bedbugs. He systematically squashed one after another. When I got off the train at the station, there was the Chinese officer. I did not know if he had escorted me, but perhaps that was the case. When we left, the conductor called for me to go to the last car because there was some sort of meeting. So they may have known about me.

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Some Korean behavior was incomprehensible for the Czechs and Slovaks. They were especially surprised and disappointed with the position of women. It was not just the heavy work of the women that bothered them but their working conditions. Mynařík recounted a visit in May 1956 to a coal mine that Polish experts had reconstructed:

We arrived at one o'clock in the afternoon, and in a half hour, we went from Sinanju to their camp at the mine. With the agreement of the chief engineer, we had to go down into the mine. We received all of the miners' clothing (they fitted us, but those poor Koreans!) and lamps, and we had to go down by foot! We walked in a stark and muddy terrain. We fell and laughed at our inability. In the horrible heat, we covered about 150 meters in ten minutes. Surprise! Working there were not only men but also female miners. From that point, we had to crawl on our knees, and one was indistinguishable from the other. They had there some sort of continuous miner, but it ran manually.

Communists emphasized the equality of men and women, but Korean society was different. Although North Korea was then described as a friendly people's democracy in which the Workers' Party of Korea had the leading role in society and people are equal, Czechs and Slovaks soon found that in fact the Korean men saw the women as servants. Mynařík wrote in his diary on 26 May 1956:

Opposite my window stands a small house thrown together with mud. A sweaty Korean woman mixes some sort of mortar with a shovel, and her husband further away is playing with the child. I noticed often, for example, even on the street, that the man goes first, and behind him is the woman with bundles and a kid hanging on her. Women here were (and to this day are) considered inferior (apparently, even today, the men defend their ancestral customs). The worst is perhaps in the village. There they work mainly in the fields—predominantly women. The men are talking with their friends. If a man is working somewhere, then the woman is giving birth or is sick, or the man does not have a wife.

Other members also were critical of the position of women in Korea. Kučera noted: "When I saw how the *papasans*, wearing high black horsehair hats and with a few straggly whiskers this long [he gestured], walk with their hands behind their back and their wives, who had children in front of them and behind them and who had a big bag of rice in one hand and rice straw in the other, walked behind them ... that shocked me." Vlček expressed a similar opinion: "In Pyongyang we had a cook who

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was named Kim. When he went shopping, he acted as though he was God. He was three meters in front of his wife, who was loaded with bags. She carried something on her head and even had two children. I said, ‘Kim, man!’ He replied, ‘that’s normal here.’” Vlček noted that North Korean soldiers tended to express superiority. “One of our assistants received some ham. When he did not want any more, he flicked the ash from his cigarette on it. I said, ‘you jerk. Here people are dying [from hunger], and you have become so accustomed [to so much] in a half year.’”

The Perception of the South

There were many reasons for the intense interest the Czechoslovak members had in South Korea. They wanted to see “the enemy,” their army and armaments, and the highly-valued US equipment and technology. They were less impressed with the South’s popular culture, which they considered flooded with low-rated magazines and comic books at the expense of more serious literature. They appreciated the ability to purchase cameras and slide film in the PX at the American bases because they wanted to document their deployment and show others back home life in a faraway country. The Chinese side later supplied some Soviet cameras and films, but the soldiers favored the brands the PX sold, especially Kodak films.

The soldiers wanted to see South Korea and discover how people lived there, but it was not so simple. They rarely came into contact with South Koreans, aside from the personnel in the compounds, like the laundresses and the cleaning staff. The situation worsened after the protests in the summer of 1954, when the Czechoslovak NNSC members were unable to leave their compounds to explore freely. Furthermore, there was a significant language barrier. The NNSC members did not speak Korean, and the few translators available usually remained in and around Panmunjom

The Czechoslovak members of the inspection teams in the five ports in South Korea took a vast number of photographs. Many showed the bizarre narrow lanes with old houses in the typical Korean style with curved roofs and many woodcuts. They also photographed adults, children, and often poor families living in shanty towns. Kučera wrote:

In Gangneung, Incheon, Daegu, Busan, and anywhere one goes, one sees the same housing picture: part of the population, with respect to housing, is poor because they do not have even enough [money] for a small piece of land where they would build a shanty. Land rents for them are too

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high. They do not build their shanty in the village but search for a place with no owner, for example, on the banks of rivers. There, directly on the ground or on posts, they build their shanties. In the spring, of course, the regular flooding comes, which takes even the shanties built on the posts, and then a critical situation arises, which often ends catastrophically Others build their shanties under bridges, still others build dugouts, which they cover with wood or sheet metal. They use the metal from American cans for the roofs of their shanties or dugouts because even material for construction is not free. They have to buy it, and the majority do not have the money for it.

The situation in the North was no better, as he wrote when he described the poor houses. The people in North Korea used everything they found as well. When the members investigated the dog fight between F-86 Sabers and MiG-15s over Onjong-ni, they ran into difficulties when trying to collect the auxiliary fuel tanks the American pilots had scuttled. “The biggest problem was to put together the tanks,” wrote Komárek, who did the photographic documentation for Mobile Inspection Team 5. “The Koreans made sure of that. The people took them apart, cut them up, and put them on their roofs. After the war, every piece of sheet metal was good. Some of the tanks were whole, but several already were cut.” Czechoslovak and Polish members wrote in their report: “Several tanks were ruined when the local inhabitants cut them, and in several cases, the small parts were taken away [from the scene]. It is apparent from the explanation that the group on the ground provided that this results from the habit [that had developed] during the war, when the inhabitants made many useful things from the items they occasionally found.”



Refugee camp built by the US army after a devastating fire in Busan (NJD)

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Kučera described a large fire in a slum in Busan, which Nejedlý had photographed:

Busan is a city of fires. It is natural. The construction materials are wood, wicker, rags, and paper. The sun parches all of that. Then just one carelessly tossed cigarette butt is enough for the houses, which are glued one to the other, to catch fire with tremendous speed and for the fire to spread to the neighbors. It was when we were present that one such large fire broke out only a few hundred meters from our camp. The wind fed the raging flames, which reached a height of five meters. The flames tore through the burning roofs, which came down on the other hovels, giving rise to more and more fires.

An unbelievable panic broke out because the flames soon engulfed the space that once had housed tens of thousands of people. Hopeless people fled in fright and trampled each other. Children perished. Hopelessly disadvantaged, they tried to extinguish the ocean of fire with buckets of water. Nothing could hold back the flames. The flames advanced to the side where the fire had originated and spread further down somewhere.

Kučera added that the Americans helped when hundreds of people lost the roofs over their heads. “The Americans eventually solved [the problem] by housing the homeless in the camps of the former POWs – where there previously had been North Koreans and Chinese.”

Kučera delivered a remarkably complex view of the South in his articles for *Sokolovák*. Although his series strictly copied the official ideological views, he often acknowledged that the situation in the North was no better. “The photographs of the cities in the South exemplified the difficult situation and poverty of the South Korean inhabitants, who one often sell their products directly on the ground [without tables or display counters], just as those in the North.”

Behind the ideological messages in Kučera’s articles, there sometimes were many interesting details. For instance, he described the South Korean fishermen in Gangneung, where there was a cooperative of the type that was typical in the socialist economies. He explained how people in the South got everything possible from the sea: “On the wild rocky cliffs of the shore, one can see women and girls, with turned-up skirts, climbing in the cruel cold to tear small shellfish from the rocks or scrape with a knife from the rocks a type of disgusting green slime, which they then cook and eat.” Kučera also observed the dangerous fishing in Incheon:

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Interesting and at the same time horrible is the work of the fisherman. The ebb and flow of the tide at Incheon are dramatically different. The tide reaches a height of 8 to 12 meters. When that strong tide arrives, the fishermen set out to sea and travel in their boats to the location of undersea swamps. There they wait until the tide recedes, so that the boats will be grounded on the mud. The fishermen then go down into depressions and use their hands to catch a large number of sea creatures that they seldom catch in their nets in the open sea. They know the swamps well and are able to go from one depression to the next. It is a hunt during which the blood of the observers on the shore runs cold because one wrong step is enough for a fisherman to disappear forever in the sticky black mass of mud.

Kučera noted the deep influence of the American presence on South Korean society and tried to compare it with the North: “One difference is that the children on the street offer to clean the shoes of the American MPs. Ten-year-old and seven-year-old boys already have acquired the ‘means of production’ in the form of a box with cleaning supplies. They stopped us on the streets and called to us in their native language: ‘Sirs, clean your shoes!’ MPs riding in their jeeps have the habit of stopping at the curb and sticking out their feet.” He also described other impacts of American culture. “Color posters for American films add to the variety of color on the streets,” noted Kučera. “Korean signs mix with those in English, and Korean carts mix with American luxury cars. Megaphones blare Korean music and American jazz.”

Conclusion

As those who had been deployed on Korean peninsula returned home, they began to recount their experiences to friends and family and in the process painted a picture that was different from that of the official Czechoslovak media. The discrepancies were no secrets because thousands of people personally knew someone who was in Korea or they met Koreans in Czechoslovakia. A total of 792 Korean children lived in Czech orphanages, 420 Koreans studied in technical high schools, and 571 Korean students studied at Czechoslovak universities. The more accurate personal views gradually amended and corrected the official, ideologically driven interpretations in Czechoslovak newspapers, short movies, and books. At first, the short movies were pure propaganda – montages based on official news agency clips that linked the war in Korea with footage from *Neprojdou!* (They Shall Not Cross, 1952) that conveyed the duty to protect Czechoslovakia’s borders. *Buduj í Korea* (Building Korea, 1954)

was about reconstruction. The next three movies maintained a similar general view, but they were shot in Korea, and the most important contributor to those projects was noted Czech film maker Jiří Ployhar (1927-2009), who was part of the Czechoslovak delegation. *Rozdělená země* (Divided Land, 1954) included the commentary of the NNSC member Jiří Kubka (1924-). Next, Ployhar made a film about the work of Czechoslovak doctors and nurses in Chongjin titled *Československá nemocnice v Koreji* (The Czechoslovak Hospital in Korea, 1954). Finally, *Daleko od Prahy* (Far away from Prague, 1956) showed the work of the NNSC.

In 1955, two books appeared. The first was Kubka's fictional *Cestovní příkaz do Kesongu* (Travel Orders to Kaesong). The second was a collection of short stories and essays titled *Diamantové hory* (Diamond Mountains), a collaborative effort of medical doctor Bohumil Eiselt (1913-2013), who had served in the evacuation hospital in Korea, and the writer Pavel Bojar (1919-1999). It offered readers an engaging description of the efforts of the staff at the evacuation hospital to assist Koreans and included some excellent photographs.

Korea had a strong impact on all those who had been deployed there. Their experiences were eye opening. They took home pictures and souvenirs, but their most important acquisitions were the discoveries they had made. Unfortunately, many of them paid a high price for the time they spent in Korea. Some contracted serious physical illnesses that took months or years to cure, and many suffered psychological stress from the long deployment and from the difficulties they had encountered.

Others eventually paid a high price for the new perspectives they had acquired because of their contact with another culture. Most of them had believed in communist ideals, but after their experience in Korea, they lost much of their black-and-white view of the Korean conflict. Circumstances in Korea resulted in many challenging – often times ever so slightly – the orthodox interpretations of the Korean War that the Communist party of Czechoslovakia had advanced. Several of these individuals built respectable careers over the course of a decade and a half after their deployment to Korea, and they were supportive of the liberalization efforts of the 1968 Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia. After the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, many of them lost their jobs because the new Czechoslovak hardline regime of Gustáv Husák (1913-1991) in the 1970s and early 1980s punished not only those who disagreed with the invasion and the end of the Prague Spring reforms but also those who had cultivated any sort of contacts with Westerners or who had spent time in the West. For instance, Vlček, whose experience in

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Korea as a radio operator enabled him to serve in the same capacity at Czechoslovak embassies in Jakarta and Athens, had to work in a factory. The translators and interpreters who later worked as journalists or for foreign trade companies faced the same fate. Švamberk, who was employed with the state-run ČTK press agency, was one translator who lost his job. Ployhar's name no longer appeared in the credits of movies, although many segments of his film clips appeared in compilations about exotic lands. Those who had been workers or who had remained in the military, like Komárek, managed to keep their employment.

English-language version edited by David E. Miller

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Authors of photographs:

FAB	Karel Fabián (b. 1931)
KEL	Jaroslav Keil (b. 1931), translator
KOM	Jaroslav Komárek (b. 1925), head of counter-intelligence unit
MYN	František Mynařík (b. 1933), radio operator
NJD	Zdeněk Nejedlý (b. 1930), translator
PCK	Vladimír Pucek (b. 1933), Koreanist
SAP	Mojmír Sapák (b. 1930), truck driver
SCH	Jaroslav Schystal (b. 1929), motorcycle liaison

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Zídek, Petr: „1950: Ty kluku kimirsenská, já tě mám tak rád.” (I Do Love You, My Kim Il-sung). In: Zídek, Petr: *Češi v srdci temnoty. Sedmadvacet reportáží o prvním čtvrtstoletí komunistů*. (The Czechs in the Heart of Darkness. 27 Reportages on the first 25 years of the Communist Rule). Praha: Knižní klub 2013.

Alex Švamberk (b. 1961) is a Czech journalist, performer, composer and musician. Although he graduated from the Czech Machinery Institute in 1985, since then he has worked as a journalist, both in the field of culture and nowadays as a political commentator.

As a composer and electronic musician, samplist and percussionist he has recorded three CDs with famous Czech jazz piano player Emil Viklický and one with American singer Laure Amat. He has composed music for two theatre plays, and wrote and recorded four suites for Czech radio, three of them with his own lyrics. He also created numerous dance performances, mostly with live music, partly based on *butoh* dance which he studied in Japan in Min Tanaka’s Mai juku.

He has written two book of interviews with leading British and American punk and hardcore musicians *Nenech se zas oblbnout* (Won’t Get Fooled Again, 2006) and *No Future!* (2012).

Because of his interest of oral history and microhistory he started collecting documents and memories of people who served in NNSC, where his father served, too. His major publication in this field is *Nasazen v Koreji* (Stationed in Korea, 2013).

This study has been prepared in co-operation with the Embassy of the Czech Republic and the Czech Center Seoul.

In Memoriam: Alan Heyman (1931 – 2014)

Alan Heyman was a familiar figure for generations of RAS Korea members, leading tours to shamanistic *Kut* performances as well as the royal shrine ceremonies, organizing picnics where Korean musicians provided the entertainment, and lecturing on traditional Korean music while at times providing his own illustrations on various instruments. Perhaps the most remarkable event came near the start of his life in Korea. As *Transactions* reported soon after: “On 16th September, 1960, a reception was held at Kyongmudae (the presidential mansion) at which the President and Mrs Yun Po-sun welcomed the members of the Royal Asiatic Society. This was followed by a banquet in the candle-lit Kyonghoe-ru, the pavilion in the Lotus Pond of the Kyongbok Palace. The regal repast was followed by an excellent programme of Korean classical music, under the able direction of Mr. Alan Heyman.”

He had been growing visibly weaker in recent years, but still he usually appeared at our garden parties and also whenever there was a lecture about Korean music. He finally passed away very quietly at his home on March 1, 2014. RAS Council-member Jeremy Seligson contributed obituaries to the local press but the fullest account of his life is that to be found in Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Heyman and we are reprinting it here as a fitting tribute to a very remarkable man who had to endure some very hard things, yet loved and served Korea to the end.

Alan Charles Heyman (16 March 1931 – 1 March 2014) was a South Korean musicologist and composer. Born in the United States, he first came to South Korea in 1953 with the United States Army during the Korean War, and after completing a graduate degree in music education at Columbia University, moved to South Korea permanently in 1960 to devote himself to research and composition. He led traditional Korean music troupes on tours of North America and Europe, and made significant contributions to the preservation of Korean traditional music,

for which he was recognised with awards from national and international organisations. He gave up his U.S. citizenship to become a South Korean citizen in 1995, and remained in the country until his death in 2014.

In the Korean War

Heyman was born in New York on 16 March 1931 to Charles and Lillian Heyman. He went on to attend the University of Colorado, where he majored in music while also studying a pre-medical course, graduating in 1952. After his graduation, Heyman was drafted into the United States Army. He initially knew nothing about Korea; when informed by his senior officer that he would be stationed in Uijeongbu near the South Korean capital Seoul, he asked, “Excuse me sir, in what part of Japan is Uijeongbu?” He would go on to serve as an army medic and lab technician.

Heyman was first exposed to East Asian music during his Korean War service. In 1953, he was attached to a field hospital unit stationed in Gangwon Province. Chinese and North Korean forces stationed on a nearby mountain would often play loud drum, gong, and taepyeongso music over a loudspeaker late at night, using the sound as a non-lethal weapon to try to keep their enemies sleep-deprived. Most of Heyman’s comrades found the noise irritating. However, it had the opposite effect on Heyman himself, who was enthralled by the music, describing it as “refreshing and interesting”. During the war, he also met the woman who would become his first wife, a nurse.

Heyman returned to the U.S. in 1954. At that point, Heyman did not know the name of the instrument that had so fascinated him, the taepyeongso. He would not find out until after his tour of duty had ended and he had entered Columbia University to start studying towards his master’s degree in music education: a fellow graduate student from South Korea informed Heyman, based on the description he provided, that the sound he heard was that of the taepyeongso, which he analogised to a “conical oboe”. That same friend would encourage Heyman to go back to South Korea and pursue his interest in Korean music.

Return to South Korea

In 1960, the year after U.S. civilians could officially live in South Korea again, Heyman moved to Insa-dong in Seoul. He states that he was the only passenger on the Northwest Airlines flight which brought him back to the country. He enrolled in the Korea Traditional Musical Arts

Conservatory near his house, offering free English lessons in exchange for his studies. He also married the nurse whom he had met during the war. He took on a variety of other odd jobs to support his family. As he was not yet fluent in the Korean language at the time, he faced numerous difficulties in his studies, though he later stated, “Luckily, in music one can learn much by example and observation, without the need for language.” Aside from the taepyeongso, he also learned to play a number of other traditional Korean musical instruments, including the gayageum, the piri, and the janggu, as well as Korean dances such as the talchum and dances related to nongak. Among his teachers was Im Bang-ul (임방울). Though he eventually attained fluency in Korean, he later admitted he did not read hanja very well.

Heyman was initially nervous whether he could find success in his chosen field, but his confidence and reputation grew after a 1962 performance he gave, the first in which a foreigner had performed Korean traditional music on stage. He recalled that “the audience was flabbergasted. They couldn’t believe that they were seeing a foreigner perform Korean music.” He even performed for South Korean president Yun Bo-seon. In 1964, with the sponsorship of the Asia Society, he organised a twenty-seven city tour of the U.S. for traditional Korean music group Sam Chun Li. Among the highlights, they performed at the Lincoln Center and on national television on *The Tonight Show*. However, the tour’s success was damaged by negative rumours about their shows spread by a rival musical group, which resulted in cancellations by 17 out of 27 universities where they had scheduled performances; their sponsors refused to pay the musicians their contracted wages, and Heyman had to make up the difference out of his own pocket.

In 1973, Heyman led another troupe of National Gugak Center musicians on a tour of Europe. Again he ended up incurring unexpected expenses: the troupe arrived in Berlin and took a bus through East Germany on the way to the rest of Europe, but on the way back to Berlin a South Korean consular official in Paris demanded they fly instead of taking the bus, fearing that East German authorities might detain the musicians and turn them over to the North Koreans. Around that time, Heyman also considered moving back to the United States to take a position as an instructor in traditional Korean music and dance at Brown University, but the university cancelled its plans to hire him at the last minute. Instead he chose to remain in South Korea. His first wife died after a protracted struggle with liver cancer in 1985, leaving him with large debts as the couple had lacked insurance to pay for her treatments.

Naturalisation and later life

Heyman applied for naturalisation as a South Korean citizen in 1995, after more than thirty years of living in the country. He first faced a grueling naturalisation test, in which only two students passed the written portion; however, the oral portion was much simpler for him, as his interviewer asked him only to tell the tale of Heungbu and Nolbu, which he knew quite well from his pansori studies. As South Korea did not permit dual citizenship at the time, he then gave up his U.S. citizenship. He took the Korean name Hae Eui-man. In September 2010, he donated a large amount of the research materials he had collected over the years to the National Gugak Center.

In his old age, Heyman suffered from declining health, in particular spinal problems, but maintained good humour about his physical limitations. Heyman died at his home in Hwagok-dong, Seoul on the evening of 1 March 2014. His wake was held at Severance Hospital in Sinchon-dong two days later. He was survived by his second wife Choi Ok-ja, son Seong-gwang, also a scholar of Korean music, another son Seon-ju, an entrepreneur, and daughter Hay Laam, a professor at York University in Canada.

Music and scholarship

In the 1960s, Heyman also began taking an interest in the music of Donald Sur, a Hawaii-born composer whose works drew inspiration from the traditional music of his Korean immigrant forebears, as well as that of Alan Hovhaness and Lou Harrison, who had both visited South Korea and were influenced by the music they encountered there. However, he was an opponent of attempts to adapt Korean music to Western sensibilities in the name of modernisation. In 1985, he was particularly critical of Hwang Byungki's efforts in this regard in the composition *Migung*, calling it "Hwang's one and only venture into the abstract madness of modern music, and it is surely hoped that it will remain just that", and recounting an anecdote of a woman who ran "screaming from the concert hall" upon hearing it performed.

Among the odd jobs that Heyman took to support himself and his wife during his music studies in the 1960s, he composed film scores for various films set in South Korea; by 1968, he had nearly a dozen such credits to his name, mostly documentaries. One non-documentary one was *Northeast of Seoul*, a 1972 thriller directed by David Lowell Rich. His English translation of Im Sok-jae's *Mu-ga: The Ritual Songs of Korean*

Mudangs, sponsored by the Korea Literature Translation Institute, was published by Asian Humanities Press in 2003. In the last years of his life, Heyman worked on what he described as his “*magnum opus*”, translating historical materials relating to the past half-century of the Korean National Folk Arts Festival.

Heyman received various awards recognising his contributions to the study, preservation, and documentation of Korean traditional music. He received a UNESCO cultural award in 1991. In 1995, he was awarded the South Korean government’s Order of Cultural Merit. President Lee Myung-bak awarded Heyman the Silver Crown Order of Cultural Merit in April 2011 in recognition of his contributions to the National Gugak Center. That month he also received an award from the National Gugak Center on the occasion of their 60th anniversary. In June 2011, he was inducted into the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch as an honorary lifetime member.

Christianity, American Missionaries, and Korean Immigration to the United States, 1903-1915

Wayne Patterson

This article¹ will examine the role of American Protestant missionaries and Christianity more generally as they impacted the process of Korean immigration to and settlement in the United States during the early years of the twentieth century. It spans developments in both Korea and the United States, providing a link that suggests that events in Korea contributed to shaping the development of the Korean community in America.

1. Missionary Support for Emigration - Direct

Beginning with the Presbyterian Dr. Horace N. Allen in 1884 soon after the conclusion of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United States in 1882, American Protestant missionaries began to arrive in Korea. Over the next two decades, many of them, like Allen, spent years learning the language and culture of the peninsular kingdom with an eye to converting Koreans to Christianity and helping to alleviate some of the hardships that Koreans endured during the declining years of the Chosŏn dynasty. Allen, for example, used his medical training to that end by founding Korea's first Western hospital. In the process, many of the American missionaries came to sympathize with Korea and Koreans and hoped that their own government would devote more political attention to

¹ This is a revised version of a paper presented at the Im Conference on Korean Christianity at the University of California - Los Angeles on October 21, 2011, and a lecture presented at the Royal Asiatic Society - Korea Branch on June 25, 2013.

the country to prevent it from being swallowed up by the major powers surrounding it. When these missionaries went on home leave, they often lobbied Washington to support Korean independence. These entreaties, however, fell on deaf ears at the State Department, relegating the missionaries to little influence in Korean affairs except at the person-to-person level in Korea itself.²

One missionary, however, the aforementioned Horace Allen, had traded his stethoscope for the frock coat of a diplomat, becoming the US Minister to Korea in 1897. In that more influential position, he pursued what the other missionaries in Korea could not—dollar diplomacy—believing that Washington would pay more attention to Korea if there were more American business interests there. And so when the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association (HSPA) approached him in the fall of 1902 seeking his help to import Korean laborers to offset the majority Japanese laborers, he saw an opportunity to add yet another American investment to the growing, yet still miniscule, list of American business concerns in Korea. Allen's actions opened the door for some 7,500 Koreans to begin moving to Hawaii in January of 1903, a movement that would continue until the summer of 1905.³

Although it was now legal to emigrate to the United States, Hawaii, recently incorporated as a US Territory, and the US mainland were far removed geographically, culturally, and psychologically from the experience of the average rural farmer who made up the vast majority of Koreans at the turn of the century. Indeed, most Koreans did not even know exactly where that country was: "My father said that he did not even know where it [the United States] was located except that he heard it was somewhere in the west, thousands of miles across the seas." For Koreans, it was one thing to cross the northern border into China or Russia, a movement that had proceeded unofficially since the 1860s as Korea's domestic troubles intensified. After all, one could always return to Korea if necessary on short notice and with a minimum of difficulty. Going to America, however, was a different ball game entirely, and despite the plethora of "push" factors, there was no guarantee that Koreans would seize the opportunity to travel across the ocean. It was American

² See Fred Harvey Harrington, "An American View of Korean-American Relations, 1866-1905," in Yur-Bok Lee and Wayne Patterson, editors. *Korean-American Relations, 1866-1997*. Albany: SUNY University Press, 1999, p. 47.

³ For more detail on Allen's motives and actions, see the discussion in my *The Korean Frontier in America: Immigration to Hawaii, 1896-1910*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994, pp. 19-30.

missionaries at the local level in Korea who helped “pull” the Koreans toward America both directly as well as indirectly.⁴

Perhaps one of the earliest and best examples of a missionary who actively and directly encouraged emigration was the Methodist missionary Reverend George Heber Jones [Cho Wŏn-si]. A personal friend of Allen, Jones advised his parishioners to emigrate, telling them that the weather and scenery in Hawaii were very agreeable and that, as Christians, they could set up a church there and evangelize. As a result of his exhortation, more than fifty of his followers volunteered to go in the first boatload. Before they departed, Jones held a large tent meeting to prepare them, supplied them with literature, and handed a few of them letters of introduction to the Superintendent of Methodist Missions in Hawaii, Reverend George L. Pearson. So pervasive was the Christian influence among this first group that during this pioneer voyage they organized a prayer-meeting in the steerage of their ship and carried on Christian work among their fellow emigrants.⁵

2. Missionary Support for Emigration - Indirect

Most of the American missionaries, however, influenced emigration indirectly by giving Koreans the impression that the United States was a paradise. This occurred in several ways. Some missionaries passed on reports of the good experiences of the Koreans who had already gone to Hawaii. One such missionary was Homer Hulbert, the editor of the *Korea Review*. Hulbert weighed in early, during the first month of the movement, citing compulsory education, religious opportunity, comparatively short working hours, and the opportunity to learn “valuable” lessons. Seven months later, he wrote that “those Koreans who have been in Hawaii for

⁴ Wayne Patterson, editor. *The Golden Mountain: The Autobiography of a Korean Immigrant, 1895-1960*, by Easurk Emsen Charr. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996, p. 89.

⁵ George Heber Jones, *Korea – The Land, People, and Culture*. Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham; New York: Easton and Manis, 1907, p. 108; Hyun Soon [Hyŏn Sun], “My Autobiography.” Honolulu: Center for Korean Studies, University of Hawaii, n.d., p. 61; No Chae-yŏn, *ChaeMi Hanin Saryak* [A Short History of Koreans in America]. Vol. 1. Los Angeles: America Printing Company, p. 2; Hyŏn Sun, *P’owa yuram-ki* [A Record of a Sightseeing Trip to Hawaii]. Seoul: Hyŏn Kong-yŏm, 1909, p. 5; Reverend John W. Wadman, “Educational Work Among the Koreans.” *Report of the Supervisor of Public Instruction to the Governor of the Territory of Hawaii, December 21, 1910 to December 31, 1912*. Honolulu: Hawaiian Gazette Company, 1913, p. 146.

some time seem, so far as the letters we have seen convey intelligence on this point, to be getting along very well, and their children are within reach of modern schools and advantages.”⁶

Hulbert also published glowing reports written by others. An article in the *Korea Review* by Reverend Pearson concluded that the Koreans “have received good treatment and they generally are well pleased with their homes, advantages and prospects.” And, the Presbyterian missionary S. F. Moore in his “One Night with the Koreans in Hawaii,” also published by Hulbert in the same journal, noted that the Koreans were well treated on the plantations.⁷

Other missionaries influenced Koreans indirectly by the messages in their sermons. For example, the missionaries linked Christianity with the good life in America. As one student of the Methodist missionary Henry Appenzeller noted, “To the timid, stoical Korean, the message [of Christianity] was one of hope and life. Eagerly he asked of its power and a sample of its results. The one was told him by the missionaries, the other was pointed out to him in the advanced life of the United States. Soon the United States was the hope for Korea, for was it not there that the wondrous Cross had brought beneficent results? Was it not there that the pagan ceased from troubling and the Christian could rest? Was it not worth the while of any timid, down-trodden Korean laborer to make the attempt of reaching this haven of peace and plenty?”⁸ Even the homes of the missionaries indirectly influenced the Koreans to emigrate to the United States. When Koreans visited missionary homes, they caught a glimpse of typical American life. Horace Allen, for one, noted that Koreans “admire the comforts of the home life of the strangers.” When one young Korean saw the missionaries’ houses, he said “High above the others, those houses seem like some fairyland palaces! How calm and peaceful they look! Just look at those windows dazzling in the golden glow of the setting sun! That’s Goom-San, or the Land of the Golden Mountain. It must be a beautiful country, indeed, and a big, strong and rich country!”⁹

⁶ *Korea Review*, January, 1903, p. 30; *Korea Review*, August, 1903, Pp. 365-366.

⁷ *Korea Review*, December, 1903, pp. 529-532; *Korea Review*, January, 1904, p.31; see also Lillias Horton Underwood, *Fifteen Years Among the Top-Knots, or Life in Korea*. New York, Boston, and Chicago: American Tract Company, 1904, p. 174.

⁸ Tai Sung Lee, “The Story of Korean Immigration,” *Korean Student Association Annual*. Honolulu, 1932, pp. 47-49.

⁹ Horace Allen, quoted in Fred Harvey Harrington, *God, Mammon, and the*

Koreans were also impressed by and became familiar with, western dress: “And all the time Ma Moksa [Reverend Samuel Moffett] was standing there preaching I watched him most intently, observing how he looked, how he was dressed, and how he preached, and dreaming if I could only be like him some day. If I could not be an American-born like him, at least I could dress like him and preach like him, I thought. Yes, I wished that I could go to Me-Gook some day and come back as a missionary to my native country!”¹⁰

Mission schools also reduced the distance between things Korean and American for the students enrolled in them, making a possible life in a new country seem less daunting. In Moffett’s Sungsil School in P’yŏngyang with its Western curriculum, “The new missionary school taught geography, arithmetic, and many other new things that the old fashioned schools had never taught.”¹¹

Koreans who were treated by missionary doctors using Western medicine increased the admiration of America on the part of the patient. One young Korean who was cured of an eye infection proclaimed that “I wanted to become a doctor like [the Presbyterian missionary] Dr. Wells. My father said there was no doctor school in the country that he knew of. To learn to be a doctor, he said, the only place to go was the place where the doctor had come from, which was Me-gook.” In sum, Koreans who had interacted with missionaries had become familiar with the English language, Christianity, western dress, western houses, western medicine, a western curriculum, and life in America to a certain degree. It should be no surprise that Koreans who had experienced these would be more likely to emigrate to America than those Koreans who had not. But not all American missionaries supported emigration to the United States.¹²

3. Missionary Opposition to Emigration

Despite this encouragement, both direct and indirect, there were some missionaries who opposed emigration to the United States, centered

Japanese: Dr. Horace N. Allen and Korean-American Relations, 1884-1905. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1944, p. 58; Wayne Patterson, editor, *The Golden Mountain*, p. 71.

¹⁰ Wayne Patterson, editor, *The Golden Mountain*, p. 101.

¹¹ Wayne Patterson, editor, *The Golden Mountain*, p. 89.

¹² Wayne Patterson, editor, *The Golden Mountain*, p. 89. The reference here is to ten-year old Easurk Emsen Charr [Cha Ŭi-sŏk] whose uncle had been baptized by Reverend Horace G. Underwood.

around the Presbyterians in P'yŏngyang. One reason for the opposition, raised by Moffett, was that the Korean emigrants were unwitting participants in the violation of the US immigration laws against contract labor because they had signed work agreements stipulating hours, wages, and working conditions before they had left Korea. Allen, who was the prime mover behind the emigration, moved quickly to counter this threat by enlisting Homer Hubert to carry an article in his *Korea Review* regarding the "mistaken impression on the part of a few of the foreign residents in Korea that the work in sending Koreans to work in the sugar fields of Hawaii is contrary to U. S. law." In fact, changes in the recruitment procedures brought the process into compliance with American law, undercutting this argument by the missionaries.¹³

A second reason Moffett and others opposed emigration was that the Korean emigrants to Hawaii would be "liable to suffer ill usage or be demoralized." Allen was quick to counter that charge as well by pointing out that "the move on their part seems to be one that you of all men would be glad to encourage. The chief men of the islands are Christians – sons of missionaries - and the sabbath is kept and church going is encouraged." Moreover, "as the movement is one that seems to be desired by our own people and most beneficial in every way for the Koreans, I ask you to withhold judgment until you are better informed."¹⁴

A third complaint was based on jurisdictional disputes and denominational jealousies. Moffett wrote to his superiors in New York that of those who had emigrated to America, "a far larger number of men less advanced and of less hopeful character have gone to Hawaii." And since "we have no work in Hawaii, the result is likely to be a transfer of their allegiance to the Methodist Church and we ought not to lose them."¹⁵

The fourth and main reason for missionary opposition, however, was that emigration took promising young men away from Christian work in Korea. While acknowledging that "in a country as wretchedly ruled as this there is beginning to be much restlessness and a desire to get out of it is not to be wondered at," Reverend William Baird's report in the *Monthly Station Letter* argued that the sugar plantations of Hawaii are "not the best place for the development of the Korean Christians, and the only hope for

¹³ *Korea Review*, August, 1903, pp. 365-66.

¹⁴ Allen to Moffett, February 25, 1903, *Correspondence. Allen MSS.* New York Public Library.

¹⁵ Moffett to Brown, October 20, 1904, Presbyterian Church in the USA, *Korean Letters*, Vol. 234, Reel 281. Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

their country is for those who are Christians to stay here and help to overcome the wrongs here.”¹⁶

Baird went on to criticize other missionaries, both in Korea and the United States, for encouraging emigration. In one case, he cited a letter written to students in Korea by a Korean who had recently gone to San Francisco inviting them to leave and giving them the impression that they would be able to support themselves by work furnished by Christian schools. The result of that letter, claimed Baird, “was to discredit all I had said to the pupils against their going to America.” To prevent an exodus, Baird recommended against an “unwise expenditure of benevolence” on the part of missionaries that are “putting irresistible temptations” in front of Korean young men and “filling with discontent and restless longings the minds of many.”¹⁷

Sallie Swallen voiced her own opposition: “We have never known such unrest among the Koreans due to the excitement of so many going to the Hawaiian Islands to work on sugar plantations, and the dreadful hard times.” She admitted that “we can’t blame them for wanting to go to America, and yet we do not encourage their going.” Instead, “we would rather the Christian people would remain here and do what they can.”¹⁸

More than a year later, the P’yŏngyang Presbyterians were still complaining that emigration was taking their Christian students and that they were forced to try to dissuade some from leaving. In one case in which their students left, William Baird wrote that “We very much deplored their going because they were promising boys of some Christian experience and we needed them here.” They were needed as teachers, “especially since we find it hard to get a sufficient force of foreign teachers” and “native trained men could do invaluable work.” And Reverend Charles Bernheisel complained in his diary that three baptized persons and four catechumens had gone to Hawaii under the influence of a Christian evangelist, whose “influence has been very detrimental to this

¹⁶ William M. Baird to Frank Ellinwood, March 21, 1903 (Monthly Station Letter, P’yŏngyang), Presbyterian Church in the USA, *Korean Letters*, Vol. 233, Reel 280.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* Baird also claimed that some Koreans resorted to theft and lies in order to get to America.

¹⁸ Sallie Swallen to Jennie Ashbrook, October 9, 1903, *Mrs. William L. (Sallie) Swallen Letters, 1901-1903*. In *Samuel H. Moffett, Documents*, No. 6. In the possession of his son, the Reverend Samuel A. Moffett, Seoul. Used with permission.

group where he spent a good deal of time that should have been given to preaching to the heathen.”¹⁹

Due in part to Allen’s efforts, the changes in recruiting procedures, and mostly the popularity of emigration among the Koreans themselves, the P’yöngyang Presbyterian missionaries eventually reconciled themselves to the fact that Koreans would continue to depart for the US. Consequently, they abandoned their overt opposition as ineffectual and did the next best thing by eliciting promises from the intending emigrants that they would eventually return to Korea. Such a scene occurred when Easurk Emsen Charr [Cha Ŭi-sök] went to see his mentor: “I didn’t forget to say goodbye to Reverend Moffett who baptized me. When I went over to his home that evening and told him I was on my way to America, he said, ‘Oh, how nice, Easurk! I’m glad, and I wish you all the success from your trip.’ Then he asked me what I intended to learn in America. When I told him that I intended to learn to be a doctor and return as a medical missionary from America, he was delighted and said, ‘That’s just fine. We need more doctors, especially Korean doctors for the Korean people. May God bless you and keep you until your return as a Christian doctor.’” Few, however, would keep their promises to return, Charr among them.²⁰

In short, despite the opposition of some of the Presbyterian missionaries in P’yöngyang, emigration to the United States remained so popular that they were unable to hold back the tide. The recruiter, David Deshler, wrote that emigration to Hawaii “had the approval of the majority of the missionaries, who saw in the work an opportunity for Koreans to improve their condition and to acquire useful knowledge and to better themselves financially.”²¹

4. The Linkage between Christianity and Emigration

Of course, not all of the emigrants were Christians. But the evidence suggests that the great majority, if not card-carrying Christians, had had at least some contact with Christian missionaries. The reason for that is that

¹⁹ William M. Baird to John Baird, May 19, 1904, in *Samuel H. Moffett, Documents, no. 6*; Reverend Charles F. Bernheisel *Diary*, November 9, 1904, in *Ibid.*

²⁰ Wayne Patterson, editor, *The Golden Mountain*, p. 113.

²¹ David Deshler to Huntington Wilson (Charge d’affaires, American Legation in Tokyo), undated, Enclosure in Huntington Wilson to Elihu Root, January 27, 1906. Hawaii, Territory, *Governors Files, Carter-U.S. Departments, State (October 1905-June 1907)*. Hawaii State Archives, Honolulu.

the cohort of emigrants closely resembled the cohort attracted to Christianity. That is, both were overwhelmingly younger rather than older, more likely to be urban dwellers than rural dwellers, more likely to be unemployed or employed in urban-type jobs than in farming, and often more likely to be recent migrants to the cities after being uprooted from their ancestral homes in the countryside by some combination of war, rebellion, famine, drought, disease, oppressive taxes, corrupt officials, poverty, or banditry. Because most American missionaries were based in the cities, they attracted these young, urban, rootless males on the margins of society who were open to any opportunity that presented itself, either the new religion of Christianity or emigration to the United States or both.²²

Although there is a strong correlation between Christianity, American missionaries, and those who chose to emigrate to the United States, it would not be correct to say that religion was the main reason for their decision to emigrate. Rather, the main reason was a combination of bleak prospects in Korea combined with good reports of life and work in the United States. That is, Christianity functioned as an intervening variable, making the decision to leave easier because those Koreans were more familiar with Americans and American culture through their association, however tenuous, with American missionaries. That is, if a Korean were Christian, it increased the likelihood that they would choose to emigrate.²³

Although statistics are notoriously inexact, it is estimated that at the beginning of the twentieth century there were perhaps only one hundred thousand Korean Christians in a country of ten million, representing no more than one percent of the population. Aware of the close connection between Christianity, American missionaries, and the desire or willingness to go to America, David Deshler wisely selected Korean Christians, like Hyōn Sun, to assist him in the recruitment effort. And since most of the likely emigrants were to be found where the missionaries themselves were located, Deshler located his dozen or so recruiting offices [the *Dong-Sō Kaebal Hoesa*, or East-West Development Company] in the cities. In this way, Deshler was able to send the 7,500 Koreans to Hawaii, many of whom had some sort of connection to missionaries and Christianity, before Japan, citing emigration irregularities, forced Korea to suspend emigration in the summer of 1905.

²² Wayne Patterson, *The Korean Frontier in America*, Pp. 103-104. Just as few yangban were Christians at that time, just so, few yangban chose to emigrate.

²³ Wayne Patterson, *The Korean Frontier in America*, pp. 103-113.

At the same time that emigration came to a halt, Horace Allen was relieved of his post, having failed in his attempt to use dollar diplomacy to persuade Washington to support Korean independence. President Theodore Roosevelt seemed prepared to allow Japan to take over Korea at the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War.²⁴

5. Christianity on the Plantations – The *Tonghoe*

But Korea was still an independent country in the summer of 1905, and its Foreign Minister, Yi Ha-yŏng, decided to reform the emigration process so that Koreans could once again travel abroad. To that end, he selected his Vice-Foreign Minister, Yun Ch'i-ho, to go on an inspection tour of the Koreans in Hawaii. Upon his arrival, Yun was accompanied on his visits to the various plantations by the Methodist Reverend John W. Wadman, who had succeeded Reverend Pearson in the previous year. At the plantations, they found that the Koreans, being mostly single young men, exhibited behavior typical of many young men away from the constraining influences of their elders and traditional mores—drinking, gambling, swearing, fighting, and committing sexual assault. As Wadman observed, “The Koreans are in a very needy condition and fearfully immoral influences prevail among them. Gambling and drinking are common practices. Their reputation is very bad indeed.”²⁵

Yun and Wadman saw Christianity as the solution to this moral breakdown—a logical conclusion given Wadman’s position and Yun’s own Christian views honed by his Methodist seminary training at Vanderbilt University and Emory University. By Yun’s reckoning, those Koreans who were Christians or who worked on plantations where there was a strong Christian presence were more content, better behaved, and law-abiding. But Yun spent only a month in Hawaii before returning to Korea, and the Planters were more interested in how the Koreans worked in the fields and less in what the Koreans did on their own time. Consequently, it

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-102.

²⁵ Reverend John W. Wadman, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Hawaiian Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1904-1905*, December 29, 1905. Appears as “Methodists in Hawaii Are Making Progress.” *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, January 1, 1906. Yun was also slated to visit Mexico, where one thousand Koreans had emigrated, but his plan was thwarted by the Japanese. With the establishment of the Protectorate in November of 1905, the Japanese effort to halt emigration was completed. See Wayne Patterson, “Immigration and Imperialism, A New Look at the Japanese Takeover of Korea,” *Acta Koreana*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (June 2011), pp. 267-274.

fell to the Koreans themselves to police their plantation-based communities. And it was Christian principles that contributed to this policing.²⁶



Yun Ch'i-ho (seated center) visits the Korean day school,
Korean Methodist Episcopal Church, September, 1905

Because Korean plantation society was largely made up of young bachelors, the few married women and their teenaged daughters inevitably faced the risk of sexual assault. One interviewer noted, “Most Koreans were young and unfamiliar with cultured life. There was need of protecting the 600 families. Drunkenness and unruly manners among these unmarried Koreans had to be defended against.” One put it bluntly: “Koreans were ignorant and made many problems for women.” And a nineteen-year-old woman remembered her parents warning her that “inasmuch as I was a teenager, I was told to stay away from the ‘bad’ plantation workers.”²⁷

²⁶ *Yun Ch'i-ho Ilgi* [Diary], September 11, 13, and 20, 1905. ed. Kuksa p'yŏnch'an wiwŏnhoe. Seoul: T'amgudang, 1973-1976.

²⁷ Kingsley K. Lyu, “Korean Nationalist Activities in Hawaii and America, 1901-1945.” Typescript. University of Hawai'i, Hamilton Library, 1950, pp. 30-31; Kim Hyŏng-sun interview with Bong-Youn Choy, March 26, 1976 (in the possession of the author); Harold Hakwon Sunoo and Sonia Shinn Sunoo, “The Heritage of the First Korean Women Immigrants in the United States: 1903-1945,” *Korean Christian Scholars Journal*, 2 (Spring 1977), p. 153.

Consequently, Koreans on the plantations spontaneously developed organizations known as *tonghoe* or village councils that were based at least in part on Christian principles. The leaders of these organizations were invariably some combination of Christians, those few with families, and/or those few who had been farmers. The *tonghoe* aimed to protect the few females and to establish a modicum of stability for those who might remain working on the plantations for the long term. The *tonghoe* included a headman or mayor (*tongjang*), a chief of police (*sachal*), and a police force (*kyǒngchal*). The council drew up rules and regulations outlawing the kinds of behavior that most Christians would oppose – drinking, swearing, gambling, fighting, illicit sexual relations, and sexual assault. Penalties included warnings, fines, floggings, being placed in stocks, and, as a last resort, banishment for repeat offenders.²⁸

The efforts of the *tonghoe* met with success and soon nearly all plantations with Koreans had them. Interpreter Hyǒn Sun noted that “the morale of Korean villages became better gradually. As these types of self-regulations proliferated, Korean wanderers decreased.” The *tonghoe* also made certain plantations more attractive to Christian Koreans with families: “The news about our self-ruling Kahuku Korean camp was spread all over Hawaii. Many married Koreans came to the Kahuku Camp. The outstanding persons I still remember are mostly Christian families from Pyung Yang.” As further evidence of the *tonghoe*’s success in maintaining law and order, “the local authorities tacitly recognized the self-government of the Koreans in each camp, for they generally accepted what the Koreans had done among themselves whenever any lawbreakers were dealt with.” In short, although the *tonghoe* were not, in and of themselves, overtly Christian organizations, they did promote many aspects of Christian probity.²⁹

6. Christianity on the Plantations – Korean Churches and Pastors

²⁸ Bernice Bong-hee Kim, “The Koreans in Hawaii.” Master’s thesis, University of Hawai’i, 1937, pp. 108-112; Kim Wǒn-yong, *ChaeMi Hanin osimynǒnsa* [A Fifty-Year History of Koreans in America]. Reedley: Charles Ho Kim, 1959, p. 85; Hyǒn Sun, *P’owa yuram-ki*, p. 7; Hyun Soon, “My Autobiography,” pp. 62-63; Lyu, “Korean Nationalist Activities,” pp. 30-33. Lyu cites interviews with Lee Kyungshik, Cho Pyung-ho, Nahm Chanchō, and Lee Hong-ki, the first of whom was the sachal at Camp Four, Makweli, Kauai, in 1906.

²⁹ Lyu, p. 31; Hyǒn Sun, *P’owa yuram-ki*, p. 7; Hyun Soon, “My Autobiography,” pp. 63-64.

Korean Immigration

In addition to the *tonghoe*, a second aspect of Christianity that impinged on the Korean plantation experience was the formation of Korean churches, initially organized by the Koreans themselves. According to one account, the first organized worship service was held as early as July 4, 1903, less than six months after the arrival of the first Koreans. At another plantation, “we organized a Christian church and about fifty persons worshipped God every Sunday morning.” Since there were no Korean churches yet built, services were held in the boardinghouse kitchens. The pastors were plantation workers who had had some missionary training in Korea.³⁰



Ewa Korean Methodist Episcopal Church, 1913

The Korean church initiative elicited a favorable response from a few of the plantation managers. For example, the Koreans on Ewa Plantation collected three hundred dollars and requested that a church be built. The manager “was greatly pleased and said that they were better than he because they believed in God firmly even though they were laborers.” As a result, he donated \$750 to build a church and used the \$300 collected by the Koreans to furnish it. The church was dedicated on April 30, 1905 with 110 people in attendance.³¹

³⁰ Sarah Lee Yang, “75 Years of Progress for the Koreans of Hawaii,” *75TH Anniversary of Korean Immigration to Hawaii, 1903-1978*. Honolulu: 75th Anniversary of Korean Immigration to Hawaii Committee, 1978, p. 17; Hyun Soon, p. 63; Bernice Kim, pp. 137-138.

³¹ Hyōn Sun, p. 9; E. Leigh Stevens (Assistant Secretary, Castle and Cooke, Inc.)

As these Korean churches sprang up spontaneously, the Methodist missionary establishment deemed it necessary to bring them under its authority. As Homer Hulbert observed when he arrived in Hawaii in 1905, Reverend Wadman “makes frequent trips throughout the islands visiting the Koreans and looking after their religious and educational interests. He has enrolled over 1,600 men and women on the records of the church, as members or probationers, and seven chapels have been erected.” Wadman also organized a cohort of Korean Methodist ministers, some of whom were attached to particular plantations, while others itinerated among several plantations. These ministers also acted as mediators: As one remembered, “Besides preaching, I used to help the welfare of the Koreans and straighten [out] misunderstandings between the Korean workers and the plantation officers.” Some also offered language classes—Korean language for the children and English language for the adults. On occasion, some of these pastors were subsidized by individual plantation managers. This *ad hoc* construction of Korean chapels and provision of salaries for Korean pastors by the individual plantations did not go unnoticed by Wadman.³²

Because these pastors engaged in preaching, converting, teaching, interpreting, and mediating on the plantation, Wadman believed that he could persuade the planters in a systematic approach to support his mission work among the Koreans financially. The planters at that time had two major complaints against the Koreans. The first was that the Koreans were poor agricultural workers, not surprising since they were from the cities, and thus were less useful as an offset to the Japanese. The second was that Koreans were becoming increasingly unstable by “plantation hopping” or worse, moving to the city. The planters had already been told by Yun that Christian Koreans made better plantation workers, and that a strong Christian presence on the plantations would make Koreans more stable. Wadman now argued that his Korean pastors could make the Koreans work harder and keep them on the plantation. Wadman specifically wanted the plantation managers to contribute in two ways: building chapels for the Koreans and paying the salaries of the Korean pastors. In return, he had to promise that the Koreans would be better workers: “I am arranging for the bearer of this [letter], Rev. Mr. Kim, pastor of the Ewa plantation, to visit your plantation once or twice a week

to the author, May 7, 1976; Sarah Lee Yang, p. 17.

³² Wadman, “Educational Work Among the Koreans,” pp. 146-150; Homer Hulbert, “Koreans in Hawaii,” *Korea Review*, November, 1905, pp. 411-413; Hyun, pp. 66-67.

so as to try and get these men to do better [work] and help all he can to bring about a better state of things.” To another manager Wadman wrote that “wherever our little Church is established and a faithful pastor resides with his [illegible] school and night classes, besides his Sunday services, a better class of people is raised up and a more healthy moral atmosphere prevails. It really pays.” Besides creating better workers, Wadman was quick to point out that his churches also were more likely to keep the Koreans from leaving: “These little chapels which we are building like the ones we have put up at Ewa, Kahuku, Waialua, Eleele, etc, etc, help greatly to keep the Koreans in one place and so in the end it pays the plantation for any [illegible] they may feel disposed to make in this direction.”³³

In general, Wadman was successful in his efforts to have the planters erect chapels and subsidize his pastor’s salaries subsidized. However, although these efforts increased the Christian orientation of the Korean community, they did little to improve the work habits of Koreans or to keep them on the plantation. In fact, the Koreans recorded the fastest departure rate from the plantations of the 32 different ethnic groups in Hawaii’s history. Consequently, after a decade of financial support, plantation managers became increasingly unwilling to contribute to pastors’ salaries. “Mr. Wadman made promises which he has not lived up to and in the writer’s opinion the monthly donation should be afterwards considered on its merits if it should be continued or not,” wrote one plantation manager. Moreover, the dwindling number of Koreans on the plantations meant that the Koreans could not help defray such expenses, despite Wadman’s assurances that “he would endeavor to collect from the Koreans further contributions.” And, the Methodist Church found itself on the brink of a factional split, resulting in Wadman’s resignation in 1914.³⁴

Wadman was succeeded by Reverend William Henry Fry who continued to appeal to the individual plantation managers to subsidize the salaries of the Korean pastors. He did this by saying that he would bring them back to the plantations from the city. But once having made the move to the city, primarily Honolulu, Koreans were loath to return to what

³³ Wadman to Bull, December 9, 1904; Wadman to Watt, October 17, 1905, OSC 5/12. HSPAPA [Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association Plantation Archives]. Aiea, Hawaii; Wadman to Bull, May 11, 1906. PSC 19/12. HSPAPA. Chapels generally cost several hundred dollars to construct and the salaries for the pastors were about double the wage of the average worker, in the range of \$30-\$35.

³⁴ Morrison to F. A. Schaefer and Co, Ltd. June 1, 1911, HSC2/10; F. A. Schaefer to Morrison, June 18, 1911, HSC 5/1. HSPAPA.

was, in Hawaiian terms, the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder. As a result, the managers largely rejected his overtures: "I am in receipt of your [Fry's] letter of the 18th instant with reference to placing your Korean Pastor, Rev. Y. T. Cho on our pay roll at \$18 per month. Your letter has had my careful attention, but I regret to have to inform you that I do not see my way to grant your request in this connection. At the present time we only have one Korean on our pay roll. I am very sorry to disappoint you in this connection, but feel under the circumstances that I cannot do otherwise."³⁵

7. Christianity and Factionalism

A final word is necessary on the confluence between Christianity and political factionalism among the Koreans in Hawaii. The most prominent example of this was the formation of the Korean Christian Church that split off from the Methodist Church in the late 1910s. While some of this stemmed from disagreements over financial issues, educational issues, and the role of Reverend Wadman, the primary cause of the split was a struggle for power for power in the Korean community between Syngman Rhee and his *Dongjihoe* [Comrade Society], with which the Korean Christian Church was affiliated, and the *Kungminhoe* [Korean National Association] which was affiliated with the Methodist Church. These two groups remained at odds with each other for most of the next three decades. This article will not deal with this example in detail since it is covered elsewhere in more detail, but rather will look briefly at an earlier example of the confluence between religion and factional politics at the very beginning of the formation of the Korean community in Hawaii.³⁶

Most of the Koreans in Hawaii identified themselves as Methodists, as the Presbyterians in P'yōngyang had feared, and, not surprisingly, most of the organizations that Koreans founded were dominated by those of that persuasion. One notable example was the *Sinminhoe*, or New Peoples Society, founded in Hawaii in late 1903 as the first avowedly political society. Its leader was Hong Sōng-ha, a close collaborator with Reverend Pearson, and its program called for reform of the home government in Korea. However, a conservative faction of that

³⁵ Eckart to Fry, January 25, 1915, PSCV.160. By the mid-1920s, the number of Koreans on the plantation had dwindled to little more than several hundred.

³⁶ For a complete look at this episode, see David K. Yoo, *Contentious Spirits: Religion in Korean American History, 1903-1945*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010, pages 58-82.

society arose against the more radical Methodist leadership, charging that they were traitors to Korea and labeling it the *Yōkjōkhoe*, or the Traitors Society. This opposition faction, upset by the Methodist monopoly in leadership roles, aligned itself with the small Episcopalian mission in Hawaii. Its Bishop, Reverend Henry Restarick, noticed that “a number of [Koreans], mostly non-Christian, came to me in the summer of 1905 and asked me to minister to them.” He may have had an inkling that they had come to him for political rather than religious reasons because he observed that Koreans “are not an easy people to deal with, as they are divided into factions which quarrel and sometimes come to blows.” As a result of the factionalism, the Sinminhoe disintegrated and its leader Hong returned to Korea and resurrected the Sinminhoe there in 1907 with Tosan An Ch’ang-ho. The early career of Kim Ik-sōng, the Episcopalian leader of the opposition faction, is instructive in looking at the linkage between religion and factionalism. Kim led a group of about fifty to form a new society, the *Ch’inmokhoe* [Friendly Society] in 1905, which later became the *Ch’ōnhŭng Hyōphoe* [Lightning Flourishing Society] in 1907. Kim had by this time taken the name Isaiah and in 1907 became the first lay reader of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church. When the Korean community attempted to unify politically in 1907 and again in 1909, the *Ch’ōnhŭng Hyōphoe* remained outside the fold until it finally agreed to unite in the spring of 1910 with the Methodist-dominated *Kungminhoe* [Korean National Association].³⁷

8. Conclusion

Clearly, Christianity and American missionaries were intimately involved in both the emigration process in Korea as well as the formation of a Korean community in Hawaii during the early years of the twentieth century. It began with missionaries painting a bright picture of life in the United States and encouraging, either directly or indirectly, emigration to the United States, despite the opposition of some missionaries who wanted Korean Christians to remain in Korea. Moreover, the small minority of Koreans who were initially attracted to Christianity shared the same

³⁷ “History of St. Lukes,” 75th Anniversary of Korean Immigration to Hawaii, 1903-1978; Rt. Reverend Henry B. Restarick, *Hawaii, 1778-1920 from the Viewpoint of a Bishop*. Honolulu: Paradise of the Pacific, 1924, p. 319; *Hawaiian Church Chronicle* (successor to the *Anglican Church Chronicle*), September, 1908; Wayne Patterson, *The Ilse: First-Generation Korean Immigrants in Hawaii, 1903-1973*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000, pp. 49-53.

characteristics of those who would choose to emigrate to the United States. Once on the sugar plantations in Hawaii, Christian principles served as one major component in the formation of a nascent Korean community, the tonghoe. Additionally, central to the Korean communities on the plantations were churches staffed by native pastors, in affiliation with Methodist missionary leaders in Hawaii. Indeed, Christian churches were so central to the early Korean experience in America that they became inevitably caught up in the factional struggles which would come to characterize the Korean community.

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1945: Korea Faces a Post-Colonial Industrial Future

Bill Streifer

The following is a reprint of an article by Dr. Fritz Johann Hansgirg, a brilliant electrochemist and metallurgist. The text “Korea’s Industrial Development” originally appeared in the April 1945 edition of the *Korea Economic Digest*, a publication of the Korea Economic Society based in New York City. It is of especial interest in that it was written and published even before the surrender of Japan and the subsequent liberation of the Korean peninsula.

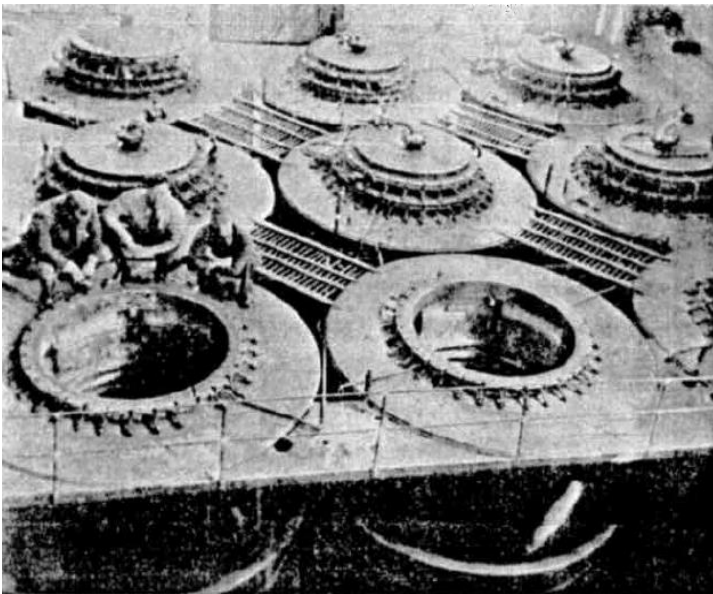
Born in Graz, Austria in 1891, Dr. Hansgirg received his Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of Graz. In 1928, he invented the carbothermic magnesium reduction process at his laboratory in Rodentheim, Austria. Then in 1935, he was invited by the Japanese industrialist Jun Noguchi to set up a magnesium plant at the Chosen Nitrogen Fertilizer Complex in northern Korea at Hungnam—known as “Konan” by the Japanese. At the time, Korea was a colony of Japan.

In addition to magnesium, Hansgirg helped the Japanese develop a “cracking” plant (used to break down crude oil into its various component parts), an electro-iron process, and a plant to produce synthetic gemstones. Hansgirg also urged the Japanese to build a pilot plant to produce heavy water by a process he had recently invented at his laboratory at Konan. And yet, despite the potential to produce various war materials, and perhaps heavy water, the plant where Hansgirg had worked for three years was never once bombed during the war.

Although Hansgirg was later hired as a chemical consultant to the South Manchurian Railway in Dairen, he remained in contact with his Japanese industrial projects in Korea until 1940. When Japan became so completely pro-Axis and hostile to foreigners, Hansgirg decided to depart Japan for the United States in the hope of helping to develop the magnesium industry there. Then in December 1940, he was approached

by the American industrialist Henry Kaiser who hired Hansgirg to set up the enormous Permanente magnesium plant in California using his carbothermic magnesium process.

A year later, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hansgirg—who was considered a German national—was arrested by the FBI as a “dangerous enemy alien.” He was later interned at various enemy alien camps in the United States before being paroled into the custody of Black Mountain College in North Carolina where he taught chemistry and physics until 1947. While apparently in good health, Hansgirg passed away two years later.



Three photographs of Hansgirg’s carbothermic magnesium reduction process at Konan, Korea, appeared in the second of a two-part article that Hansgirg wrote in 1943 for the journal, *The Iron Age*. The full citation is: Hansgirg, Fritz J. “Thermal Reduction of Magnesium,” *The Iron Age*, Vol. 152, No. 21, Nov. 18, 1943, pp. 52-58. (Part 2) Vol. 152, No. 22, Nov. 25, 1943, pp. 52-58.

Korea's Industrial Development

by Fritz Hansgirg

Since the Cairo declaration, an independent Korean state has become a new factor for the industrial development in the Far East. Up to the present—as a Japanese colony—Korea's industrialization was started by the Japanese under an entirely different plan than would have been initiated by Koreans for the development of their own country. In whatever industry, all Japanese investments are military in character—producing, either directly or indirectly, material for war or processed goods to be exported to Japan—thus contributing to the Japanese economic system and to the prosecution of the war in the Pacific area. For this reason, the present industries in Korea are not geared to necessities of that country, but they exist solely to assist in a program for world conquest by a nation which is interested only in its own expansion.

The industrialization of Korea has increased greatly since Pearl Harbor. The militarists in Japan intensified the production of war materials on the mainland of Asia in order to place their factories as far as possible from the range of air and naval power, in case of an invasion of the Japanese islands by the Allied forces.

Period of Reconversion

After the collapse of Japan, and the subsequent formation of a free Korean state, the vital question will arise: How can the present investments be made to produce much needed civilian goods? As now operated by the Japanese regime, most industries are of little use for civilians in Korea. They were conceived in an entirely one-sided way, as mentioned above, for Japanese advancement. Therefore Koreans must undertake the development of their industries on an entirely new plan. Of course, it is important to use Japanese-made installations as much as possible, insofar as they may not be destroyed by the war. Some of these are general in their construction and may be easily readjusted for peacetime, civilian economy; among these are mining, hydroelectric and caloric-power plants, transportation systems. Under any conditions, the mining installations are usable, if the minerals produced are basic, raw materials. Some small mines may have been started only because of the need for war materials and, under such circumstances, it may be uneconomical to continue

operating them for civilian needs when world trade competition must be considered.

It will be possible to convert all of the power plants, especially hydroelectric units. Power for such installations can be utilized for all types of industry, if the current can be generated under economical conditions. To a great extent, the cost of production depends upon the interest rates and amortization of invested capital.

Upon the foundation of the new Korean state, investments by Japanese companies, individuals, or the Japanese government should be transferred to Korean concerns, and thus interest and amortization on existing hydroelectric power plants will involve a relatively small outlay of capital. Under such a plan, actual production costs of electric power will be very low—even for plants that are quite artificial in their layout and are not able to produce power economically during peacetime. For this reason, any hydroelectric plant built by the Japanese is one of the greatest assets of the new Korean state. Even if power houses and conduits are destroyed by war, their repair would entail only a small investment providing the larger installations were still intact. Caloric-power plants are of minor importance in the Korean economy, as they are dependent upon coal being shipped into the country excepting for the few deposits in the northern part of the peninsula.

The second Japanese investment in Korea which may be utilized immediately at the close of the war is the transportation system. Korea has quite a mileage of standard-gauge railways and, in general, railways are easily repaired even when damaged. On the Japanese islands, the railways are narrow-gauge, so there is no possibility that material for the Korean lines may have been transferred to the home islands.

Another important installation is the highway system. With the exception of Seoul and a few of the large cities, no paved highways exist; but there is a system of about 25,000 miles of good roads extending over the country. The largest investment needed would be that of bridge construction necessitated by washouts due to floods and the primitive work done by the Koreans in order to make them usable after the rainy season.

Therefore, the first task in the industrial reconstruction of Korea will be the improving of mines, repairing of power plants and extending hydroelectric service, repairing and improving both railway and highway systems.

If Korea is to establish an independent economic system, the country has to make a start along two separate lines. One is to develop certain industries for export in order to bring the necessary capital into

Korea; the other is to develop industries for civilian consumption. Planning must be directed toward this dual purpose. It will be necessary to establish home industries in order to raise the standard of living; on the other hand, it is impossible to raise the economic level of a people without initial capital which can be secured mainly through exports. Each of these proposed developments should be undertaken simultaneously, just as soon as the new Korean government begins to function.

At the beginning of her liberation, Korea will experience a situation somewhat similar to that confronting Russia after the revolution. It may be advisable to draw up plans for a five-year period, or for several three-year periods, for certain industries. Upon the establishment of a free government, Korea will need a great deal of outside help which may be secured from the United States, England, and Russia, in order to train her people in modern technical skills until such a time as the specialized education of the country is able to provide trained engineers, mechanics, and other employees for industrial enterprises.

First Five-Year Plan

It might be advisable to begin the new industrialization of Korea with an improvement in mining facilities. Korea is quite rich in several important products—including gold, tungsten, molybdenum, graphite, mica, and magnesite. They could be mined easily and placed upon the world markets in order to obtain the necessary capital for new and expanded industrial developments. The next steps would be the utilization of existing hydroelectric plants for the production of power for manufacturing certain items which also could be sold on world markets; products made from light metals, aluminum and magnesium, electric steel, fused magnesia, and all amounts of compounds based on fixed nitrogen. With extremely cheap power, there exists the possibility of synthesizing high-octane gasoline from the coal deposits in northern Korea and hydrogen made by such electric power.

In the final analysis, it may be possible to reduce the annual imports to a considerable extent and to utilize electric power for railway transportation. Such developments have been extremely economical in countries like Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and in northern Italy where comparatively inexpensive hydroelectric power is available and all fuels must be imported. The improvement of railway lines, using electricity as power, is so great that the investment pays for itself in a short time and — for such projects—probably foreign money will be available.

The skillfulness of the Korean worker, in the long run, will be an advantage in the electrical industry. Production of electric motors, transformers, and electric lamps is based upon skilled workmanship. The limited experience I had with Koreans leads me to believe that it is possible to educate them for such tasks, within a comparatively short period, so that all the electrical equipment necessary for the development of electrified railway lines could be provided locally.

A question of great significance arises when the development of a new Korean state is considered. Peoples of Asia have inherited an attitude toward life entirely different from the mode now prevalent in Europe and the United States. It would be a mistake to transplant the Western factory system into an Oriental country without greatly modifying it. The Korean would never feel at ease in a factory system setup on Western lines. Special study must be made in order to adapt Western methods of production to specific conditions that exist in a country like Korea.

The cooperative system has been tried out in China, particularly since the Japanese invasion of the coastal areas; and such a plan may be applied to Korean industry. It may be possible for farmers and farm families to produce some manufactured goods in the winter time and during their spare hours from regular agricultural pursuits; or they might even make parts which are to be assembled in plants some distance from their villages—for all Korean farmers live in villages and walk to the fields to cultivate their crops.

It is absolutely necessary that, at the beginning, the new state avoid a system of exploitation. This could easily become prevalent because of the present low standard of living of the larger part of the population, as well as the extremely low wages to which the Koreans are accustomed. Industrialization of the new Korea should be planned at the outset in such a way that the people will have the benefit from their own efforts. Therefore, all methods undertaken should stress the needs of the people; they should also have as their primary aim the raising of the standard of living for the vast majority of the Korean nation. Koreans will be the customers for almost any goods manufactured in their country, if they can afford to buy such products.

Shift in Occupation of the Population

It is a fact that the Japanese avoided training the Koreans for industrial work or in engineering. For this reason, the new Korean state will be confronted with an extremely difficult problem. In general, Korea is still an agricultural country. And most of the population of the peninsula has

continued to eke out an existence—under most unfavorable conditions—since annexation by the Japanese. Rice produced by the Korean farmers was exported to Japan; and the real producers of foodstuffs had an insufficient amount to eat from their toilsome labor. Many farm families are crowded on small acreages, with little chance for their children to enter industry and thus relieve the burden placed upon the head of the household to feed his family. However, many Koreans have been employed in the post offices and on the Japanese-operated railways, but few have been engaged in industries where specialized training was required.

A special program in connection with the industrialization of free Korea must be the shifting of a part of the farm population into industrial occupations. The only outlet the farm has, at present, is for seasonal employment which consists usually in some sort of construction work. A redistribution of the population will be an important phase of the Korean economy at the beginning of the new government.

Autarchic Principles should be Avoided

Another special danger exists in the establishment of an independent state in free Korea. Great care must be taken in order that industry may be carried on with other countries in a harmonious way in order to avoid any autarchic experiments. The writer was born an Austrian and he has experienced the great mistakes which were made in Europe after the Austrian Monarchy was divided. The old Austrian Monarchy had an economic system which was very well balanced; different districts specialized in the production of certain commodities.

After the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain, the independent states (newly created) started to function and to develop their own industries. As each of these new states was not very friendly with its neighbors, a high tariff wall was built up; it then became impossible for industries located in one of the new states to sell their goods to territories which were a part of the old Austrian Monarchy but which now existed as new states. As each one developed industrially, their manufacturing was on a much smaller scale because these high tariff walls prevented exporting goods. The idea that each independent state should be entirely self-sufficient which would lead to war. Such a principle is economically unsound, and it is general ruinous.

Sound economic development must be based upon proper trade relations with a country's neighbors. It will be one of the most responsible tasks of the planning for Korean industry to find out which kind can be

properly developed on Korean soil in order to ensure economic success, and which industries might better be left to other countries and their products be imported into Korea. It is a fact accepted by economists that one-sided imports or exports for a certain economic system will never lead to ultimate success. Therefore, it is of outstanding importance that the planners of industry for the new Korean state avoid any autarchic principles or the erection of high tariff walls; this would surely prove to be disastrous. At the beginning, it may be necessary for some of the new industries to be protected by customs levies; in general, however, any autarchic program should be strictly avoided.

The great resources of Korea consist of her water power and her mineral deposits, and the personal skill of the Korean people. With proper planning, the new state will surely aid in (1) the harmonious distribution of the population between agriculture and industry, and (2) the development of the country industrially so as to attain a well balanced system of exports and imports.

The geographical location, as well as the Korean people themselves, makes Korea an ideal connecting link between the vast unindustrialized lands of the Asiatic continent and the islands of the Pacific. Postwar conditions promise to give twenty-five million Koreans a chance for a brighter future.

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From Traditional Opera to Modern Music Theatre? Recent Experiments in *Ch'anggŭk*

Jan Creutzenberg

Introduction

Ch'anggŭk is a staged version of the traditional Korean art of storytelling *p'ansori* and has been open to experiments since its earliest days.¹ Born in the early 20th century out of the encounter between traditionally trained *p'ansori* singers and modern influences from Japan, the West and, possibly, China, up until today this hybrid genre suffers the fate of other “traditionesque” arts in post-colonial societies. On the one hand, *ch'anggŭk* is not traditional enough to become a proper “icon of identity” (like *p'ansori*).² On the other hand, *ch'anggŭk* appears old-fashioned enough to fail in reaching wider audiences eager for—mostly Western—genres that promise modern state-of-the-art entertainment (such as musicals) or are considered to carry more cultural capital (such as opera or spoken theatre).³

¹ For the opening section I relied on the detailed historiographies of *ch'anggŭk* provided in Andrew Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera: Discourses of Ch'anggŭk* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010) and Paek Hyŏn-mi, *Han'guk Ch'anggŭk-sa Yŏn'gu* (Seoul: T'aehaksa, 1997).

² On the preservation of *p'ansori* tradition see Keith Howard, *Preserving Korean Music: Intangible Cultural Properties as Icons of Identity* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2006), 60-67. Two recent monographs deal with *p'ansori* and its history in detail: Haekyung Um, *Korean Musical Drama: P'ansori and the Making of Tradition in Modernity* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013) and Yeonok Jang, *Korean P'ansori Singing Tradition: Development, Authenticity, and Performance History* (Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2014).

³ On the ambivalent position of *ch'anggŭk* between tradition and popularity, see Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, xvi–xxii.

Ch'anggŭk enjoyed popular and commercial success until well into the 1950s, today the majority of performances are stately-sponsored. When *ch'anggŭk* began to lose audiences to the rising film industry, the young Park Chung-hee regime saw a chance to polish up its image as a cultural patron. Eager to establish—and if necessary, to invent—a distinctively Korean genre of traditional music theatre able to compete with those of other Asian countries, the government supported the foundation of a resident *ch'anggŭk* ensemble at the National Theater and thus institutionalized the genre. In 1962, the National Changgeuk Company (NCKK, Kungnip *Ch'anggŭktan*) officially set off for what Killick calls the “search for Korean traditional opera”. Since then, the NCKK has staged over hundred productions and, more than any other ensemble, continues to dominate the way *ch'anggŭk* is produced and perceived.

Under different directors and cultural policies, the NCKK conducted various experiments in content and style. Killick describes these ongoing attempts of finding an adequate format for the “national” genre as an oscillation between two directions deemed incompatible: traditionality and popularity.⁴ On the one hand, attempts to bring *ch'anggŭk* closer to its “parent art” *p'ansori* stress the genre’s traditional roots; on the other hand, a different use of the theatrical means available, including modern technology and stage machinery, help to bridge the gap to more popular performing arts.

Since the 1990s directors from a variety of backgrounds turned more and more away from the traditional roots of *ch'anggŭk* and made experimentation and innovation their driving force. At the same time, the distinction between “traditional” (*chŏnt'ong*) and “newly-created” (*ch'angjak*) *ch'anggŭk* gained in importance.⁵ In an essay published in 1998, *p'ansori* scholar Yu Yŏng-dae⁶ proposes a reform of *ch'anggŭk* productions methods in order for the genre to regain its former popularity and to finally find its identity. Besides the acceptance of *ch'anggŭk*'s inherent difference from *p'ansori*, more productive collaborations, and a simplification of dramatic language for better understanding, he suggests

⁴ Ibid., 149.

⁵ Ibid., 141.

⁶ For consistency and easy reference, I use the McCune-Reischauer-system for the romanization of Korean terms, titles, and names, regardless of existing alternative spellings. The only exception are commonly used transliterations of proper names like Seoul or Park Chung-hee and authors of cited English-language works.

the establishment of “a fixed, repeatedly performed repertory” for *ch'anggŭk*.⁷

During his term as artistic director of the NCKK from 2006 until 2011, Yu could realize some of his proposals. Concerning repertory-building, his strategy is twofold, focusing on large-scale *chŏnt'ong ch'anggŭk* based on classical *p'ansori* pieces on the one hand, while at the same time staging smaller, more experimental *ch'angjak* pieces on the other.⁸ One of the biggest successes of this era was *Cheong*, a technically sophisticated version of the well-known *p'ansori* piece *Simch'ŏng-ga*, featuring dozens of musicians, dancers, and singers.⁹ In contrast, the “Young Ch'anggŭk”-series (Chŏlmŭn Ch'anggŭk) consisted of more modern adaptations, including *ch'anggŭk* versions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Sanbul*, a 1962 play about the Korean War.¹⁰ These pieces were usually shown in smaller venues that allow for a more intimate and direct experience of the performance.

The “National Repertory Season” (Kungnip Rep'ŏtori Sijŭn), inaugurated by newly appointed director of the National Theater An Hongsang in 2012, breaks with this twofold concept by putting new pieces on the centre stage. Only one of the five main productions of the first season is based on a canonical *p'ansori* work (*Sugung-ga*). Another one is a recreation of a non-canonical “lost” *p'ansori* piece (*Paebijang-jŏn*). The sources of the other three productions include a traditional folk tale unrelated to *p'ansori* (*Changhwa Hongnyŏn*), a novel from the 1970s that was turned into a hit-movie in 1993 (*Sŏp'yŏnje*), and a Greek Tragedy (*Medea*).¹¹

⁷ Yu Yŏng-dae, “Ch'anggŭk-ŭi t'ŭksŏng-gwa taejung-hwa,” *P'ansori Yŏn'gu* 9 (1998): 27.

⁸ Yu Yŏng-dae, “Ch'anggŭk-ŭi chŏnt'ong-gwa saeroun mudae: Kungnip Ch'anggŭktan-ŭi *ch'anggŭk* ‘Ch'ŏng’-ŭl chungsim-ŭro,” *P'ansori Yŏn'gu* 27 (2009): 269-70.

⁹ The pamphlet of the performance I saw in May 2010 records more than 50 performances and more than 60,000 spectators in less than four years. On *Cheong*, see also Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, 145-6.

¹⁰ The original play by dramatist Ch'a Pŏm-sŏk has been translated as “Burning Mountain” by Janet Poole and can be found in Richard Nichols, ed., *Modern Korean Drama: An Anthology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 15-75.

¹¹ Two other productions that involved members of the NCKK, the inter-ensemble collaboration *Hwasŏn Kim Hongdo* about the eponymous Chosŏn-era genre painter and the young audience production *Nae Irŭm-ŭn O Tong-gu* (“My Name is O Tong-gu”), are excluded from my discussion as they do not belong to

Based on my own viewing experiences, video recordings from the archive of the National Theater, and promotional material of the productions, the following discussion will focus on three aspects of these new pieces: Their stories and themes, the music and songs employed, and the role of the narrator. What can *ch'anggŭk* talk about today and in which ways? What do the five productions of the first National Repertory Season 2012–13 offer their audiences? By trying to answer these questions, I hope to further pinpoint the aesthetic and social location of the genre in contemporary Korean society and to find out in which direction *ch'anggŭk* is heading.

Stories and Themes

Apart from occasional adaptations of other traditional material or historical sources, the majority of *ch'anggŭk* productions have been based on one of the five canonical pieces of *p'ansori*, the “five *madang*”, with the most famous piece *Ch'unhyang-ga* leading the count. In his analysis, Killick identifies the general theme of most classical *ch'anggŭk* stories, in particular *Ch'unhyang-ga*, as “resistance to penetration”, a reaction to national fears rooted in the colonial experience.¹² What kind of works are staged and what themes do they deal with? Does the trend towards new pieces coincide with different underlying themes – or is recent *ch'anggŭk*, so to speak, old wine in new bottles?

German director Achim Freyer, who is introduced in the pamphlet as “Brecht’s last student”, certainly lives up to this title – his adaptation of the classical *p'ansori* piece *Sugung-ga* (“Song of the Underwater Palace”) looks strikingly different from everything that has been shown as *ch'anggŭk* before.¹³ Freyer uses large masks and a colorful stage design to create a playground for a critical re-interpretation of the traditional plot. Although most of the existing lyrics remain unchanged, Freyer turns the adventures of a loyal turtle, a cunning rabbit, and a dragon king who

the ensemble’s core productions and I did not have the chance to see them. I always use the romanized original titles of the productions instead of apocryphic translations, with the exception of *Medea* – the *han'gul* spelling, probably based on the English pronunciation of the title, would read “Media”.

¹² Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, 151.

¹³ The international title this particular production is *Mr. Rabbit and the Dragon King*. After its premiere in Seoul (Sept. 2011), it was shown in Wuppertal, Germany as a guest performance (Dec. 2011). My discussion of the piece refers exclusively to the slightly modified version of the 2012 revival.

suffers from a strange disease and depends on the rabbit's liver as a cure, into a modern allegory of class struggle between "the ruling class" represented by the underwater world and "individuals fighting alone" on the mainland.¹⁴

For *Changhwa Hongnyŏn*, the second production that premiered in November 2012, dramatist Chŏng Pok-kŭn and theatre director Han T'ae-suk modernized the well-known folk tale about two girls whose spirits haunt a village. Set in a suburban residential area, the ghost story becomes a "thriller *ch'anggŭk*" (thus the tagline) about a middle-class family torn apart while the police force tries to unravel the dark secrets of the neighborhood. Strong lighting with spotlights isolating single characters on stage, as well as the occasional use of shock effects such as a sudden lightning blast evoke a nerve-wrecking trip in the human subconsciousness. Although taking a different direction, this production evokes in many scenes the successful horror movie *The Tale of Two Sisters* (2003) that is based on the same story.

Staged in December 2012, *Paebijang-jŏn* might be considered the most "conservative" production of the National Repertory Season. Although not part of the remaining "five madang", the original *p'ansori* piece *Paebijang-t'aryŏng* was performed frequently until the canon of *p'ansori* was reduced to its current form in the 19th Century¹⁵. In reconstructed form, *Paebijang-jŏn* has been staged as *ch'anggŭk* several times and a leaflet advertises this production as a "return after sixteen years". *Paebijang-jŏn* tells the story of Chief Aide Pae who is sent on a mission to Jejudo, an island off the southern shore of Korea. Despite his vows to remain faithful to his wife during the trip, he soon falls for the charms of the local women, gets seduced and, eventually, ridiculed. Staged as a light-hearted comedy with a slight erotic touch, the piece ends, in a very traditional way, with a party where all entanglements dissolve into laughter.¹⁶

Sŏp'yŏnje, shown in March 2013, is based on a collection of short novels from the 1970s by Yi Ch'ŏng-jun. Yi tells a nostalgic story about a patchwork family of itinerant *p'ansori* singers who try to make a living in the aftermath of the Korean War (1950–53). More famous than the novel

¹⁴ "Director's Note", pamphlet *Sugung-ga*, 5.

¹⁵ For possible reasons see Jang, *Korean P'ansori Singing Tradition*, 85-86.

¹⁶ Killick interprets *Paebijang-jŏn* as an inversion of the Ch'unhyang-plot and its gendered "celebration of resistance against penetration". The much less melodramatic piece makes a similar point with a male protagonist sent out to peripheral territory (Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, 166).

is Im Kwŏn-t'aek's cinematic adaptation from 1993, a surprising box office hit that rekindled popular interest in traditional music and culture. The *ch'anggŭk* version by acclaimed musical director Yun Ho-jin draws on both sources but, in contrast to the flashback-driven narrative of the book and the movie, follows a linear structure: In the first act, the two young half-siblings learn *p'ansori* from their (step-)father but get separated when they begin to develop romantic feelings for each other. The second act is set decades later and focuses on the brother's search for his sister and – ultimately – his country's lost tradition. Although the *ch'anggŭk* adaptation *Sŏp'yŏnje* puts the emphasis on the emotional relations of the patchwork family, it is also a celebration of *p'ansori*, a tale about artistic passion and excess.

Medea is the first *ch'anggŭk* adaptation of a Greek tragedy and one of the few productions of the genre based on non-Korean sources. In earlier cases, “Koreanization” of the content was a common means to make a foreign piece fit the format.¹⁷ *Medea*, however, remains *Medea* from Colchis, the Barbarian princess who follows her fiancé Jason to his home of Iolcus only to find out that he intends to wed another woman. Plotwise, the adaptation follows Euripides' drama closely, up until *Medea*'s murder of her own children and her subsequent escape. In the production notes, playwright Han Arŭm explains that her feminist interpretation of the piece targets the strict social demands of women, in particular mothers, and asks: “Aren't you attributing a husband's faults to his wife, that of children to their mother or that of your son to your daughter-in-law?”¹⁸ Director Sŏ Chae-hyŏng draws a connection between *Medea*'s rage over her husband's infidelity and the “Korean” emotion of *han*.¹⁹ The expression of this ambivalent state of mind, often a form of suffering from inescapable injustice, is strongly associated with the rough, “painful” voice of *p'ansori*, making *Medea* a plausible object of re-interpretation in the style of *ch'anggŭk*.²⁰

¹⁷ For example, in the NCKK's aforementioned *ch'anggŭk* adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* (2009), the protagonists have similar-sounding Korean names (Mun Ro-myo and Ch'oe Chu-ri, respectively) and the story substitutes the Montague-Capulet vendetta with the rivalry between the Chŏlla and Kyŏngsan provinces.

¹⁸ Pamphlet *Changhwa Hongnyŏn*, 4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁰ On *han* and *p'ansori*, see Heather Willoughby, “The Sound of Han: *P'ansori*, Timbre and a Korean Ethos of Pain and Suffering”, *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 32 (2000): 17-30.

Most of the new *ch'anggŭk* pieces deal, at the surface, with universal themes. Class struggle (*Sugung-ga*), collective repression (*Changhwa Hongnyŏn*), and the restrictions imposed on women (*Medea*) are, first and foremost, phenomena related to the human existence rather than to the peculiar historical, geographical, and political situation of Korea. Nevertheless, these issues have specific local implications – especially when brought up in a society that struggles in particular with competitiveness, gender discrimination, and an unresolved past. Still, the obsession with national fears visible in earlier productions of traditional pieces seems to have given room to a focus on social problems. *Paebijang-jŏn* and *Sŏp'yŏnje*, too, while dealing with ostentatively Korean themes, stress comedy and personal drama over underlying traumata. Although the National Repertory Season does not abandon *ch'anggŭk*'s close relation with Korean issues, the aspiration for universality – maybe another form of national trauma? – is clearly visible.

Music and Song

While the musical accompaniment in early *ch'anggŭk* was modeled on the minimalism of *p'ansori*, its scope and diversity soon expanded. Most recent productions feature a large orchestra of traditional musicians which makes fixed scores and a conductor necessary. With regard to its musical material, *ch'anggŭk* is highly eclectic and presents a wide variety of traditional Korean music (*kugak*), amounting to “a fairly comprehensive anthology of *kugak* styles and techniques”.²¹ *Ch'anggŭk*'s eclecticism also includes the songs. Although the characteristic singing style of *p'ansori* is the main means of expression, other vocal genres such as sung literati poetry or folk songs are often used in fitting situations, particularly in the form of diegetic performances within the fictional frame. Presenting the large variety of *kugak* – and *kugak* only – all wrapped up in one piece stresses the unity and independence of Korean traditional music and, as Killick argues, in extension constructs the Korean nation as a unified and independent entity.²² What kinds of music and songs are employed in the National Repertory Season and how do they relate to the larger discourses of the genre?

The music of *Sugung-ga* is fairly eclectic, fitting the plot – for instance, the dragon king's palace calls for court music –, and in this sense conventional. The most striking feature are the masks worn by all singers

²¹ Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, 213.

²² *Ibid.*, 206.

except for the narrator. Although the use of microphones renders the songs clearly audible, hearing the electronically amplified voices of masked singers makes a rather peculiar experience. Most vocalization techniques of *p'ansori* highlight the physical production of the sounds, sometimes even the painfulness of this process. In *Sugung-ga*, however, the act of singing remains invisible and makes the performance at times appear like that of an automatic singing device that moves without human influence. While this effect might be interpreted as a comment on the anonymous mechanisms of social power structures, it proves difficult to relate to the singers and the characters they embody. When the singers remove their masks at the end for the curtain call, a collective gasp of relief seemed to spread through the auditorium, in recognition of the hardships the “disembodied” singers suffered behind their masks.

Sŏp'yŏnje and *Medea* likewise employ a fairly conventional *kugak* ensemble for accompaniment that remains hidden within the orchestra pit. *Sŏp'yŏnje* is rather unusual, however, in its use of *p'ansori* singing, which is, unlike in most *ch'anggŭk* productions, not the main means to transmit the dialogues. The majority of plot-relevant lines are rather spoken than sung and the orchestral music is mostly limited to the overture and transmission pieces. However, throughout the performance the actors present many famous excerpts from different *p'ansori* pieces (*nundaemok*) as diegetic music, accompanying themselves on the drum. The fact that *Sŏp'yŏnje*, rather than being based on a traditional *p'ansori* piece, is a story *about p'ansori* with characters who practice, rehearse, and perform on various occasions, makes this “jukebox *ch'anggŭk*” possible.

The music in *Medea* is, as the pamphlet notes, “through-sung” or rather “through-composed”, as there are in fact several spoken scenes. *Ch'anggŭk* productions usually follow the episodic structure of the *p'ansori* pieces they are based upon, resulting in a series of short numbers connected by spoken dialogue or narrative parts that drive the plot forward. In *Medea*, in contrast, the different scenes are connected by the music, resulting in a continuous soundscape that leaves hardly room for scene applause. This notable feature is linked to another first in the history of *ch'anggŭk*. Composer Hwang Ho-jun is responsible both for instrumental composition (*chakkok*) and vocal composition (*chakch'ang*), tasks that are usually divided between two persons: a composer and, in most cases, an experienced *p'ansori* singer who re-arranges existing melodies to fit the respective lyrics.²³ By abandoning this division of labor, *Medea* attains a musical unity that is likewise reflected in the box-like

²³ Ibid., 199-202.

stage that separates the performers even more from the auditorium than the regular proscenium stage.

Instead of a full orchestra, *Changhwa Hongnyŏn* employs a small ensemble of five musicians, members of the fusion *kugak* group AUX (*han'gŭl* spelling: Öksŭ). Using only a few traditional instruments as well as keyboards, an electric bass, various kinds of percussion, and pre-recorded sounds, they produce atmospheric background music for the thriller plot. Right from the start, the overture sets the scene with a series of slightly disharmonic string-sounds, squawking woodwind vibratos, electronic sounds reminiscent of the score from Hitchcock's *The Birds*, and the rhythm of bongo drums. This chaotic soundscape slowly rises in volume and tempo and suddenly turns into the recorded sound of a siren. Then a spotlight reveals an actress in police uniform who starts to report an incident about a missing person, switching from formal speech to *p'ansori* singing in mid-sentence. Other characters add small parts to the unfolding plot in a similar way, changing between different forms of speaking (casual talk, stage-acting pronunciation, choral speech) or singing, respectively. A few trot-like songs interrupt this manifold collage of voices and evoke a nostalgic atmosphere, particularly in the last scene, when the older sister, now definitely heading to the realms of death, leaves the stage while singing "Another day goes by..."

In *Paebijang-jŏn*, the music is provided by a handful of musicians who are sitting on stage, right next to the action. The music seems, in contrast to the other productions that tend to use pre-composed scores, mostly improvised. Some scenes of diegetic music – a sailor song during the boat trip, banquet songs at the party, or folk songs performed throughout the piece by the chorus – do not stand out, but are naturally accompanied the "on-stage" ensemble. Among the productions of the National Repertory Season, *Paebijang-jŏn* comes closest to the "historical informed performance" that Killick witnessed at the National Center for Korean Traditional Performing Arts.²⁴ Besides the minimalist stage design and music, the production also stresses improvisation and comedic scenes, features associated with *p'ansori*, and is consequently promoted as "traditional *ch'anggŭk*".²⁵

While some of the new productions follow the established *kugak*-eclecticism (*Sugung-ga*, *Paebijang-jŏn*), there seems to be a trend towards music more custom-tailored to the specific piece, instead of re-arranging or sampling existing material. Most obviously, in *Medea* the through-

²⁴ See *ibid.*, 134-37.

²⁵ Pamphlet *Paebijang-jŏn*, 5.

composed soundtrack is the expression of a single artistic vision. In *Changhwa Hongnyŏn*, too, the instrumental music is clearly subordinate to the plot, at some points bordering on functional “effect” music. The various means of vocal expression are likewise used as a dramatic means to tell the story from multiple angles. Between tradition and innovation, the “jukebox *ch'anggŭk*” *Sŏp'yŏnje* is a special case: The songs that are performed on stage throughout the piece are required by the plot but effectively constitute an “anthology”, albeit limited for the most part to *p'ansori*.

These different uses of music, instead of catering to the integrity of *kugak*, serve the unity of the piece, its independence as an individual work of art. The fusion *kugak* ensemble in *Changhwa Hongnyŏn* also might suggest a reorientation from an implicit postcolonial claim of national autonomy towards flexibility, a common trend in *kugak* in general.

The Role of the Narrator

The narrator in *ch'anggŭk*, usually a senior singer of the ensemble, is standing apart from the action to relate crucial plot developments that are difficult to depict on stage. In the 1990s, Kang Han-yŏng, then lead performer and librettist of the NCKK, suggested to abandon the narrator altogether, as elaborate stage technology had rendered the separate presentation of narration unnecessary. Although some later productions continued in this vein, using subtitles, projected videos and animations as substitutes, the narrator remains “one optional resource among many”.²⁶ In the National Repertory Season, all but one production feature a narrator, who often serves quite unconventional functions.

The narrator in *Sugung-ga* – listed as “Madame Pansori” in the pamphlet – is mounted on a lift and elevated several meters up into the air. Far above the stage, waving an oversized fan, her movements are limited to large gestures and communication with the audience is reduced drastically. Stripped off her communicative role as an in-between for the audience to relate to, Madama Pansori mostly serves an allegoric function: The large dress that she is wearing acts as an entrance for the other characters – a symbolic birth of *ch'anggŭk* from the spirit of storytelling.

In *Changhwa Hongnyŏn*, likewise, the narrator is literally above things. A bold, ghostly figure, he is looming on a bridge that is spanning across the stage, removed both from the action below and the audience

²⁶ Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, 139.

surrounding it. He sings and laughs, roars and howls, exclaims ominous predictions and evokes the dark past that set the tragic family plot in motion. It is only in a few crucial moments that he takes an active role in the plot, for example when throwing a spear down to floor, which, as it turns out, signals the death of a character. However, despite a transformed audience space – in *Changhwa Hongnyŏn* the seats have been installed on the stage in a semi-circle to allow for an “intimate dialogue with the audience”²⁷ –, the mostly dark stage with spotlights singling out specific actors creates a distance that the narrator is unable to overcome.

Sŏp'yŏnje dispenses with the narrator for an uninterrupted, immersive, and at some points almost cinematic atmosphere. One exceptional – and particularly striking – scene in the second act, however, also involves the audience. On his search for his sister, the grown-up brother attends a national *p'ansori* contest, a series of short performances-in-the-performance. Before the first contestant begins to sing, a host introduces the event and also asks the audience to support the singers with calls of encouragement.²⁸ It remains ambiguous whether the host is talking to the fictional audience of the contest, played by actors on stage, or to the real audience in the auditorium. In the performance of *Sŏp'yŏnje* I attended, both parties responded and during the following minutes several shouts could be heard from the auditorium, too. Nevertheless, this remained an exception to the otherwise rather passive attitude of the audience.

In *Medea*, the role of the narrator is divided among two choruses, a male and a female one. They do not represent a narrative instance outside the stage fiction, but rather two different groups of fictional characters: women who support Medea in her struggle and men who try to cast her out. Although obviously inspired by the chorus of Greek tragedy here the narrator-choruses become acting groups within this confrontation of genders who not only lobby their cause but actively intervene in critical plot developments. In the final scene, after Jason has realized the true dimension of the tragedy, he throws a spear at Medea. While singing a last comment on the situation (“Times haven’t changed... Men commit the sins, women take the punishment.”), the female chorus gathers around Medea, effectively saving her from the attack and allowing her to escape.

Once again, the only production that employs the narrator in an established way is *Paebijang-jŏn*. The narrator appears only occasionally,

²⁷ Statement by stage designer Yi T'ae-sŏp, pamphlet *Changhwa Hongnyŏn*, 10.

²⁸ This traditional way of interaction can often be heard at *p'ansori* performances attended by enthusiasts and similar requests for participation are not uncommon.

each time stepping out of the shadow towards the audience. In the small performance space the narrator is standing merely a few feet away from the first row and addresses the audience directly. After the final scene, she once again comes forward and asks the audience for applause, leading to the curtain call.

With the exception of *Paebijang-jŏn*, the narrator has lost his or her unique role as an intermediary between stage and auditorium. From a storyteller, a character standing at the threshold of fiction and reality, the narrator has become an integral part of the story told, whether elevated above the stage (as in *Sugung-ga*, *Changhwa Hongnyŏn*) or integrated as an acting part (*Medea*). Without a dedicated narrator, *Sŏp'yŏnje* relies on the actors to communicate the plot – a task made easier by the popularity of the hit movie and the performances-in-the-performance that directly relate to the audience.

Conclusion

The five *ch'anggŭk* productions of the National Repertory Season 2012-13 employ a vast variety of narrative, thematic, and musical strategies. The pursuit of diversity in these five new pieces, that will be repeatedly put on stage for years to come, is not least an attempt to address a wide range of potential target audiences. Friends of theatre or opera, musical fans and *p'ansori* aficionados – there is something for (almost) everybody here.

A categorization according to the dichotomic framework that Killick suggests in his historical analysis – traditionality versus popular appeal – turns out to be difficult, if not impossible. All productions embrace popularity without completely giving up the traditionesque features that distinguish *ch'anggŭk* from other forms of music theatre.

Sugung-ga, maybe the most ambitious (and certainly most costly) of the five pieces, goes a great way to look as little as possible like *ch'anggŭk*, but retains the canonical source and traditional music. The peculiar combination of radically different voices and sounds in *Changhwa Hongnyŏn* evokes contemporary theatre and its effective use of a variety of different source materials, rather than *ch'anggŭk*. *Paebijang-jŏn* manifests almost all features commonly associated with *ch'anggŭk* (including those that might make the genre appear “outdated”, such as *hanbok*-costumes, fake beards, and folk songs) but uses its intimate setting to charm the audience with comedy, slapstick, and some opportunities for interaction. *Sŏp'yŏnje* might be mistaken for a state-of-the-art musical thanks to its well-tuned use of stage machinery, its mellow background

music, and its nostalgic storyline, yet presents *p'ansori* at its purest. In *Medea* many scenes look and sound similar to classical *ch'anggŭk* productions, especially when the *han*-struck heroine cries out her anger, pain, and grief with a breathtaking voice that resembles those of Ch'unhyang or Simch'ŏng.

Despite these many individual differences, the National Repertory Season 2012-13 shows some notable trends in recent *ch'anggŭk* practice: adapted plots, although not necessarily of *p'ansori* pieces; music that stresses the aesthetic integrity of the piece; the integration of the narrator into the fictional plot.

Even when not relying on the classical *p'ansori* canon, *ch'anggŭk* remains an art of adaptation.²⁹ More often than in earlier times, the presentation of the adapted work is influenced by other versions of the same material, most obviously in the case of *Changhwa Hongnyŏn* and *Sŏp'yŏnje* and the respective movie adaptations. Personal constellations and interpretations provided in the performance pamphlets offer further connections, e.g. with spoken theatre (*Changhwa Hongnyŏn*), opera (*Sugung-ga*, *Medea*), and musical (*Sŏp'yŏnje*, *Paebijang-jŏn*). These intermedial references do not only increase the marketability of the productions, but also provide further points of comparison in positioning *ch'anggŭk* as a flexible genre that goes beyond *p'ansori* and traditional music.

Although musical eclecticism is not completely absent in the pieces discussed, the music tends towards unity and the creation of an immersive fictional world rather than diversity in style and episodic number-structures. Projections, light design, and stage decoration further contribute to a self-contained work of art. The through-composed score of *Medea* that joins the arguments of the opposing parties, the beautiful animations of *Sŏp'yŏnje* that make the seasons virtually change before one's eyes, the disembodied singers of *Sugung-ga* hidden behind their masks, and the intense spotlights in *Changhwa Hongnyŏn* that let the singers emerge from all-encompassing darkness – while these effects add to the autonomy of the respective work, they also make audience interaction difficult.

A similar tendency can be seen in the use of the narrator. This character, once standing on the threshold between stage and auditorium, has been either completely abandoned (*Sŏp'yŏnje*) or is integrated into the

²⁹ To my knowledge, the NCKK has, up until now, never staged a truly original work of *ch'anggŭk*, one that is neither based on historical records or literary sources.

play, where he serves varying purposes that range from commentator (*Changhwa Hongnyŏn*) or emblematic part of the stage design (*Sugungga*) to acting party (the narrator-choruses in *Medea*). In *Paebijang-jŏn*, in contrast, several factors such as the small venue, the engaging actors, the mediating narrator, and, last but not least, the reduced instrumental ensemble, hand in hand with the diegetic songs and dances, add to a slightly more open, spontaneous, and interactive situation. Here, the narrator, although scarcely used, appears as an active mediator who draws the audience into the stage action.

Apart from *Paebijang-jŏn* and few exceptions like the performance-in-the-performance-scene in *Sŏp'yŏnje*, that might well be considered as proving the rule, these works imply an “interpreting” audience, rather than the actively participating audience of *p'ansori*. While this phenomenon, also known as the “fourth wall”, is nothing unusual in all kinds of stage arts, including *ch'anggŭk*, the National Repertory Season seems to stress this point even more than earlier productions. The tendency of highlighting the autonomy of the single work over the history of the genre creates a distance to the “traditionesque” identity of *ch'anggŭk*, that is closely connected with *p'ansori*. The whole project itself, a repertory that consists of more or less fixed, repeatable pieces based on various traditional and modern, Korean and foreign sources (rather than, say, the *p'ansori* canon or folk tales), constitutes a step towards defining *ch'anggŭk* as a modern music theatre, capable of adapting all kinds of material, rather than an exclusively Korean traditional opera. While the choice of pieces downplays the national and the traditional aspect, the various styles of staging them opens *ch'anggŭk* towards other genres, including musical and spoken theatre.

Collaborations of writers, directors, and composers from different artistic fields have a tradition in the history of *ch'anggŭk*, in particular with regard to the NCKK. So far, the change of course the ensemble has taken with the National Repertory Season – from establishing *ch'anggŭk* as Korean traditional opera to imagining it as contemporary music theatre – is of a quantitative rather than a qualitative nature. While *Paebijang-jŏn* has inaugurated an ongoing series of small-scale productions of restored *p'ansori* pieces, turning the hierarchy of Yu's twofold concept on its head, the future of *ch'anggŭk* remains open, although history has shown again and again that quantity can suddenly turn into quality. What we can expect, in any case, are more aesthetically strong works of music theatre that can convince on their own.

Killick's discussion of *ch'anggŭk* focuses on the generic level, because, at the time of writing, "*ch'anggŭk* does not consist of 'individual musical products' in the way that those genres [*kabuki*, various kinds of Chinese operas] do."³⁰ Further explorations, however, will need to take into account the individual works and their respective use of traditional and modern sources, Korean and foreign music, song, and dance, as well as the new experiences these experiments offer.

Note

This paper is based on the presentation "Recent Experiments in Ch'anggŭk: The National Repertory Season 2012–13", at the Royal Asiatic Society Colloquium in Korean Studies in Seoul on March 15, 2014.

Performances Discussed

Sugung-ga (Mr. Rabbit and the Dragon King), written by Pak Sŏng-hwan, directed by Achim Freyer (also responsible for stage, costume, and light design), composition by Yi Yong-t'ak, song composition by An Suk-sŏn (5–8 September, 2012; premiere on 8 September, 2011).

Changhwa Hongnyŏn, written by Chŏng Pok-kŭn, directed by Han T'ae-suk, musical director Wŏn Il, composition by Hong Chŏng-ŭi, song composition by Wang Ki-sŏk (27–30 November, 2012).

Paebijang-jŏn, written by O Ūn-hŭi, directed by Yi Pyŏng-hun, composition by Hwang Ho-jun, song composition by An Suk-sŏn (8–16 December, 2012).

Sŏp'yŏnje, written by Kim Myŏng-hwa, directed by Yun Ho-jin, composed and conducted by Yang Pang-ŏn, song compositions by An Suk-sŏn (27–31 March, 2013).

Medea, written by Han A-rŭm, directed by Sŏ Chae-hyŏng, composition by Hwang Ho-jun (22–26 May, 2013).

With the exception of *Paebijang-jŏn*, which was shown at the Small Hall "Dal", all performances took place at the Main Hall "Hae" of the National Theater of Korea. Video recordings and pamphlets of the performances discussed are available at the archive of the National Theater. A collection of material and links on the productions discussed can be found on the author's blog at <http://seoulstages.wordpress.com/2014/03/05/recent-experiments-in-changguk>.

³⁰ Killick, *In Search of Korean Traditional Opera*, 177.

Recent Experiments in Ch'anggŭk

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Symbolism and Literary Reference in Traditional Korean Gardens

Jill Matthews

There is a famous quote from a nineteenth century American missionary to Korea: “The all-round Korean will be a Confucian in society, a Buddhist when he philosophises and a spirit worshiper when he is in trouble”.¹ Such a syncretic worldview is reflected in traditional gardens surviving in 21st century Korea.

Symbolism from all the major spiritual, religious, literary and philosophical influences on Korean cultural history appear frequently in surviving traditional Korean gardens. These influences include: animism especially mountain and tree worship, shamanism, Daoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Chinese literature, and the Korean form of geomancy (*pungsu*). Of these by far the most significant influences are Confucianism and Buddhism. However it is almost impossible to say of any surviving traditional garden: ‘this is a purely Buddhist garden’ or ‘this is a wholly Confucian garden’. Symbols from older or confluent cultural traditions have a delightful way of infiltrating every Korean garden.

Thus in the centre of the stairway leading to the main entrance to the Dongwhasa Buddhist temple in Daegu there is a plinth displaying three rounded stones representing the three mountain gods from the older religion. Likewise there is an elegant arrangement of three rough rocks in the garden of the Hanggyo Confucian Academy also in Daegu. Nevertheless and despite their eclectic nature, understanding these symbols, and the traditions they represent, greatly enhances the enjoyment of visits to all types of Korean gardens.

¹ Homer B. Hulbert quoted in Daniel Tudor, *Korea: the Impossible Country* (Tuttle 2013) ch. 4.



Three ‘mountain gods’ at the entry to Dongwhasa Temple near Daegu

Physical symbols in traditional Korean gardens

Korean gardens contain many symbolic plants and literary references which will be considered below. They may also contain symbolic physical objects, structures and arrangements, which are considered here.

Entry pathways to Buddhist temples

Pilgrims and visitors to Buddhist temples are encouraged to approach them on foot up ritual pathways which usually meander through forests of trees such as Korean red pines. There is a particularly magnificent pathway leading to Weoljeongsa² Temple in Gangwon Province³ which is lined with ancient Fir trees, some so large that several people would have

² Non-Korean speaking visitors to Korean gardens can learn a lot from the suffixes ending place names. For example the ‘sa’ at the end of ‘Weoljeongsa’ indicates a temple. Similarly the suffix ‘jeong’ or ‘jeongja’ indicates a pavilion; ‘neung’, the tomb of a king or queen; ‘myo’, the tomb of princes or princesses of the queen or concubines; ‘won’, the tomb of the Crown prince, his wife or their son; ‘san’ a mountain; ‘gung’, a palace; ‘mun’, a gate; ‘buk’, north, ‘nam’ south.

³ This English convention for the names for provinces is used herein. eg South Jeolla Province, however the alternative convention should be noted by which this province would be named Jeollanam-do where the suffix ‘nam’ means south and ‘do’ means province.

to link arms to encircle them.⁴ Such avenues occur but usually the trees are less formally arranged in the older, more sylvan, tradition. These ritual pathways are never straight and always lead uphill, and so could be seen as a metaphor for the difficult progress towards Nirvana. Often they cross symbolically cleansing flowing water more than once, and they always pass through several gateways. The number varies from temple to temple but commonly there will be an *iljumun* or 'one-pillar gate', a *geumgangmun* or 'diamond gate' followed by a *cheonwangmun* or 'four heavenly kings gate'. Much has been written about the significance of these gates in Buddhist cosmology⁵ but the point to grasp in relation to temple gardens is their role in marking the symbolic transition from the secular to the religious or spiritual, on the 'path' to enlightenment. Often they stand-alone and are not set into walls, so that it would be possible to walk around them rather than through them, which underlines their symbolic significance.

At the end of the ritual walkway there is often a tranquil reach of water crossed by an arched or rainbow-shaped bridge such as the lovely one leading into Songwangsa Temple in South Jeolla Province. Another example is the triple arched bridge crossing the sacred pond in front of the famous Bulguksa Temple in Kyeongju. It may not be too fanciful to suggest that these bridges and their reflections may be metaphors for the passage from the prosaic and ephemeral outside world into the contemplative higher realm inner world beyond. Almost always these pathways wind slowly through beautiful, peaceful woodland or forest. The whole process of walking up to a Buddhist temple is designed to be a calming meditative and mind-clearing process through a sacred landscape, and should be experienced as such.

Gates

In addition to the symbolic gates described on the ritual paths to Buddhist temples, wooden ceremonial gates may also be found in palace, royal burial grounds and *soewon* gardens. In royal burial grounds and *soewon* they are known as *hongsalmun* and are also stand-alone structures rather than apertures in walls.⁶ They are intended to mark the transition from the profane world to, respectively, the royal and the rarified academic realms

⁴ Yoo, Myeong-jong, *Temples of Korea* (Discovery Media, 2009) p. 130.

⁵ See for example *Temple Architecture* (Dale's Temple Adventures at http://koreantemples.com/?page_id=579).

⁶ Lee Byeongyu, *Visits to the Kings – Guidebook of Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty* (GeoMarketing, 2008) p. 29.

beyond. It has been suggested that these red arrow gates could have come to Korean gardens from India⁷, either with Buddhism or by some more circuitous route. There, very similar gates, of stone, mark the transition into old Buddhist sacred areas such as Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh.

Of course in other types of gardens, ceremonial gates are set into walls and thus serve dual roles of providing security as well as symbolic transition. The gates to the Gyeongbok-gung palace and gardens in Seoul are certainly multi-purpose. Newly rebuilt, they are intended as they always were, to concentrate the *pungsu* energy of the site, to overawe visitors, and to deter potential malefactors and invaders, as well as to underline their transition from civilian to royal space.

Lack of enclosure

When Korean gardeners build boundary walls around their gardens they build beautiful ones, but the practice is far less common than it is in other gardening traditions. It appears that few if any royal burial grounds were ever enclosed by walls, nor are many Buddhist temples, scholarly retreat gardens or even pre-Confucian royal palace gardens. The reorganisation of society along hierarchical Confucian lines during Joseon was reflected in later garden designs. *Seowon* and palace gardens were certainly enclosed then, but even so the influence of *pungsu* on the siting of gardens and the cultivated humility of Confucian scholars meant that the building of ostentatious artificial nature-dominating gardens with high walls would have been frowned upon. Notably, the numerous scholarly retreat gardens built during Joseon are not enclosed.

One of the most profound differences between Korean and European gardening traditions, or even other Asian gardening traditions such as those of China and Japan, is this attitude to enclosure and the demarcation between gardens and their surroundings. Indeed Westerners might not even recognise some Korean gardens as gardens because of this lack of demarcation.

Geomancy (Pungsu)

Korean geomancy differs from Chinese *fengshui* in many respects and is far too vast a topic to be considered here.⁸ However *pungsu* principles clearly influenced site selection for almost all significant gardens in Korea.

⁷ Tom Turner, *Asian Gardens – History, Beliefs and Design* (Routledge, 2011) p. 146.

⁸ For an exhaustive discussion see Hong-Key Yoon, *The Culture of Fengshui in Korea* (Lexington Books, 2008).

Pungsu considerations militate against aggressive modification of landscapes in the Western manner. The aim was to achieve gardens which were in balance and harmony with their natural surroundings and did the minimum disruption to the landscape. This emphasis on careful and appropriate site selection and environmentally friendly development could be seen as the foundation of Korean landscape design. It may in fact be one of the reasons why so many Korean gardens have survived for so long in comparison to say the gardens of the great mogul emperors in India, which usually died as soon as natural or man-made catastrophes disrupted their elaborate and expensive irrigation systems.

Ponds

Few Korean gardens are considered complete without at least one pond. Poems such as 'Lotus Blossom Pond' reproduced in *Garden Poetry* below, are evidence that garden ponds were a tradition at least 800 years ago during the Goryeo dynasty. With a few notable exceptions discussed below, most Korean garden ponds are symmetrical and geometric, commonly square or rectangular, although circular ones also exist. Unlike many ponds in Japanese and Chinese gardens, no attempt is made to naturalise them. Most have hard edges and no marginal plantings.

Lotus and water lilies are frequent decorative elements but usually constrained to small areas leaving much clear water surface. In grander gardens, ponds are often overlooked by pavilions which are particularly beautiful when reflected on the still water surface, and provide elegant venues for literary gatherings, contemplation or parties. Such pavilion ponds exist in both Changdeok-gung and Gyeongbok-gung palace gardens in Seoul.

Square ponds containing a round island are said to symbolise the Daoist idea that the earth is square but heaven is round and by extrapolation the fundamental complementarity of the universe: creative and receptive; movement and stillness; active and passive. Neo-confucianism also viewed the universe as round and the earth as square, so square ponds with a round island may also indicate the garden of a Neo-Confucian scholar or even the presence of a Confucian Academy (*seowon*). Buyongi pond in the grounds of Changdeokgung Palace in Seoul is a good example of this type of pond and it is situated right next to the building in which the Confucian civil service examinations were held during the Joseon dynasty.

Ponds containing three islands are said to symbolise the Chinese legendary three islands of paradise or alternatively, the mountainous abode of the three Korean immortals and thus the human search for

immortality. Three islands may also represent the trinity of heaven, earth and man and hence be an indication of a garden in the Shaman/Daoist tradition.

What is planted on pond islands is also symbolic. Plant symbolism in general is dealt with in the next section. However the presence and number of trees on pond islands should be noted. Solitary pine trees indicate Neo-Confucian influence. Three of any sort of tree, most commonly Crape myrtles or Maples, may also symbolise the three mountain spirits and the quest for immortality. In gardens sufficiently large to have two ponds, one is frequently planted with white lotus and one with pink, the former being regarded as the more pure.

Ponds in temple gardens are intended to inspire contemplation and to mark the boundary between the sacred and the profane. An example of such a holy pond is the beautiful one in front of the Bulguksa temple in Kyeongju which reflects the two bridges leading metaphorically to the Buddhist enlightenment beyond.

Although there are exceptions to every rule, it is nevertheless generally true that symmetrical ponds, whether square, rectangular or circular, appear in Confucian style gardens, whereas more irregular naturally shaped ponds appear in Buddhist style gardens. Thus the ponds in Gyeongbok-gung and other Joseon dynasty palace gardens in Seoul are symmetrical, whereas the ponds in both the Silla and Baekche dynasty royal gardens are not symmetrical, nor as hard-edged. The oldest surviving palace pond, Gungamji, in Buyeo⁹ and Anapji pond in Gyeongju¹⁰ are good examples of this pre-Confucian more naturalistic style.

The ponds in Confucian scholarly retreat gardens usually have a bet each way and have both irregularly shaped and geometrical ponds. Examples of retreat gardens with both natural and rectangular ponds are the Imdaejong garden in South Jeolla province and Seon-do Yun's garden on Bogildo Island. It may be that the custom of building scholarly retreat gardens, although only widely popularised during the neo-Confucian Joseon period, was developed on the shoulders of an older more Daoist garden design tradition in which the natural flow of water and contour of the land were disturbed as little as possible, with streams or springs dammed slightly to give irregularly shaped calm reaches of reflective water, but otherwise unimpeded.

⁹ Gunamji pond in the Baekche royal pleasure garden was built in CE 634.

¹⁰ Anapji pond in the Silla royal pleasure garden was built in CE 674.

Levels

The relative levels at which structures in Korean gardens are built are very significant. By observing the height of the podiums they are built on and how many steps lead up to them, it is possible to understand much about their importance. Thus in palaces, the King's bedchamber will be higher than the Queen's; in *seowon* the Shrine to Confucius will be higher than the scholars' hall; in Buddhist temples the building housing the main Buddha statue will be higher than all lesser shrines and functional buildings such as dormitories and kitchens; and in *yangban* domestic garden compounds, the master's study will be higher than the women's quarters.

In many gardens there are individual steps (*daetol*) which are deliberately too high for normal progress, and are intended to emphasise transition from the mundane or profane world to different higher spheres such as sacred, royal, academic or masculine. *Daetol* appear at the entrance to the Master's study in *yangban* homes, at the bottom of the normal steps leading to the King's chamber in palaces, and outside major shrines in temples.

Dismounting stele (*hamaseok*) are found near the entrance to many gardens worthy of reverence or at least deference, including those surrounding royal or Confucian shrines, *seowon* and Buddhist temples. These stones originally indicated the point at which a visitor should get off his horse or out of his palanquin as a sign of respect for the teacher, deity, sage, king, or enshrined spirit within. Some suggest that the modern-day custom of getting off one's bike or out of one's car in order to greet an important person, such as one's professor on a university campus, stems from this *hamseok* tradition.¹¹

Threes

It is remarkable how often things in Korean gardens come in threes: three islands in ponds; three trees on each island, three trees and three rocks on islands, three rocky outcrops on the banks of ponds or within view of pavilions or studies or meditation hermitages; three rocks forming tables; three rounded stones at the entrances to Buddhist temple gardens. Once you start looking, these trios are everywhere. Three has been an important number since prehistoric times in Korea as the three-stone dolmen tombs show. It seems there were three mountain gods and three sacred mountains in Korea long before the Chinese emperors sent their

¹¹ Lee, Sang-hae, *Seowon – The Architecture of Korea's Private Academies* (Hollym, 2005) p. 72.

expeditions to seek the three mountains of immortality and possibly before the Korean progenitor Dangun was born. He certainly took up residence on one of the three existing sacred mountaintops in the company of two pre-existing mountain gods, thus making another trio.

Hence threes in Korean gardens can symbolise many things: the Chinese quest for immortality; the gods of the oldest religion; the three most sacred mountains in Korea; heaven, earth and man, and thus the essential wholeness of the universe. It all depends upon your own perspective and the context of the rest of the garden whether a particular trio is a Daoist symbol, a symbol of the old animist religion, a symbol of immortality, a graceful reference to Chinese mythology, or a reminder of the essential complementarity of the universe.

Rocks

Arrangements of three rocks are very common in Korean gardens and their symbolism is complex, as explained above, however arrangements of more numerous rocks also appear and have their own significance. Many gardens have twelve rocks in them somewhere, either as rocky outcrops in ponds or small rock arrangements on the shores of ponds or within view of pavilions.

Twelve-rock arrangements represent the peaks of Wu and a famous Chinese myth. Mt Wu is an actual mountain in Sichuan Province in China and it does have twelve peaks. According to one version of the myth these twelve peaks have been the abode of female immortals since the Warring States Period. The legend is that King Xiang of Chu climbed Gaotang ridge nearby to view the beautiful Mt Wu, after which he took a nap and dreamed he spent the night there with one of the female immortals, which he enjoyed greatly. As she departed next morning she told him she lived on one of the sunny peaks of Mt Wu which she shrouded in cloud each morning and to which she summoned rain every evening. Consequently, a shrine to the morning clouds was built on Mt Wu and Chinese literature abounds with references to this titillating affair.

With their deeply ingrained love of mountains it is no wonder that the Koreans have adopted the Chinese Mountain of Wu myth almost as their own. Classical Korean literature has many references to 'the sunny side of the hill', 'clouds and rain' and 'the dream of Mt Wu', all of which refer with varying degrees of delicacy to stimulating, even immortal, outdoor sex.

Symbolic rock arrangements abound near the Anapji Pond in the Silla royal garden in Kyongju. In the pond are three islands symbolising the three mountain spirits or their sacred mountains and the quest for

immortality whilst an arrangement of twelve rocks, representing the peaks of Mount Wu, stands on one shore of the pond. Coupled with the wine cup canal at the other end of the Anapji pond, we can infer that this must have been a great venue for royal parties during the height of the Silla dynasty.

Symbolic plants in Korean gardens

Revered trees

To this day the Korean peninsula remains heavily forested and in times past, the forests covered much more territory. It is therefore not surprising that trees play an important part in Korean cosmology including the creation myth. Many villages have *dangshan* (or *seonang*) trees in their common areas which are considered to embody protective spirits. The *dangshan* tree in Yonggyi-ri near Andong is a Gingko believed to be more than 700 years old and reputed to weep whenever there is a national catastrophe. So important is this symbolic tree to the villagers that it had to be moved at a cost of 2 billion won in a process which took three years, to prevent its submergence by the construction of the Imha Hydrological dam.¹² The 600 year-old Zelkova tree in the grounds of the Hwaseong Haenggung, the reconstructed palace within the Hwaseong Fortress at Suwon, is also such a tree. It was considered to protect the town of Suwon long before the construction of the fortress or even the original palace. Although only a single branch remains green, it is gently encircled by ropes hung with little flags and tended with the utmost care. Veneration of *dangshan* trees is clearly a very old tradition dating back to animism and pre-history and the trees themselves mostly stand alone, rather than in gardens.

However other individual venerable trees command respect simply for their longevity or historic associations. Such a tree, a gingko, grows in Husan Village in South Jeolla province and was sufficiently mature and sturdy for King Injo to have tied his horse to it when visiting the village in the early 1600's. Probably because many Buddhist temple gardens in Korea are older than most palace gardens, revered trees are often found in temple gardens. In the grounds of Heinsa temple there is a tree known as the Haksadae fir tree. It is reputed to be at least one thousand years old and commemorates the famous poet, calligrapher, administrator and general polymath, Choi Chi-won, having grown from

¹² Chun, Young Woo, *Forests and Korean Culture* (English version, Bookshill, Seoul, Korea 2010, Korean version, Soomoon Publishers, Seoul, Korea 1999) p. 27.

his walking cane when he stuck it into the ground before retiring to the mountains to become a hermit. Also at Heinsa, among the avenue of trees lining the main entrance, stands an enormous dead tree trunk, the remains of an elm believed to have been planted in 802CE by King Aejang the 40th King of the Silla dynasty, to mark the establishment of Heinsa. This tree lived for over 1000 years until it died in 1945. That it has not been removed in the many decades since its death, underlines the almost sacred nature of such trees and the deeply rooted association between trees and royalty in Korean tradition.

Pine

The Korean red pine (*Pinus densiflora*) is the national tree of Korea and plays many symbolic roles.¹³ Its Korean name, *sonamu*, means supreme tree.¹⁴ Many depictions of the Korean creation myth, the story of Dangun, feature a heavenly tree whose bark at least, looks remarkably like Korean Red pine bark. This tree is one of the Ten Symbols of Longevity, *shipjangsaeng*, the others being: the sun, mountains, water, clouds, rocks/stone, mushrooms of immortality, turtles, white cranes and deer. As such it appears frequently in all forms of Korean visual art and literature and is the preferred timber from which to build royal palaces and to sculpt wooden Buddha statues. In addition it is cultivated in many types of traditional Korean gardens, especially those associated with royalty. Twisted red pines abound throughout the Piwon Secret Garden which surrounds the Changdeokgung Palace complex.

An entire forest of red pines protects the Joeseon royal tomb complex in Gangnam in Seoul where they are said to symbolise the wish for longevity of the whole Joeseon dynasty despite the death of individual family members of the dynasty entombed there. They were also widely cultivated in the gardens of the Buddhist Silla dynasty around Kyongju. The famous Jeongipumsong red pine tree has been growing by the roadside leading to the Beopjusa Temple in North Chungcheong province for more than 600 years. It is said that in 1464 an ailing King Sejo was being carried towards the Temple in a palanquin to seek a cure when his way was impeded by the branches of the tree. When he remonstrated, the tree immediately lifted its branches and enabled the royal party to proceed.

¹³ It is probably endemic to both Japan and the Korean peninsula and adjacent parts of China. The same tree is known as Japanese red pine in Japan where it does not seem to have been invested with the same symbolic significance.

¹⁴ Chun, Young Woo, *Forests and Korean Culture*, p. 205.

King Sejo was so impressed by this deferential action that he granted the tree the status of administrative Senior Rank 2 on the spot.¹⁵

Single red pines also grow frequently next to the main pavilions in Confucian scholarly retreat gardens where they symbolise constancy and righteousness because they remain green and do not shed their leaves in winter. Most Buddhist temple complexes include a shrine to the shaman deity, *San shin*, which literally translates as 'mountain spirit'. These stand-alone buildings (or *gak*) often have red pines planted by them and commonly house a painting of an old man invariably accompanied by a tiger and a red pine. Indeed any painting of a sage figure, male or female, whether in Buddhist or Confucian garb, when accompanied by a tiger and a Korean red pine, is almost certain to be of a *San shin* recluse who has retreated from the outside world seeking enlightenment and immortality.

*Ginkgo*¹⁶

Ginkgo trees (*Ginkgo biloba*) are found in the gardens surrounding Confucian schools and shrines all over Korea and are plainly associated with the great sage. Pairs of ginkgoes often mark the entrances to Confucian academies (*seowon*). Ginkgoes are said to shoot straight and fast towards Heaven and thus to symbolise the fostering of many upright and high minded officials and their many fruits, the scholars who graduate each year.¹⁷

The origin of the association of ginkgoes with Confucianism is the grave of Confucius in Shandong Province in China. During the Song Dynasty in the eleventh century CE, the 45th lineal descendent of Confucius was renovating his grave which he moved slightly to enable the erection of an 'apricot altar' in front of it. Around this he planted many ginkgo trees. There is much scholarly argument about whether the original trees were ginkgoes or apricots, however the fact is that today and for a very long time, ginkgoes have surrounded Confucius's grave and the trees have come to symbolise things Confucian and the achievement of probity and wisdom. Ginkgoes are also planted in both private and palace gardens to remind visitors of the virtues of the great teacher. Seen in this light the current choice for new tree plantings throughout the streets of Seoul of thousands of ginkgoes, may be more than just a pragmatic choice related to the ability of these trees to withstand modern day pollution.

¹⁵ Yoo, Myeong-jong, *Temples of Korea*, p. 122.

¹⁶ For an exhaustive examination of the Ginkgo, its history and cultural significance see Peter Crane, *Ginkgo* (Yale University Press, 2013).

¹⁷ Lee, Sang-hae, *Seowon*, p. 72.

A spectacular pair of ginkgo trees mark the entrance to the oldest and highest Confucian school and shrine in Korea which is known variously as Seoul Confucian Shrine, Munmyo Confucian Shrine, Seonggyungwan National Confucian Academy. This whole complex, is now a part of Sungkyunkwan University, itself the oldest in Korea. These ginkgoes are designated Natural monument number 59. Planted in 1519AD, they are approaching their five hundredth year. One of the pair was badly damaged during the sacking of the shrine complex by the Japanese in 1592 and is celebrated as much for its resilience as its longevity: it now possesses seven branches, each as thick as the main trunk, which grew from the site of the injury.

*Lotus*¹⁸

The sacred lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) is the most contentious of the symbolic plants commonly found in Korean gardens. Widely regarded as a Buddhist plant, the lotus grown in Korean gardens may indeed have originated in India and travelled to Korea with Buddhism itself. However today the lotus occurs more frequently in temple decoration than in temple gardens, few of which have ponds appropriate for lotus cultivation. Moreover lotuses were also frequently planted in Confucian gardens including scholarly retreat, royal pleasure, shrine and *soewon* gardens for hundreds of years, continuing until the present day. It is therefore a matter for regret that misguided agitation by 20th century Korean Christians forced the removal of all lotuses from both Hyangwonjeong and the Gyeonghoeru pavilion ponds in the Gyeongbokgung palace, on the spurious basis that they were ‘Buddhist’ flowers.¹⁹

The symbolism of the plant is obvious, not only to Buddhists and Confucians: so much purity arising from so much dirt and mud. Every part of the plant is useful and the bloom a culmination of enlightenment.

Bamboo

Another symbolic plant which appears frequently in Korean gardens is the bamboo. It is regarded as a metaphor for uprightness, strength and resilience because it may bow before a storm but rises again unbroken. Its hollow stems are said to indicate open-mindedness.

¹⁸ For an exhaustive examination of the Lotus, its history and cultural significance see Mark Griffiths, *The Lotus Quest – in Search of the Sacred Flower* (Chatto & Windus 2009).

¹⁹ Heo Kyun, *Gardens of Korea – Harmony with Intellect and Nature* (Saffron, 2005) p. 48.

Persimmon

Persimmon trees are widely cultivated in Korean gardens for their fruit and their seasonal beauty as well as their symbolism. After a dazzling display of autumn foliage, persimmons lose their leaves but hold their brilliant orange fruits through many of the colder months. The sight of frost- or snow-limned persimmon branches with the fruit still tenaciously hanging from them is very beautiful. Because their fruit starts off hard, green and extremely bitter, but ripens to a bright orange and becomes very soft and sweet, persimmons are regarded as a symbol for transformation. As such, persimmons appear frequently in Buddhist temple gardens and both the fruit and the quadripartite calyx are often included in the wooden carvings and paintings in temple buildings.

Literary references

Before 1443 when Hangeul was invented, the primary means of written communication in Korea was Classical Chinese. For many centuries it performed a similar role to that of Latin in Medieval Europe. Indeed it remained Korea's literary and administrative language until the start of the twentieth century. This is why most inscriptions, calligraphy and poetry found in Korean gardens to this day, are in Chinese characters. These Chinese texts in Korean gardens are part of an elaborate and erudite game which allows people educated in this tradition to appreciate the gardens at a different, intellectual, level in addition to that of mere aesthetic pleasure. For example in the Soswaewon garden in South Jeolla province, there is a pavilion with a name-plate in Chinese characters which means 'Pavilion for Awaiting the Phoenix'. Visitors schooled in Chinese calligraphy and mythology would immediately realise the significance of the plantings which surround it: bamboo, reputedly the favourite food of the phoenix, and Paulownia trees, the favourite nesting place of these mythical creatures. Thus the whole garden can be read as a metaphor for Daoist ideas concerning the quest for immortality. Sadly fewer and fewer young Koreans learn classical Chinese these days so they are unable to appreciate such references unassisted and thus their significance is slowly being lost.

In 1590 Gwon Munhae, an official in the Court of King Seonjo, produced a 20 volume literary encyclopaedia for authors, the *Daedong unbu gunok* (*A Korean Guide for Writers*). It comprised mostly rhyming couplets arranged by topics such as – geography, names of kingdoms, family names and lineages, filial sons, chaste women, official titles, immortals, actual names associated with pen names, names of flowers,

names of animals and so forth. It was inspired by a dictionary of rhyming phrases written by a Chinese scholar of the Yuan dynasty around 1270 but Gwon's work was a distillation of centuries of earlier Korean works and covered every Korean dynasty from the mythical founder Dangun up to his own day in the early Joseon era. What a resource for aristocratic Korean garden-builders searching for a perfect name for a garden or pavilion or inspiration for a piece of garden poetry!

Gwon Munhae lived and worked only shortly after William Shakespeare, yet he was accessing and systematising a literary tradition which already stretched back at least two thousand years. Another astonishing thing about his *Daedong unbu gunok* was that it was not published until two hundred years after his death. In 1798, Gwon's seventh generation lineal descendent published it, printed from woodblocks which are still retained in his ancestral village Jungnim-ri by the current head of his lineage.

In addition to writing this extraordinary work, Gwon Munhae also built a garden in his home village with a pavilion entitled *Choganjeong* (Studying at a Bend in a Stream). It must have taken such an erudite man a long time to select the title for his own pavilion. This pavilion was burnt down once by the Japanese in 1592, and once later, and required a major restoration in the nineteenth century. Each time, it was rebuilt or restored by his faithful descendants and still can be visited. It is an example without parallel of steadfast filial dedication and literary continuity in any other culture.

Garden poetry

Many old garden pavilions are hung with wooden plates into which poetry has been carved in fine calligraphy of various styles. Especially in scholarly retreat gardens it was customary for the owners to invite guests to write poems inspired by their experience of the gardens. Even in translation, such Korean garden poetry has an elegant sparseness and brevity, often reading more like an aphorism or a haiku than a sonnet or a narrative epic. It also displays acute and detailed observations of nature, as one would expect from authors who spent much time sitting in open garden pavilions in beautiful surroundings with superb views to mountains and water.

'Lotus Blossom Pond' is a beautiful example of such garden poetry.²⁰ As it appears in the *Collected Works of Minister Yi of Korea* by Yi Gubyo (1168-1241AD), it must be almost eight hundred years old:

²⁰ Heo Kyun, *Gardens of Korea – Harmony With Intellect and Nature*, p. 45

*A lonely bird flies into a pond
Cutting through the water as though it were a piece
of blue silk cloth.
A small wave ripples through the water in that
square pond
Causing the lotus flowers on the surface to sway.*



Garden poetry in Imdaejeong pavilion in South Jeolla

An example of the close relationship between gardens, literature and poetry is Imdaejeong Pavilion Garden in South Jeolla province. The name of the garden itself comes from a Chinese poem entitled ‘Sitting Riverside Looking at Water, Thinking of Mountain’ by the Song Dynasty poet Yeomgye. Still today the pavilion in this garden is hung with several wooden plates engraved with nature poems in Chinese characters.

The Four Friends

Jeong Yeongbang who built the scholarly retreat garden Seoseokji Pond in North Gyeongsang province, included an elevated terrace overlooking a pond with a rock named – A Platform for Four Old Friends. There he wrote the following poem:

*Plum and chrysanthemum stand out in a snow-
covered landscape*

*Pine and bamboo give nature colour after frost
With pine, bamboo, plum and chrysanthemum as my
friends in winter*

*I will have companions as long as I live.*²¹

These ‘four friends’ – plum, chrysanthemum, bamboo and pine – continue to grow in his garden three hundred years later. Yeong Yeonbang was not the first man of letters to group these plants together because of what they symbolise. Many earlier Chinese poems and paintings had done so. In fact Korean gardens share many symbolic plants with Chinese gardens because of their common literary and artistic heritage.²² Both Korean and Chinese poetry contain many references to plum blossom, chrysanthemums, pine and bamboo, and also to juniper trees, peonies, orchids among others. Gardens containing them should be considered as the embodiments of the virtues long associated with them.

The strong literary associations with many specific plants can be argued to have restricted the planting palette in Chinese gardens, where the diversity of plants cultivated is much less than the array of wild plants available to Chinese horticulturists. It took numerous excursions by European plant hunters to collect and promulgate many Chinese wild plants.²³ This does not seem to have occurred in Korean gardens where, in addition to the accepted group of plants with widely understood symbolism, a plethora of other plants have always been grown simply for their aesthetic appeal. Surprisingly this is particularly so in Buddhist temple gardens which often maintain flower terraces (*hwagye*) filled with diverse ebullient multi-coloured plantings of annuals and biennials such as Evening Primroses, Hydrangeas, Cosmos, Day Lilies, Grannies Bonnets, Pinks, Iris, various Daisies and Narcissus, Peonies, Azaleas, Cosmos and White Clover. The main object of the selection of plants in these flower terraces seems to be to emphasise the changing of the seasons and perhaps to re-enact the birth/life/death cycle. It has been suggested that the practice may be a consequence of the arrival of Daoism in Korea at roughly the same time as Buddhism was becoming established on the peninsula. The essentially transient and cyclical nature of the bedding plants in the *hwagye*, is reinforced by the choice of shrubs and small trees within the temple grounds. Crape Myrtles, Viburnums, Plums, Magnolias

²¹ Heo Kyun, *Gardens of Korea*, p. 103.

²² For an examination of symbolic plants in Chinese visual art and literature see Peter Valder, *The Garden Plants of China*, particularly p. 47 and following (Florilegium, 1999).

²³ Jane Kirkpatrick, *Gifts From the Gardens of China* (Frances Lincoln, 2007)

and Maples are common, all famed for their seasonal glories. Tongdosa temple garden even features several Banana trees in one of its gardens. These must die back each winter in such a harsh climate and need to re-grow each spring.

Conclusion

The Western attitude to gardens is extremely different from the Korean attitude. For example many Koreans might not consider the landscaped Joseon royal burial grounds to be ‘gardens’, but Westerners familiar with English landscape traditions certainly would. On the other hand, many Westerners would consider that a clear demarcation between ‘garden’ and ‘outside the garden’ by walls or fences to be essential to the very concept of garden. Therefore they might not consider pavilion pond gardens, open on all sides to the surrounding forest or agricultural fields as they often are, to be real gardens, whereas these delightful places are clearly understood to be gardens by Koreans.

Despite these different mental frameworks Western visitors to Korean gardens will find their appreciation of distinctiveness and significance of these gardens will be greatly enhanced if they visit being already aware of the layers of symbolism and literary reference embedded within them.

Further Reading in English

Min, Kyung-hyun, *Korean Gardens* (Borim, Seoul, Korea 1992) This book, sadly out of print, is a history of Korean gardens compiled from literary and painting records and the results of the author’s own archaeological excavations and observations.

Heo, Kyun, *Gardens of Korea – Harmony With Intellect and Nature*, (Saffron Korea Library, London, 2005) A wonderful book which describes and explains many existing gardens in detail illustrated with colour photographs.

Korean National Arboretum, *Traditional Korean Gardens – Representative Gardens of the Joseon Period*, (Korean National Arboretum, 2012). A beautifully illustrated survey of 26 major gardens with emphasis on identification of the trees therein.

Chun, Young Woo, *Forests and Korean Culture*, (English version, Bookshill, Seoul, Korea 2010, Korean version, Soomoon Publishers, Seoul, Korea 1999). Passionate examination of all aspects of trees in Korean culture from their role in the creation myth to modern

sustainability and pollution issues with many insights into Korean gardens along the way.

Yoon, Hong-Key, *The Culture of Fengshui in Korea*, (Lexington Books, 2008) Detailed clear explanation of pungsu (fengshui) principles and their application to the siting of gardens, houses, graves, palaces, towns and cities, especially Seoul and the Japanese destruction of Seoul's pungsu.

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Korea in the Asian Crisis of 1997 - 1998: the IMF Crisis in Korea

Hank Morris

In January of 1997, as the fateful year began, many Koreans were looking forward to another good year in economic terms. The economy was projected to grow at 6.4 percent that year according to a report by the *New York Times* in late November (30 November) of 1996 which cited the Bank of Korea as the source of the projection. Even though exporting was easing and capital investment was slowing down, there was considerable momentum in the economy and the 6.4 percent expectation for growth reflected the lowest growth rate compared to historic rates achieved over the previous four years of the Kim Young Sam administration, it was not that far down on the growth rate that the Bank of Korea had announced for 1996. Thus many Koreans, along with a great many foreigners with business or other connections to Korea, were caught off-guard by the precipitate plunge in the economic outlook from early in 1997 that began with the collapse of a series of major chaebol groups, the unique family-owned and managed conglomerates of Korea.

The initial chaebol group that went into bankruptcy in late January of 1997 was Hanbo Steel, and as the headline in the *New York Times* (25th January, 1997) trumpeted, "Second-largest Steelmaker in Korea Goes Under", this was one of the greatest corporate collapses in South Korea to that time. As such it was bound to have a major impact upon the economy in general--which was according to the IMF's Director of Asia and the Pacific, Kunio Saito who presented a paper in January of 1998 that indicated that the Korean economy was scaled at about 440 trillion won and thus a collapse of a single company with debts of 5 trillion won or over 1 percent of the entire economy in scale, was of a magnitude as to have been quite shocking at the time.

There was soon even more to worry about in the wake of the bankruptcy of Hanbo as it was soon revealed that a number of Korean

bankers and officials had been bribed by Hanbo's major shareholder and chief executive, Chung Tae Soo. In June of 1997, Chung was convicted of bribery of banking officials and of certain politically well-connected individuals such as Kim Hyon Chul, the second son of president Kim Young Sam. Kim Hyon Chul was convicted of accepting bribes in October of having accepted bribes to encourage banking officials to overlook their duties and provide assistance to Hanbo's Chung.

The impending crisis of 1997 gathered pace through the rest of the year as an increasing number of chaebols came under financial pressure following Hanbo's collapse. As Chung H. Lee and Kangkook Lee of the University of Hawaii phrased it in a paper presented in 2000 at a conference in Seoul, "Following Hanbo, eight of the top 30 chaebol went bankrupt in 1997" (paper posted on internet). Among the chaebol that went bust during the year were famous names such as Kia Motors, Jinro, the largest *soju* producer, and Haitai confectionary group. As the companies in these business groups and others that were under increasing financial stress looked to local banks to generate more funding to continue in business, Korean banks in turn began to increase their borrowing in foreign exchange from foreign banks. The amounts of funding that the Korean companies needed simply exceeded the ability of the Korean banks to provide funds in local currency.

The logical question that everyone who was watching the crisis unfold in those days was really quite straightforward: why were some of the biggest companies in Korea, units of major chaebol groups, in such desperate need of loan funding? The answer was perhaps not so readily apparent at the time, since most of the chaebol, including those that subsequently collapsed, insisted that they simply needed more access to loans from local Korean or foreign banks to ride out short term difficulties in their current business development circumstances. In fact, what had happened is that the chaebol were allowed by the Korean financial authorities to take on debt loads far in excess of what were then and still are today considered prudent debt levels for companies to maintain. In traditional business operations, a company can be said to be making considerable use of borrowing if its borrowings are anywhere from a ratio of 50 to 70 percent of its equity, and companies where the management succeed in raising debt levels to 100 percent of their equity resources are often thought of as taking leverage, or borrowing, to quite high levels. At western companies, levels of much beyond 100 percent are almost never encountered--but in 1997 the debt to equity ratio of the top 30 chaebols in Korea was over 396 percent! (paper presented by Ambassador Kim Kihwan, at an IMF conference in Singapore, July, 2006).

Debt levels of approximately 400 percent over their equity resources meant that far too many Korean companies were unable to pay current interest and principal scheduled repayments without additional borrowing--in other words piling up additional debts on top of current debts that they were completely unable to repay. This system of adding more debt on top of already existing debts that they were incapable of repaying simply delayed the inevitable bankruptcies of a number of the loss-making chaebol companies, and took earnings well down for those companies such as LG Electronics and Samsung Electronics which were never in any danger of failure. As noted above, if the Korean banks had been able to fund the rapidly increasing need for more funding on the part of many Korean companies, bankruptcies might have been avoided in some cases, particularly if the local banks could have tided these debt-ridden Korean companies over until their businesses were in better economic shape.

Unfortunately, so many of the chaebol were highly dependent upon exports, and as their exports were falling or not rising enough, earnings were consequently declining at so many of the chaebols as well. As a result, in many cases Korean chaebol companies found that not only were they unable to repay debts that were coming due for payment—they were unable to meet their needs for funding of current operations—in other words they had in accounting parlance become ‘capital destructive, not capital enhancing’. Again, if some of the Korean chaebols that failed had built up reserve funds to a major extent, they might have been able to fall back upon their corporate reserves and consequently needed less borrowing from banks and other financial institutions. But this was not the case and most of the companies that failed had very little to draw upon in their reserve accounts.

While watching this sad process of corporate self-inflicted collapse unfolding during the first half of 1997, foreign banks and financial institutions that had traditionally been lenders to Korean companies and even more importantly, to Korean banks, began to cut their levels of new funding to Korean entities and in many cases to call in existing loans. This process gained momentum following the bankruptcy of Kia Motors in July and from that point onwards the Korean banks had to plead with the Bank of Korea to obtain backing. Korean foreign exchange reserves maintained at the Bank of Korea had risen to over US\$20 billion by the end of 1994 and were at nearly \$30 billion at the end of 1996 and the beginning of 1997.

But during the second half of 1997 as the Bank of Korea became the only source of dollar funding for the Korean banks and non-banking

financial companies that had to repay short term loans to global banks, the reserves began to be rapidly depleted until in the first few weeks of November they fell below US\$10 billion—and at that point the Korean government felt that it had no choice but to do something that it had continually said that it would not do: call upon the International Monetary Fund for a relief and recovery loan. From the time that the IMF rescue package of over US\$57 billion was announced in late November, the situation in regard to the banks began to stabilize—but even so by the end of that year the Bank of Korea's usable foreign exchange reserves were only back up to just over US\$9 billion. (source, IMF conference paper of 2006 by Kim Kihwan).

The dependence of Korean banks upon short term borrowing to fund their asset portfolios was a highly significant element in the headlong rush towards the foreign exchange crisis that built to a climatic point in November of 1997. At the end of the year, Korean banks had in borrowings short term loans of \$49.2 billion and long term loans of \$41.8 billion but by the end of 1998 they had repaid a considerable porportion of their short term debts which were down to \$31.1 by the end of that year, although the long term debts were hardly reduced in falling to \$41.4 billion by the end of 1998. But in the recovery year of 1999, by the end of the year Korean banks continued to keep short term borrowings at a relatively low level of \$33.8 billion, but long term debts were down to \$33.9 billion at the end of that year. (source, IMF conference paper by Kim Kihwan, 2006).

During the crisis year of 1998, Korean banks were forced to repay debts and focus on rebuilding their balance sheets, and thus many Korean companies were unable to continue in business since either credit was unavailable, or if credit was available, many Korean companies were unable to afford to borrow at the high interest rate levels that were imposed by the IMF as part of the agreement it made with the Korean government at the time the bailout agreement was arranged in November of 1997. At the beginning of December, an IMF team was in Korea for the formal signing of the bailout agreement with the Korean government, and the general outline of the terms of the agreement was announced on 3 December in Seoul. As the records of the IMF indicate, the outline agreement identified the essentially overwhelming nature of the crisis, and then stipulated a series of measures that the Korean government had agreed to implement in order to overcome the crisis and its ill-effects in the shortest possible time frame. (source: IMF website, Agreement between the IMF and the Korean government, 3 December, 1997).

As the Korean government-IMF agreement noted in a preface that explained the background of the crisis, “The bankruptcies spilled over into a sharp increase in non-performing loans (defined according to international standards) to won 32 trillion (7 percent of GDP) by end September, about double the level at end-1996. The won depreciated by about 20 percent against the US dollar through November 30; the stock market index fell by 30 percent to a ten-year low.” (source: IMF Agreement, 3 December, 1997). The nature of the problem was thus stated so that everyone in Korea and indeed around the world would understand the magnitude of the economic collapse that was confronting Korea. The IMF also made it clear in this statement that it had come to terms with the Korean government as to the steps that the Korean government was supposed to take in order to comply with the terms of the overall IMF bailout package of \$57 billion dollars.

This agreement identified five basic steps that the Korean government would undertake: “The government’s economic program is built around: i) a strong macroeconomic framework designed to continue the orderly adjustment in the external account and contain inflationary pressures involving a tighter monetary stance and substantial fiscal adjustment; ii) a comprehensive strategy to restructure and recapitalize the financial sector, and make it more transparent, market-oriented, better supervised and free from political influence in business decisions; iii) measure to improve corporate governance; iv) accelerated liberalization of capital account transactions; v) further trade liberalization; vi) improve the transparency and timely reporting of economic data.” (source: IMF Agreement, 3 December, 1997).

In effect, the initial point made by the IMF agreement was that the Korean government would have to raise interest rates to stabilize the value of the won and contain any latent inflationary trend. This meant that as interest rates soon rose to double digit rates, many companies that were already in difficulty, particularly small and mid sized companies, soon went bankrupt and even large chaebol companies that were operating on a sound basis found that their interest payments for local currency loans soared to very high levels as rates approached the 20 percent level in short order. This process of raising rates to levels at which many companies found it impossible to continue in business, resulted in large scale job losses and a massive increase in unemployment. On the positive side, the action taken to raise interest rates did cap and then reverse the slide in the value of the won. But as there were few if any signs of inflation in Korea at that time, many felt that the interest rate rises were excessive and thus

caused undue hardship on many small and mid sized companies and their employees in particular.

The Asian Development Bank's ADB Institute published a research paper that highlighted the magnitude of the crisis in unemployment during the IMF crisis period in Korea. It explains that, "Before the 1998 financial crisis, the Korean labor market was near full-employment status, with the unemployment rate less than 3 percent. When the Asian Financial Crisis struck in 1997, the financial market of Korea was totally paralyzed from the impact of the foreign exchange market and, consequently, the high interest rate policy driven by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) led to the closure of many businesses. Massive layoffs followed to reduce labor costs. As a result, the Korean labor market faced a record high unemployment rate of 7 percent in 1998 and 6.3 percent in 1999 for the first time since the 1960s. The number of unemployed skyrocketed from 568,000 in 1997 to 1,490,000 in 1998 and 1,374,000 in 1999." (source: ADB Institute, working paper 214, published 10 May 2010).

During the height of the crisis period in 1998, the economy shrank 5.7 percent, and while that number is shocking, in every year since that period the Korean economy has grown at positive rates, even during the Global Financial Crisis year of 2008. (source: Yonhap News). But during the height of the IMF crisis in 1998 as tens of thousands of Koreans were losing their jobs, there was little to cheer about and the harsh terms of the IMF bailout program became something of a political football. Extrardinary measures were taken at the behest of the IMF as part of the recovery program, including foreign investors to buy holdings in most Korean stocks up to the 100 percent level, and as well the prior restrictions on the purchase of real estate by foreign investors were completely eliminated. As a result, at a time when many Koreans were suffering the loss of income as a direct result of having been made redundant from their jobs, foriegn investors were able to make substantial gains by investing into the Korean stock market and by buying property.

Even though the Korean economy began to show a strong growth trend from 1999, problems related to the IMF crisis continued to plague the Korean economy. In that year for example, the Daewoo Group, with \$50 billion in debt, collapsed in what was then considered to be one of the largest bankruptcies in global business history. (source, *The Economist*, 19 August 1999). The ramifications of this particular bankruptcy would take years to sort out, but in the short term it meant that another round of corporate layoffs would take place and thus the pain of the crisis lingered on for many Koreans even in the 'recovery' years of 1998 and beyond.

As it began to sort out the financial sector, the Korean government closed some banks and non-banking financial companies, including almost the entire merchant banking sector. It also nationalized and merged several of the large banks that had failed such as Hanil Bank and Commercial Bank of Korea, which were taken over by the government, merged and renamed 'Hanbit Bank', but then the new bank's name was further changed to 'Woori Bank', the current name of the bank. In the wake of the bankruptcy of Daewoo, a number of the major unit trust companies in Korea, including Korea Investment Trust and Daehan Investment Trust, failed as well. These companies had been managing investment funds that often invested into the debt of Daewoo group companies, and when the Daewoo group companies were unable to repay the bonds, then the value of the investment portfolios in the unit trust funds managed by Korea and Daehan as well as other unit trust managers collapsed as well.

However, the Korean government took over these major unit trust companies and subsequently ordered that investors be paid out at the initial par value of the funds so in this case investors were bailed out by the government. Similarly, no depositors at Korean banks lost any of their funds on deposit as the Korean government arranged for all funds in deposit accounts at the banks that failed to be paid back to depositors. In that instance, the Korean government did protect average Korean investors and depositors from the potential loss of their life savings.

The casuses of the IMF crisis in Korea were manifold and complex in many cases and cannot be described in a textbook manner. The crisis in Korea was unlike those that were happening in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and in other Asian countries during 1997, although there were some similarities such as 'crony capitalism', the favoritism shown by the governments to particularly powerful business groups that sometimes led to overinvestment in particular companies and projects. This is little different that what has happened in many other regions at different times throughout history, including the South Sea Bubble in England in the 18th century and the tulip bubble in the Netherlands in the 17th century, and more recently the Global Financial Crisis that hit the economies of the USA, UK and various EU countries with such force.

There has never been a means of protecting a market economy, even modified market economies such as Korea, from periods of economic distress when certain imbalances occur. But it was very much to the credit of the Korean government, including its leader for much of the IMF crisis period, Kim Dae Jung, and to the people of Korea, who pulled up their economic bootstraps and simply agreed to accept the

unprecedented foreign influence and investment in the Korean economy into what had been highly protected sectors previously, and made the best of a bad time by working hard to make their companies successful once again. In this effort they succeeded, and that success was transparent for all to see as within 15 years of the IMF crisis Korea had gained entry into the G-20 and was in fact an important participant and the host of this global meeting and 'club' of countries that represent the largest economies in the world today.

Many of the lessons that the Koreans learned during the crisis of 1997-1998 have been incorporated into the basic operation of the Korean economy and as a result there is much more economic stability and regulatory oversight of the operations of major financial companies and banks. As well, there has been a far greater oversight by the responsible entities of government over the operations of the major chaebol companies. The net result of these efforts is that to date the Korean government and the economy have not experienced anything like the magnitude of the shocks of the IMF crisis period, even in times of global economic stress. There is no room for complacency in these matters, but the Korean government, banks, non-banking financials and major companies have all made good progress and there is hope that this process will continue.

Hank Morris, an American of long residence in Korea, has been active in the Korean financial sector with Korean and foreign companies for over 30 years. At the time of the 'IMF Crisis' as the Koreans have always termed it, he was head of International Research at Coryo Securities, one of the major Korean securities companies that collapsed during the crisis.

Jean Perry: Twenty Years a Korea Missionary

Gigi Santow

After my mother died I embarked on a little project to try to flesh out the family stories she had absorbed from her paternal grandmother and then transmitted to me. I was hunting not for rich or illustrious forebears but for the truth: the more ordinary, the more credible. I was hampered in my quest both by my mother's lack of respect for the mundane and by the delight she took in being entertaining.

The results of my investigations were often disconcerting, but one story in particular caught my attention because the essential details could be corroborated. The account concerned my mother's great-aunt, her grandfather's youngest sister, Jean Perry. According to family lore, she had been a missionary in China. I discovered that in fact she had been in Korea, but details of geography seem to have trumped those of governance, at least in Australia: contemporary journalists might describe Korea as 'a large tract of Northern China'; and 'Corea, China' served as a postal address. When some foreign missionaries were savagely murdered in China in 1895, the Queensland press excitedly inferred that Miss Perry ('formerly of Blackall and Gladstone') had been a victim, which prompted her sister Lottie to write to Rockhampton's *Morning Bulletin* to explain, in contradiction of the paper's account, that her sister was alive, and working hard, but in Corea.

Maternal lore asserted, secondly, that when Jeannie returned to England she married a rich man. All true: the return, the marriage and the wealth. Her husband's net estate was valued in 1928 at just under half a million pounds. I cannot substantiate my mother's claim that there was a revolving summerhouse in his garden but it hardly seems necessary to try to do so.

English census returns furthered my general quest—not just the search for Jean Perry—as did vital registration records in England and Australia. The ongoing programme to scan Australian newspapers and

make them freely available on the internet has been invaluable (<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>). What a treasure it is, and how aptly named.

* * *

One of Jean Perry's grandfathers was a carpenter and the other a baker, but her parents were schoolteachers. Marrying in 1850, and all the while adding to the family, they moved from school to school in southern England, from Walthamstow, Essex, down to Blandford, Dorset, and then back east to St Mary Cray, Kent. This is where Jean was born, in 1863, the youngest of seven surviving children, first two boys, then five girls. The final move in England was back to Loudwater, Buckinghamshire, close to the birthplaces of her parents.

The first dramatic dislocation in Jean Perry's life came in 1882 when she travelled, with her parents and sisters, to Australia. Ranging in age from twenty-eight down to Jeannie's nineteen, the daughters of the family were unmarried schoolteachers. Queensland's Department of Public Instruction was advertising for teachers. Jean's father, Henry Thomas Perry, was an atypical applicant, being a family man approaching sixty rather than a bachelor in his twenties who was all too likely to reveal a weakness for drink, gambling, or fiddling the books. But potential husbands for the Perry girls—my mother's term for the sisters—would be more numerous than in England, and if they did stay single they'd be better paid. Accordingly, the family emigrated to Queensland, and after a brief stay in Mackay, their point of disembarkation, Mr Perry was posted inland to Blackall, along with Sarah, his oldest daughter. And indeed there were marriages, one a year for three years, until only Jean and her eldest sister Sarah, remained. With their parents' health failing, the reduced family of four moved back to the coast, to Gladstone, and the sisters ran a little school ('The Academy') and cared for their parents until, in quick succession, they died.

The second dislocation came a decade after the first. After Jean and Sarah had persevered for a few years with their school, the local minister encouraged Jean to answer the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Union's advertisement for 'a lady missionary' to join a group bound for Korea. She applied and, to Sarah's sorrow, was selected.

Thus, towards the end of 1891, Miss Perry travelled with the Reverend and Mrs Mackay, Miss Menzies and Miss Fawcett to the port of Pusan or Fusan (now transliterated Busan), on the south-eastern tip of the Korean peninsula. They arrived in winter, unheralded, with no

accommodation prepared. Mrs Mackay died some months after their arrival, and her widower, himself unwell, returned to Melbourne. In the following year he brought a Miss Moore back to Korea to replace his late wife, but then he married Miss Fawcett and the newly-weds departed for home. This is a confusing story—I find it confusing myself. The essential point is that for a number of years a small group of women was in charge of the Pusan mission. Another male missionary, the Reverend Adamson, did not arrive until 1894. (In the following year Mrs Adamson's death brought to three the number of deaths at the P.W.M.U. mission out of only nine arrivals.)



Korean House where the missionaries lived in 1893. Jean Perry is on the right.

Mrs Isabella Bird Bishop provides a glimpse of the depleted group near the start of her *Korea and Her Neighbours*. 'I was accompanied to old Fusan by a charming English "Una"', she writes—the reference is to the representative of Truth and the True Church in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*; her temporal guide was Miss Perry—'who, speaking Korean almost like a native, moved serenely through the market-day crowds, welcomed by all.' Mrs Bishop found the 'Australian ladies ... well and happy', despite living in 'detestable circumstances'. Some miles away from the tiny foreign community, their compound surrounded by 'mud hovels', the ladies were busy in the town and the surrounding countryside providing medical assistance, conducting religious services, and classes for adults and children. By the time of Mrs Bishop's second visit a year later the ladies, still 'well and happy', had converted their

original dwelling into ‘a very primitive orphanage’.

Five years after her arrival in Korea, Miss Perry set off for Australia to raise funds for the home that she wanted to set up in Seoul for destitute little girls. The usual steamship route took her first to Japan and there, at a missionary house of rest, she met Miss Ellen Pash. An Englishwoman fourteen years Miss Perry’s senior, and a very early graduate of Girton, Cambridge, England’s first residential college for women, Miss Pash had worked with the Salvation Army in England, France, and India, until her health ‘broke down’. She was planning to visit relatives in Victoria, and the women decided to travel together. They were to become not just colleagues but lifelong friends.

So then it was a party of two. Australian newspapers describe the ladies’ appearances in church halls and meeting rooms, town halls and drawing rooms, as far north as Rockhampton, as far south as Hobart, and as far west as Adelaide, and in many places in between. Their fund-raising took various forms. Some meetings did not charge an entry fee, but there would be a collection afterwards and helpful information provided about where to direct further donations. Sometimes there was a bazaar. The entertainment typically consisted of the Misses Perry and Pash, in native costume, singing hymns ‘in the Corean and Indian languages’; sometimes there were small children in quaint dress. One or both would speak, referring variously to their work in Corea or India. I quote from one of the brisker press reports—it makes no mention of costumes, singing or children—that of *The Western Champion and General Advertiser for the Central-Western Districts* (Barcaldine, Qld) of Tuesday 17 August 1897:

Two adventurous ladies, Miss Perry and Miss Pash, B.A., Cambridge, visited Rockhampton recently with the view to create an interest in the Corean mission, says the *Record*, in which the first-named lady has been engaged for nearly six years past, having, in fact, been in that ill-fated country during the whole of the late Japan-China war. Miss Perry’s efforts have been directed to the rescue of Corean girls from the degradation in which they are kept under native custom, and she is enthusiastically devoted to her work. ... It is impossible not to admire the missionary zeal of ladies who thus leave friends and kindred ...

Shortly thereafter, the ladies were off back to Seoul. They built their new inter-denominational home for little girls, teaching them to read and write in Korean and to do arithmetic, and instructing them also in hygiene, needlework, housekeeping, and the Scriptures. Subsequently they set up a

separate home for boys. And Miss Pash learnt Korean.

In 1903 came a second trip to Australia. It was a longer visit than the first because Miss Perry was being slow to recover from a second bout of typhoid. Once she was in better health, however, the trip resembled the earlier one—the thousands of miles travelled, the gruelling round of cheerful fund-raising meetings, the native dress, the singing in Korean (the Australian press finally having abandoned the ‘C’ in favour of a ‘K’)—except that the lectures were now enhanced by the additional attraction of Mirlin’s [sic] Limelight Lantern. Advertisements for the ladies’ meetings, and subsequent accounts of them, made much of their sophisticated recourse to the magic lantern, and this, along with considerable public interest in the ongoing turbulence in Korea, must have boosted their audiences. As the *Brisbane Courier* reported on Tuesday 30 August 1904:

In the Albert Hall last evening, an interesting illustrated lecture on Korea was given by Miss Pash and Miss Perry, who for several years were engaged as missionaries in Korea. They gave graphic details of the commercial, social, domestic, and religious life of rich and poor ... Both ladies were attired in the costume commonly worn by Korean women, and on the stage with them were several children also wearing the native costume. The views, which were both meritorious and artistic, included various scenes in and around Seoul, the capital of Korea, a Japanese military camp, Japanese troops on the march, glimpses of Chemulpho, the sinking of a Russian man-of-war, &c. The lecture throughout was listened to with keen attention by a thoroughly appreciative audience. It is both interesting and instructive, and is specially valuable at the present time, in making us better acquainted with a country and people but little understood.

* * *

Early on in my project, I had the great good fortune to to manage to establish contact with a grandson of Jeannie’s sister Lottie. Not only was Gerald a congenial soul but he was interested in family. After we’d been corresponding for a while—he in Toowoomba, Queensland and I in Stockholm—he mentioned that he owned a book inscribed to his grandmother by the author, Jean Perry. There were some missing pages and he wondered whether I knew what was in them; but I had not known that any such book might exist.

What a revelation that was, and then to discover that there were four books. And how moving it was finally to hold in my hands Miss Perry's books, and in such a place—the beautiful new British Library—and finally to hear Jean Perry's own voice.



SOME OF OUR WAIFS AND STRAYS, FEGGIE AND MEGGIE AMONGST THE NUMBER.

From *Chilgoopie the Glad*

After her second fund-raising trip to Australia, Jean Perry began to publish books about her Korean experiences. I do not know when she began to write, that is, to do more than draft lectures and write letters and reports, but to *write*. I can only guess at her reasons. She may have thought that the revenue from the sales of books, and from donations inspired by their contents, would be necessary if, as seemed possible, her increasingly poor health prevented her from undertaking further fund-raising journeys; indeed, she may have anticipated that she would soon be retiring from Korea. Perhaps intimations of mortality made her want to leave behind a record of her work and her beliefs and opinions, and it would certainly be easier to sit and write than to carry out more strenuous tasks. Each of these conjectures has merit, I think, but there is an additional factor, that she enjoyed writing. I think she was good at it.

It was a pouring wet day, at the height of the rainy season in Korea, when everything—including food, furniture, and clothing—was damp, moist, and unpleasant; when you breathed into your lungs from the steaming atmosphere microbes of every class and quality, which rose in invisible swarms from the reeking gutters beside the straggling, narrow roadways, and from

the cesspools which flanked the entrance of every dwelling-place of the little Korean town.

Yellow-stained water poured from the low-hanging thatched eaves of the cottages, and small boys in vari-coloured garments, which hung in drenched and uncleanly folds round their ankles, splashed through every available pool in thick wooden clogs ...

It was on such a day as this, in July, that I was introduced to our hero....

I was sitting writing in my eight-foot square room, writing an account of "missionary labour" to the friends at home, whose pence and halfpence, with a sprinkling of the mighty silver ... supplied me with sustenance for the body ...

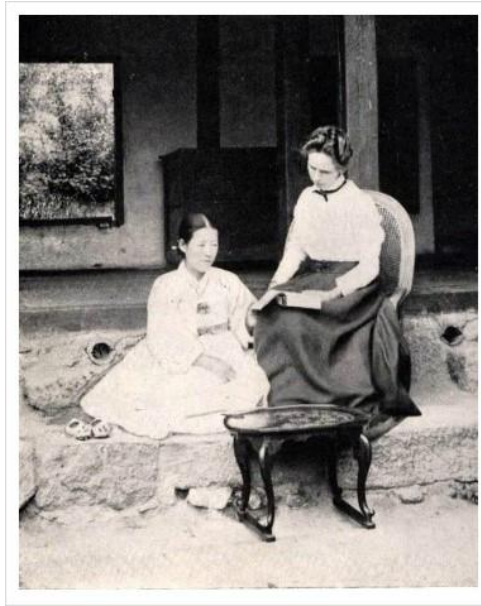
I had just written, "Am snatching time on a rainy day, when there is a lack of callers, to tell you how—". My flow of eloquence came to a standstill, for there was an ominous sound just outside the door....

Thus begins *Chilgoopie the Glad*, the first of Jean Perry's four books. Enhanced by splendid photographs that surely derive from those magic-lantern slides, *Chilgoopie* appeared in 1906. So did *The Man in Grey*, which was illustrated by Sid Paget, the popular illustrator whose depictions of Holmes, Watson and their adversaries fixed for all time their physical appearances in the popular imagination. In 1908 came *Uncle Mac the Missionary*, which was illustrated, Sid Paget having died, by his brother Wal. Finally, in 1912 came *Twenty Years a Korea Missionary*. Only this last book is declaredly autobiographical, but the fictional element, especially in the first two books, is slight.

The books reveal so much: Jean Perry's visceral sense of justice, for instance. Although fond of the 'quiet and thoughtful' Korean, whom she distinguished from the 'warrior' Japanese and the 'keen businessman' Chinese, she was affronted by the general east-Asian privileging of the male sex. Consequently, one strand of *The Man in Grey* concerns the Korean preference for little boys: she contrasts the rejoicing of the foreign missionary's wife when she bears a daughter with the abuse a local woman receives from her mother-in-law when she does the same, but then the child's father—a convert—defies his mother for the first time in his married life, and comes to the aid of his wife.

Likewise, not herself an ancestral Presbyterian, she was impatient with that denomination's comparable prejudice in favour of the male. She had a strong bond with her father, and perhaps had been influenced also by her experience at Blackall, the rough Queensland town where although her ailing father had nominally been head teacher it had been her sister

Sarah who was effectively in charge: ‘the mainstay of the school’ is what one school inspector called her. In *Chilgoopie*, Jean defends herself when she is criticized for baptising a man who requested the rite on his deathbed.



Miss Jean Perry, and Mareeya the Matron of the Home for Destitute Children, Seoul (from *Chilgoopie the Glad*)

In *The Man in Grey*, ‘little Miss Smart’, gets into trouble:

She had started a meeting for women, and many had attended regularly, and they had asked her if their husbands and brothers and cousins might come also, with the result that as many men were attending the meetings as women. ... Then a missionary brother ... told her it was not her work; she ought not to address a mixed meeting. She had not remembered it *was* a mixed meeting till the brother told her so....

The matter is thrashed out at an annual missionaries’ assembly: “...One brother rose, and said a woman should not usurp authority over a man: he had Scripture for it.” Someone in the audience declares that women should defer to their husbands, and someone else asks, “But suppose they have no husband, sir?” to which is given the testy response, “Then they ought to have.” Finally comes an intervention from the

chairman: “We have not yet replied to Miss Smart’s question. What shall we do? Break up her meeting or keep on?” A new interlocutor speaks from the floor, and all ends well: Miss Smart’s meeting will continue.

Then there is the matter of language. Jean Perry was quietly but understandably proud of her fluency and literacy in Korean, and is both amusing and convincing on language acquisition. In *Chilgoopie*, in response to questions about how she had learnt the language, she describes how she studied for the first year or two for six or seven hours a day with a Korean scholar who knew no English. Mr So initially puzzles over how to proceed, and the author digresses:

I have noticed this peculiar difference between the Eastern and Western nations, that whereas a European in any straits invariably scratches his *head*, an Easterner in like straits attacks his chin. Perhaps this is why the Westerner so frequently goes bald, and the Easterner very seldom succeeds in growing a beard.

As she watches, Mr So prepares some ink, wets his brush, starts to write, and the lesson begins:

I was, of course, a humble spectator of all this, and watched carefully, till at length the teacher looked up and said, pointing to the water, ‘Mool’, writing the character down, and signing me to do the same. Then I got the word for ‘table’, and the prepositions for ‘on the table’, ‘under’, ‘over’, etc., till I had quite a list of words. But how to write them down in those strange characters was a puzzle....

There are three stages at which you arrive when studying an Eastern language:-

First: You feel you will never get it, because of its extreme difficulty.

Second: In a few months you think you have nearly got it, and really must have a natural gift for languages.

Third: Later on you think you may perhaps see light on the subject in a few years—say ten or twelve; but a real student will never feel he has ‘got it’.

If I had more space, I would say more about Ellen Pash, who was interesting in her own right. I would say more about such aspects of Jean Perry’s personality as her lack of sectarianism, her pragmatism, her scorn for pomposity, and her fondness for children—boys as well as girls—and for animals. I might try to address the apparent contradiction in her books between her avowals of ecstatic evangelicalism and her sense of humour.

Her ironic use of ‘heathen’, for example, is startling both for the time and for her occupation:

After weeks of careful application I succeeded in mastering a whole text, and so, armed with a part of the Gospel, I went out to encounter the real live heathen, and deliver my message.... Soon my patience was rewarded by the appearance of a woman ... With what loving glances I regarded her as she silently approached, as I recognised in her my first audience, and the representative of all the women in Korea in heathen darkness! ... stepping towards her, with my most winning smile, I began, in a clear and rather authoritative voice, I am afraid:- ‘*Noo-goo-tun-gee, cu-a-talmit-nan-sa-ram-miel-mang ...*’ (John iii. 16). [For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son...’]

So intent was I on getting out the right words that I had not paid much heed to the woman’s countenance; but she waited for no further explanation. With a yell of despair she sprang down the path, clutching with both hands her precious basket, and crying out, “Such eyes, oh! fearful! and such a nose! oh, I die, I die!”

I am unqualified to attempt to interpret the fact that Korea today—South Korea, I mean, God help the North—stands out from its east-Asian neighbours in being a very Christian country. In 2005, 52 per cent of the population reported a religious affiliation: 23 per cent identified as Buddhist, but 29 per cent as Christian. In comparison, the proportion of Japanese who identify as Christian is one per cent.

* * *

In 1911, nearing fifty, Jean Perry returned to England. Several years later she married a twice-widowed man, twenty-five years her senior, who had made a fortune in South Africa. Mr Newberry had strong connections with the Salvation Army, with which Ellen Pash, who was a witness at the wedding, had previously been associated. I think it likely that this is how they met.

So far as I have discovered, Jean Perry neither published more books nor was noticed subsequently by either the Australian or British press. Undoubtedly she did good works in her immediate neighbourhood in Surrey. She corresponded with members of her Queensland family, and she sent presents to her Australian great-nieces and great-nephews: *The Girls’ Own Annual* to my mother and her younger sister, and *The Boys’*

Own Annual to their male cousins. She died, a seventy-one-year-old widow, in Bournemouth, in 1935.

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this piece to the memory of my cousin and kind informant Gerald Pennycuick, who I think would have enjoyed reading this brief account of the life and achievements of his grandmother's youngest sister.

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<http://www.archives.qld.gov.au/Researchers/Indexes/Professions/Pages/Teachers.aspx>

Gigi Santow is an academic demographer. After some decades working in tertiary institutions, in Australia and elsewhere, she now lives in her home town of Sydney, and works downstairs.

An English Chemist Visits Korea in 1899

Edited by Brother Anthony

In 1899, an Englishman named Henry Glendinning, who had arrived in China not long before, employed by a British chemical company, found himself obliged to visit Korea briefly on behalf of his employers' business interests. He kept copies of the letters he wrote reporting on his visit, and, by chance, transcripts of those letters, which are now in the British National Archives, have come into our hands. They offer a glimpse of what it was like to be in Korea on a short visit in 1899, knowing little about the country. Henry Glendinning was sent by Brunner Mond & Company to survey the Far Eastern market for their product, sodium carbonate, which is also often known as soda ash, and has multiple uses in the production of silk, paper and much else.

The history of the company is quickly told: John Tomlinson Brunner was born in Liverpool in 1842. In 1861, he took a clerical post at John Hutchinson's alkali works in Widnes, Cheshire. There, he rose to the position of general manager. Shortly after starting work at Hutchinson's, Brunner met the German-born chemist Ludwig Mond who was also working there. Ludwig Mond was born in 1839 in Kassel, Germany. In 1872 Mond contacted the Belgian industrialist Ernest Solvay, who was developing a new process to manufacture soda, the ammonia-soda or Solvay process. The following year Mond went into partnership with John Brunner. They established the business of Brunner Mond & Company, building a factory at Winnington, Northwich. It became a public company in 1881. Brunner Mond was one of several companies whose merger in 1926 allowed the creation of the mighty ICI company.

Henry Glendinning was born 9 October 1863 at Hartlepool; he died 4 June 1938 at St. Albans, Hertfordshire. In 1883 he joined Brunner Mond as a chemist. His grand-nephew, Alex Glendinning, has placed

online a spirited account of his life, <http://archive.today/mRIqC#selection-427.32-537.1> from which the following is taken:

Henry (Glendinning) went to Zurich for his University education, studying chemistry. In 1883 he applied to join the firm of Brunner Mond and Company, who were recruiting young chemists for the management team. With characteristic impatience he wrote a letter to Ludwig Mond from his lodgings in Manchester on December 8th. It is preserved at the Cheshire Record Office: "My dear Sir, Will you kindly let me know as early as possible whether you have come to a decision with regard to my application to you for a situation as chemist in your works laboratory, as I have today heard of another post which I am thinking of applying for should your decision be unfavourable to me, which however will I hope not be the case."

The letter did the trick, he was hired and put to work at the company's head office in Winnington, beginning in plant management in a small way, looking after the Soda Crystal Plant. A salary book of the time puts his first week's pay at £2.00. Brunner Mond and Company had been present at Winnington since 1873, when Ludwig Mond and John Brunner obtained a license for manufacturing soda ash (used in making soap, paper, glass, textiles and washing soda) from brine, limestone, ammonia and coke by a new method called the Solway process. They had, by the time Henry joined, built up a solid organisation based on the manufacture of heavy chemicals, with nearby plants in Middlewich, Sandbach and Lostock. (. . .)

Henry became engaged to Eliza Helen Whittingham (1865-1896) of Sandbach, Cheshire in 1893 and married her at Elworth Church, Sandbach on April 26 1894. Henry installed his new bride in Newfield House, a short journey from the plant. They were very much in love and from being a stern and somewhat awkward man he became cheerful and sociable, they often entertained friends on Sundays in their gardens, something Henry had never done on his own, preferring the masculinity of his club or his own company.

Henry was delighted when she announced she was pregnant. But on the evening of the 6th of January 1896, she began to suffer serious pain and thrashed around on the bed in agony. The local midwife was called to the house. Henry was horrified when she was brought, very drunk, to the front door. But from the cries coming from upstairs it was clearly too late to find an alternative. He let her in and she rushed straight to Nellie's bedside. Not a moment too soon, the baby chose that very instant to appear, and without scrubbing up or preparation, the midwife was forced to deliver him on the spot. Eliza was very weak after the birth but joyfully cuddled her baby and the old woman was sent packing.

It was obvious something had gone wrong the next day when

she had become almost too weak to move. Henry stayed by her bedside, holding her hand. She became progressively paler and weaker as the hours passed. The local doctor paid a visit and recommended nothing more than bedrest. On the 9th of January she died, fading away before Henry's eyes. He was grief stricken and refused to see his child. Tangye called and found him deeply upset, blaming his son for what had happened. He completely ignored the baby, and was to never have much to do with him as he grew up.

It was left to his sister-in-law Amy Whittingham to look after the boy, by now named Henry Whittingham Glendinning. It was she who gave him his nickname of Hal. Tangye, Glendinning's closest friend, wrote in his diary, "An awful sad affair, during his short married life she (Mrs Glendinning) had influenced him excellently and he humanised." Henry threw himself into his work and became a very forbidding person. He remained friends with Tangye, but it was as if all the joy had gone out of his life.

In 1899, as his work was being affected, the Directors of Brunner Mond found something new and important for him to do to take his mind off his problems and he was sent to China for two years. He returned to the home company in 1901, was made head of Information Sciences and later became Managing Director. He retired in 1928 and left Cheshire for good, settling in St Albans, where he was buried ten years later.

The British National Archives house the archives of Brunner Mond Company Ltd at the Cheshire and Chester Archives. The holdings include a "Press-copy letter book of H. Glendinning, agent for Brunner, Mond & Co in North China, Vladivostock and Korea. DIC/BM 5/12 Jan 1899-Jan 1900." The following letters from Korea were copied by someone related to ICI from that source; the notes and transcripts were then given to a former President of the RASKB for later publication.

Henry Glendinning arrived in China around the start of 1899. He seems first to have spent time visiting northern China. By September 1899 he was in Seoul. After arriving in Seoul he wrote, very positively:

"Seoul is one of the most fascinating places I have seen. It has a beautiful climate, now that the rainy season is approaching an end, is situated in the midst of the very finest scenery, and the city walls climb in the most audacious way over the wildest hills and precipices. The people are not offensive to foreigners, like the Chinese, and Seoul itself has been greatly maligned; it is infinitely cleaner and less foul than any Chinese city or any Russian settlement!"

Glendinning had been given an introduction to Walter D. Townsend—an American Merchant living in Seoul, whom he at once employed for the distribution of samples and dealing with commercial enquiries. He was influenced by him and by the resident British Minister, Jordan and the Commissioner of Customs Brown and others to believe that the potential market in Korea for Brunner Mond products was considerable. Probably the greatest impression was made by W. du Flon Hutchison, who while employed in customs work had written a report in 1885 which “was generally conceded to be a masterpiece.” Glendinning sent extracts back to Brunner Mond, with the comment that the elapse of time had only served to emphasise the truth of the report, especially as it was written by a man who had had long and active experience in China and Formosa and was thus able to institute comparisons. The 1885 report by Hutchison is quoted as opening as follows:

Korea has been the victim of political trouble, external and internal and was generally damned as the most wretched poverty-stricken country in the world. Its mineral wealth was said to be chimerical its land poor and non-productive, the people incurably lazy and dirty, content to squat the livelong/day on their haunches smoking their long pipes, a country destitute of industries, of trade, of arts, possessing no merchant class, but only a wretched substitute in the shape of a few pedlars who might possibly dispose of a few cash worth of trumpery trinkets, a land so poor that any one possessed of a capital of ten dollars was looked upon with envious regard as a successful and well-to-do merchant. To those who believe a tithe of these fabrications, circulated it is to be feared, in too many instances from interested and unworthy motives, Korea will prove a wonderfully disappointing place should they ever visit it and see the reality. They would find a trade sufficient to attract a goodly and increasing number of shrewd business Japanese and Chinese, a class of eager and enterprising native traders whose business, though not extensive, is yet of respectable proportions, the germs of numerous industries that may well develop, a style of artistic workmanship intermediate between that of China and Japan, fertile and productive soil, a people certainly not poor, although secretive and unostentatious as to their wealth, who although not richly, are well and substantially clad, a race of men of superior physique and endurance, and possessing a strongly patriotic, if calm interest in the welfare of their land. A people characterised by a strange frankness, freedom and independence of manner, who live so far as good solid nourishing food is concerned, in a much better style than the people of either of the neighbouring empires, and whose average wealth is above the average wealth of a Japanese or Chinese of the masses of the people.

Thus all the advice that Glendinning received locally from prominent, resident foreigners convinced him that he ought to make a journey into the interior of Korea. However, the length of time required and the expense caused him to agonise about whether to do so and led him to cable Brunner Mand for approval shortly before setting off. His letter of the 23rd September, 1899, indicates that right up to the eve of his departure the following day no such approval had reached him. Whether he actually set off before receiving approval is not on record but it seems likely that he did so.

As I leave Seoul tomorrow for a trip to the South of Korea, I take the opportunity of writing you a few lines before my departure. I decided after anxious deliberation to take this journey, as it seems then that it ought to be well worth while, and I was advised to do by the most prominent men in the country. From what I can see, the prospects here for your goods are really favourable, but in order to give you anything like a good report on matters which concern you, I find that I must go into the interior. The treaty ports here are not developed like those of China: a vast quantity of paper must be made in (Chelludo) province which is the chief objective of my journey. The mineral wealth of the country is being rapidly opened up: my samples have arrived at Townsend's just in time for me to take with me: already we have had an order from the American Mining Co for 10 kegs pure Bicarb, which he writes me that he has supplied from my sample lot: I shall see him here tomorrow and expect that he will then ask me to send you a wire ordering Bicarb.

The preparations for my journey have been extensive and complicated beyond all that I ever dreamed of: I must take all my own chow, bed and bedding, as well as a good supply of samples in bottles, and parcels for distribution, and Korean pamphalets: do as I will, my cavalcade will number 10 ponies. I cannot possibly complete my trip in less than 6 weeks—more probably two months, so that it will be the end of the year before I get back to Shanghai, and January at least before arriving at Hong Kong. I hope this meets with your approval: my feeling is that, working as I am here under such very favourable conditions, I ought to thoroughly exhaust the country before leaving it. I am strongly advised, after completing this trip, to go to Ping-Yang, a great Silk &c centre in the North: of course I am unhappily unable to tell in advance what profit will arise from my interior trip—I can only judge probabilities. You will receive this letter before I leave Korea, and it would greatly relieve my mind if you wired your approval or otherwise of my continuing my investigations in this country. One word will do: “approve” I shall take to mean that I am to continue until finished, even should it take 3 or 4 months more: “leave”, I shall construe as meaning that you wish me to leave the country as soon as the trip on which I am at present engaged to finish. Telegram should be addressed to: Hutchison, Seoul.

You will understand that a lengthy stay in Korea will leave me hardly any time for Hong Kong before the hot weather sets in. The difficulty in forming a correct decision in regard to these lengthy journeys is very great and I think this is a case in which, while quite understanding that you must depend on me for data in coming to a decision, I ought to consult you. The best opinion is that Korea will be neutralised, which will leave it a good market, whereas all N China will probably be Russian before long, at least as far South as the Yellow River, in which case prohibitive duties are sure to be put on goods.

I have got some very neat pamphlets printed in Korea, specimen of which I send you: they are rather costly to prepare, as I had to get a highly-placed gentleman (Korean) to translate them and look after printing &c, and without Mr Hutchison's assistance, I could not have done either that or many other things. I am having 2000 printed, the second 1000 on inferior paper and shall probably arrange for the newspapers to send them out and all who buy the papers, paying for them as advertisements. Mr H has undertaken to give them out among the numerous official Koreans etc of his acquaintance. The British Minister, Mr Jordan and also Mr McLeavy Brown are highly pleased with them; they are the first thing of their kind ever printed in Korea and attract great attention. I have sent Townsend a supply. I ought to mention that they are entirely a product of Korean labour -- translation, printing, binding and arranging solely and absolutely done by Koreans alone.

I am also, through Mr Hutchison, getting some designs for ornamental labels in Korean style. I hope they will be successful, as people lay great stress upon the availability of good labels in Korean style. In fact I consider that this is a case in which I ought not to spare money, and I am not sparing it.

A British Merchant, named [W. G.] Bennett, has been enquiring the prices of your products and you may get an order from him: of course as I had an introduction to Townsend (an American) I shall continue to work through him, but nationality is very strong here, and no doubt Brown and Jordan (Commissioner of Customs and British Minister respectively) prefer to advocate the claims of Britishers. For this and other reasons I do not at present advise giving Townsend an agency. Bennett represents the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank and was greatly relieved to hear that I had not given Townsend an agency, but that the market was open: Townsend however, is the better man as a merchant.

On September 21st I wired you. "Coyness illumine Shanghai Glen's i.e. "Forward me Letter of Credit: send immediately to Shanghai. Glen." My expenses here will be heavy, what with telegrams, travelling, interpreters, translations, printing, advertisements, designs &c, and I am also buying some curios for Sir John Brunner, which I think will be unique and can be got on very favourable terms: they are not on the market and can only be obtained privately by men like Mr Hutchison at a reasonable cost.

All this means that I shall require more money on my return to Shanghai. I am quite unable to express my indebtedness to Mr Hutchison: he has practically done everything for me—I could not have done it for myself—his whole time has been given entirely to my efforts and no help could have been more valuable: I trust you will officially write him a very cordial letter of thanks, and I would just suggest that his exertions deserve more: he is not a rich man and I find that I have been rather imposing upon his hospitality: do you not think that you might ask him if he would accept a handsome cheque from you, and if he agrees, then forward it: I merely put this latter to you -- it is of course entirely my own suggestion and I have in no way received anything in the slightest degree resembling a hint from him: you would have to do it very nicely, and it might be of advantage to you later:

I am writing this in the intervals of arranging packing, amid continued interruptions and have no time for more: Hutchison is giving me a farewell dinner party today at which an American Minister and others will be present.

By the 10th October 1899, Glendinning and his cavalcade of ten ponies had reached Gunsan, a port on the West Coast of Korea, a journey of some 200 miles south of Seoul. From there he wrote to Brunner Mond:-

I left Seoul on the 24th September and since then have been travelling overland on horseback and living in Korean inns: this is the first place I have touched at at which I could receive or post a letter: it is by far the roughest work I have done, but I am standing it all right and it is really not half as bad as Mrs Bishop paints it in her book. I undertook this journey with considerable misgivings as to its utility, but am now very satisfied with the probable results: the papermakers have shown the greatest interest and not only that, but in the numerous market towns I have passed through I have been able to do much probable good: I took a large quantity of sample packages and bottles with me, have distributed them freely, as well as the pamphlets. The papermakers almost without exception use straw or grass ashes, which are difficult to obtain and more costly than pure alkali, which is best adapted to their purpose and which they will certainly use if the difficulties of distribution can be successfully overcome -- and as they have been done successfully in the case of caustic soda, now used in the interior for washing purposes. There is no reason why ash and the other products should not also make their way.

Only, it is absolutely essential in this country of pony, man, and bull carriage only, that the stuff should be supplied in small packages: I have already given you the carrying capacity of a horse and bull respectively and a man will carry about 80lbs over a long distance -- but it is advisable that the packages should not be of the full carrying capacity of a man, inasmuch as the interior is supplied with goods by market: each district possesses a

“market town”, generally a mere village and here a market is held regularly every 5 days: it is supplied by itinerant merchants or pedlars, who have a regular round of four or five market towns in their district and spend their whole time in going from one to the other, generally carrying their goods on their backs, so that they do not want to have their whole carrying capacity taken up by one package: a package containing 25 cattles nett would probably be the best kind of package.

I again repeat that in my opinion the importance of Korea to foreign trade has been greatly underestimated, firstly because the customs returns enormously underate the total quantity of foreign goods coming into the country, owing to the immense amount of practically unchecked smuggling and secondly because of the absence of shops in the interior: the very highly developed system of markets renders them unnecessary.

Glendinning spent a month on his journey into the interior of Korea, from Seoul to Mokpo in the South-West with many deviations. He led a cavalcade of ten ponies and fourteen men, for it was all done on horseback, except for mountain climbing. In December 1899, after he had returned to China, he wrote to a friend:

I had a very interesting trip through the interior of Korea, and was amused to contemplate myself in the entirely new role of leader of a cavalcade of ten ponies for a month. You can realise the immense amount of brain tissue that I expended in trying to get these men to hustle a bit, but all in vain; their ingrained and splendidly developed faculty of inertia is too much for the mere white man to combat. It is a strange country, but I found no hostility worth mentioning, only a curiosity almost suffocating in its intensity, and which left me no rest from prying eyes by day or by night. As soon as I entered an inn yard, the whole population o: the place capable of locomotion entered after me, and stayed there; if I attempted to obtain comparative privacy by shutting the gate, they either broke that down, or the fence, in their efforts to get at me. The inn rooms are 8 foot square made of mud, and filthier than any outhouse at home. The heating apparatus is a fire beneath the mud floor, fire is put in at one hole, and smoke escapes by a hole opposite, of course mostly into the room. Once the flames came through the hole in the floor and burnt my bag, which happened to be standing over it.

He seems to have shipped a considerable number of Korean antiques back to a certain Miss Calliford, of Newfield House, Sandbach, Cheshire, which had been his home at the time of his marriage. He gave her detailed instructions on what to do with the articles on arrival. For example: “Brass-bound Korean cash box. This is old, and a large piece of furniture. I propose that you sell or store the little wash stand in my room and

replace it with this article. Notice the lock, to open insert the great brass key, and push merely. Do not try to turn or you will break the lock. It will serve to store all sorts of things in". Miss Calliford was looking after his son, then nearly four years old, and also presumably acting as housekeeper. He sent love, kisses and a "Merry Christmas" to his boy and asked Miss Calliford to "accept the same for herself".

Glendinning had enjoyed his visit to Korea and particularly Seoul which "is the only place I have struck in my wanderings that I would like to revisit". He spent Christmas 1899 in Shanghai. A few days later he was establishing himself in Hong Kong from where he would investigate Southern China before returning to England in April/May 1900.

Glendinning and Edward Selby Little

"The crowning achievement of Henry Glendinning's work in China was to identify E. S. Little a Methodist missionary, as being uniquely qualified to establish Brunner Mond's business in China. By May 1899 he had researched, worked and travelled extensively in North China for more than six months. This experience convinced him that an exceptional person was needed to develop the potentially large market for alkalis, the existence of which he correctly forecast. During a visit to Chinkiang, a busy Treaty Port on the Yangtse River, in mid-1899 he stayed with the British Consul there and discussed his problems with him. Little was working with the Methodist Episcopal Mission in the region served by the Xangtse River and the Grand Canal immediately North of the river. He served in the Missions in Yangchow on the Grand Canal, Kiukiang, Nanking, and at Chinkiang where he was living at the time of Glendinning's visit. Little had also discussed his problems with the British Consul who arranged for both of them to meet and by so doing he initiated a catalytic reaction of considerable significance." (From Patrick Brodie, *Crescent over Cathay: China and ICI*, 1898 to 1956. Oxford University Press, 1990.)

Bob Molloy in his recent ebook *Colossus Unsung* (Xlibris Corporation, 2011) tells much more fully how the Dorset-born British missionary Edward Selby Little, who was tired of working in China for the American Episcopal Methodist Church, first met Henry Glendinning in mid-1899 at the home of Everard Fraser, the learned British consul in Chingkiang, China. Glendinning already felt sure that Little was the man the company needed, given his excellent Chinese and strong personality. Glendinning had already traveled through North China. He disliked China intensely but saw its market potential and realized it needed someone like Little to develop the business. The matter was finally settled in January

1900, when Little resigned from the mission and officially joined Brunner Mond. In the years that followed Little did a remarkable job, traveling all over China to establish contacts and branch offices. His later life, told by Molloy, was marked by dramatic conflicts and betrayals, before he finally retired to New Zealand, where he established a whole new agricultural venture growing citrus fruits.

W. Du Flon Hutchison

Glendinning expressed particular gratitude to W. du Flon Hutchison, who advised and helped him in so many ways during his visit to Korea. He could not know that Hutchison would soon succumb to one of the diseases that were so prevalent in the Korea of those times. An obituary of Hutchison was published in the *Korea Review* of July 1901:

At six o'clock on the morning of the 23rd of July 1901 Mr. Hutchison succumbed to an acute attack of uraemia. He had been ailing for some little time but the end was a sad surprise to his many friends.

Mr. Hutchison first came to the East under appointment from the British Government to teach in a school in Hongkong. He carried certificates of the highest character showing that he was a properly qualified teacher. For a time he acted as deputy post-master in Hongkong. When Baron von Mollendorff came to Korea he selected Mr. Hutchison to attend him as his private secretary. This was in 1883.

When von Mollendorff left in 1885 and H. F. Merrill became Chief of Customs, Mr. Hutchison became his secretary until sent to Chemulpo to help Mr. A. B. Stripling who was Commissioner at that port. After Mr. Stripling's resignation in 1885 Mr. Hutchison continued a short time in the customs but finally left the service and through Yuan Shei-ki, who was Chinese Minister in Seoul, secured a position as teacher in an English Language School in Formosa. After some years of successful work at that point he was granted leave of absence to go home on furlough and the school was discontinued.

In 1892 he returned to Korea and was appointed, by the Government, teacher in a naval school on the island of Kang-wha but after the resignation of Mr. Bunker from the Government English School in Seoul Mr. Hutchison was transferred to the capital where he served six or seven years in the English School. About two years before his death he severed his connection with the Government and entered the service of The Eastern Pioneer Company, better known as The English Mining Co., as their Seoul agent. This position he held up to the time of his demise.

He was a man of great intellectual attainments and of generous instincts. His cordial handshake will be sadly missed by his wide circle of friends.

For a detailed life of the man Glendinning called “Townsend”, see: Harold F. Cook, “Walter D. Townsend, Pioneer American Businessman in Korea” in *RASKB Transactions*, Volume 48, 1973, pages 74-103.

Other figures mentioned by Glendinning

“**Jordan**”: Sir John Newell Jordan GCMG GCIE KCB PC (1852 – 1925), as he later became in the course of an illustrious diplomatic career, was born in Balloo, County Down, Ireland. He was educated in Ireland, then in 1876 he joined the Chinese Consular Service as a student interpreter. He held various posts in South China before being appointed Chinese Secretary at the British Legation in Peking in 1891. In 1896 he was appointed Consul-General at Seoul, becoming Chargé d’affaires in 1898 and Minister-Resident in 1901. He remained there until November 1905. In 1906 he was appointed HM Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China as the successor to Sir Ernest Satow and remained in the post until his retirement in 1920. He was also appointed to the Privy Council in 1915. He served as second President of the RASKB.

“**Brown**”: Sir John McLeavy Brown, CMG, as he later became, was born in Magheragall, Lisburn, Ireland, on 27 November 1835 and died 6 April 1926. He was sent to Korea by Sir Robert Hart to manage Korea’s Customs Department, and as Chief Commissioner of Customs from 1893 he performed so well that King (later Emperor) Kojong granted him control of Korea’s finances. At the time of Glendinning’s visit he was at the height of his power. Soon afterwards, international conflicts arose and he finally left Korea in 1905, as Japan began to take control of the country.

For further information on the other British people mentioned, see:

J. E. Hoare. *Embassies in the East: The Story of the British and Their Embassies in China, Japan and Korea from 1859 to the Present*. Routledge, 2013.

Robert Thomas's First Trip To Korea

Edited by Robert Neff

Welsh missionary Robert Jermaine Thomas (1839-1866) played an important role in Korea's early relations with the West – not so much by his acts as a missionary but rather through his death in the *General Sherman* incident of 1866. The modern views of Thomas are conflicting. Some see him as an unwanted interloper who, along with the crew of the *General Sherman*, a merchant ship, violated Joseon Korea's laws and paid for it with his life. To many, he is seen as the first Protestant to be martyred in Korea. Samuel Hugh Moffett supported this view when he wrote, "A man with such a dramatic martyrdom and intense commitment which led to that martyrdom is worthy of becoming a legend."¹

Much of Thomas's history prior to coming to Korea is given in a 1933 *Transactions* article by M. W. Oh, so it is not necessary to go into much detail. Thomas and his new wife, Caroline, departed England in July 1863 and arrived in Shanghai in December to serve with the London Missionary Society of China. Shanghai was an exotic city filled with intrigue, danger and filth which claimed many victims, foreign and native alike. Thomas would soon experience his own loss. On March 24, 1864, just a few months after their arrival, Caroline died while giving birth to their premature child. It was out of sorrow and a desire to get away from the scene of his wife's death that he severed his connection to the London Missionary Society and went to Chefoo, where he stayed with Rev. Alexander Williamson, a minister of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland and an Agent of the National Bible Society of Scotland.²

¹ Cited on the webpage <http://robertjermainethomas.com/> viewed on February 7, 2014.

² M.W. Oh, "The Two Visits of Rev. R. J. Thomas to Korea", *Transactions* Vol. 22 (Seoul, Korea: Royal Asiatic Society – Korea Branch, 1933), pp. 100-101.

While in Chefoo, Thomas met a couple of Koreans who awakened in him a desire to visit the closed country, a desire he fulfilled in September 1865. In a letter to the London Missionary Society dated January 12, 1866, Thomas wrote about his first trip to Korea:

We left Chefoo on the 4th of September, on board a small Chinese junk, and arrived off the mainland of Corea on the 13th. We spent two months and a half on the coast. I had acquired, through the assistance of a Corean Roman Catholic, sufficient knowledge of the colloquial to announce to these poor people some of the most precious truths of the Gospel. They are, as a whole, very hostile to foreigners [sic]; but, by a little chat in their own language I could persuade them to accept a book or two. As these books are taken at the risk of decapitation, or at least, fines and imprisonment, it is quite fair to conclude that the possessors wish to read them.³

Except for this letter to the London Missionary Society, I knew of no other first-hand accounts of Thomas's journey to Korea until a year ago when I discovered a series of articles apparently written by Thomas (published anonymously) in the British newspaper, *London and China Telegram*. According to Thomas, "knowledge about Corea is exciting increasing attention in England and amongst the foreign communities in the several ports of China" and this inspired him to hastily publish his "scattered notes of [his] three months' visit to the Western coast [of Korea]" with the British newspaper.

What follows are the four articles (May 28, June 6, 11 and 27, 1866). Some parts that did not really pertain to his Korean adventure or were confusing have been edited or cut out:

Whilst at Chefoo, during the spring of last year, I made sundry inquiries regarding the illicit trade in 'ginseng' carried on between the Shantung junkmen and the Coreans, a commerce winked at by the bribed Chinese petty offices, but discouraged by their confreres in Corea by the instant death of the offender if discovered. The words *terra incognita* sounded specially provoking when used to a country within two days' sail of an open port. My desire to visit Corea was realised in an agreeably unexpected manner. Towards the middle of August a junk captain named Li Chen,⁴ who had been engaged twenty years in the ginseng trade, informed me that he had two Corean Roman Catholic Christians on board, who had just arrived from the capital of Corea via Manchuria, in order to

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

⁴ Yu Wen Tai is identified as the junk's commander. Oh, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

recover some bad debts. They were both engaged in the ginseng trade. I made their acquaintance forthwith, and easily persuaded them to exchange their small, dirty, sultry cabin for a room on land. The elder one, named Yang-ga, had been a Christian for forty years; the younger one, named Kinga, aged thirty-nine, a native of Wang-king, the capital, was a convert of five years' standing.⁵ The latter, the better educated of the two, wrote Chinese with great ease, and had picked up a considerable number of useful phrases in the Shantung colloquial. They had brought with them a small catechism of the chief doctrines of Christianity, in Korean characters, written in the purest colloquial of the capital. With that as a basis, during their three weeks residence with me, I succeeded in compiling vocabularies and dialogues which afterwards proved of great use in oral communications with Koreans, who as a rule can only write Chinese. Very different from the Koreans who come here with the annual tribute, my two friends supplied me, without any hesitation, with straightforward answers to my numerous inquiries.

The Koreans here, in Peking, say their country is very poor, and no Europeans believe them. I was rather staggered when Yang-ga and Kinga told me the same tale. Fancying, I imagine, that my presence would be a safeguard to them from the treachery of their Chinese debtors, they repeatedly urged me to accompany them back to Korea, promising, should their little vessel be waiting for their return on the coast, to convey me to the capital. English shirtings form the staple exchange for ginseng, but my simple-minded guests thought in coming to Chefoo they should get the value in silver of their ginseng. They reckoned without their host, for their wily Chinese customers would only promise them payment in goods on reaching Korea. It was finally arranged that Kinga should cross in Li-Chen's junk, called the *Ta Pai Lii*, or *Great White Ass* – a misnomer, for she was painted as black as a Venice gondola – and that Yang-ga and myself should take passage in the *Li Pa Hsing*, a small junk forty feet long and about fifteen broad.

Having been detained by bad weather in Chefoo harbour for three days, on the morning of the 5th September the *Li Pa Hsing* got under way for the Port of Wei Hai Wei, the native place of the crew. Li-Chen was not prepared to start, so we purposed waiting his arrival there. I took with me two Chinese – a servant and a writer. We proceeded slowly, on account of the heavy swell setting in from the eastward. It was night before we accomplished the sixty miles between Chefoo and Wai Hai Wei. Our crew of six, including the skipper and pilot, went ashore next day to visit their families. Yang-ga and myself climbed a grass-covered hill, whence we had a magnificent view of the splendid harbour, so land locked as to be protected from every wind. The decaying, empty-looking walled town of

⁵ Kim Ja-pyung is identified as the one of the Koreans Rev. R. J. Thomas met in China and guided him to Korea. Oh, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-123.

Whe Hai lay at our feet. It is one of the 'Wei', or military posts, originally established in the time of the Ming Dynasty, for the purpose of protecting the coasts against the periodical descents of the Japanese pirates. We did the place in tourists' fashion by ascending the same day the picturesque look-out called the Hwan Tsin Len, and visited a temple in which a huge shark's bone does duty as a rafter.

So near Chefoo the worthy inhabitants scarcely deigned to notice me. Yang-ga was by far the greater curiosity. Only two or three Coreans had ever visited the Shantung coast, and, not having come into contact with foreigners, were so afraid of the Chinese officials that they only emerged from their cabins at night. Yang-ga had every confidence in the power of my protection, and replied in 'pidgin' Chinese when addressed in 'pidgin' Corean by a passing sailor. A heavy gale from the east, that lasted four days did away with all thoughts of a speedy departure. On the 11th and 12th, however, the weather cleared up, a fair westerly wind blew in gusts, but we were waiting for the arrival of the *Great White Ass*, and did not feel particularly anxious to go out till the swell had subsided. The morning of the 13th dawned cloudless and bright; a gentle fair wind and we could wait no longer. At noon all were on board, the anchor up and off and we went at a fine pace.

In fine weather commend me to a small junk. Splendid a selfish Englishman who likes to be his own master and gets wearied with the exact discipline, or at any rate the stated routine of a steamer or merchant ship. Skipper, pilot, sailors on our junk are all related to each other. One takes the helm, and when the other feels inclined or fancies it is time, goes to relieve him. We are fortunate in our crew, good-natured villagers, who make my servant quite idle by their readiness to serve me. How merrily we go down the coast, passing island after island. By nightfall we have done our fifty miles and reached the promontory, whence in a due easterly course we stand off for Corea. The pilot produces an antiquated looking compass about the size of a large pill-box, placing it gravely in front of himself; also a flint and steel, that he may light his pipe in the first place, and in the second place watch the course. I had turned in, but overhearing the skipper say of the compass, 'Never mind that thing, it is not to be depended upon, look at the Pole star,' immediately turned out, and in spite of the skipper's protestations that he was born under the luckiest of constellations, the thought of the two hundred miles before us with such a compass effectively drive away all desire for sleep. The night, too, was so sultry that Yang-ga came up on deck, and we chatted about Corea as satisfactorily as we could seeing that he only understood about a third of what I asked, and I about a fourth of his answers. We got on better when we talked of places and events recorded in the Bible.

How we welcomed the morning; the same fair wind and cloudless sky! At noon the weather changed, the wind shifted to the north, clouds began to gather. Towards evening we kept anxiously looking out for land. About

six o'clock the welcome cry 'land!' was heard. The skipper remarked that the circumstance was 'ting fei', very lucky, and so indeed it was, for the weather began to look threatening. He told us that the land in sight was the Island of Pansz, or, according to the Coreans, the Island of Ta T'sing, a little to the south-west of the Island of Pe-ling.

Corea is divided into eight *taio*, circuits or provinces. Those on the east coast from north to south in a southerly line are Hsient-ching (Ham-kyong, in Corean), Chian Yuen (Kan-won), K'sing Shang (Kyong S'ang). On the west the provinces of Ping An (P'yang An), Hwang Hai (Hang He), Ching chi (Kyong-koi), Chung-ching (Ch'ung Ch'eng), Chiven-lo (Ch'o-la). These provinces are divided into right and left departments, with the exception of P'ing An, divided into east and south, and Hsien-ching, divided into north and south. In all there are 332 of these departments. The Chinese junks frequent the numerous islands between the Ya Tung River and the Han River. The capital by some strange blunder, in our maps, is always called 'King-ki-tao,' – in fact the name of the province. The Chinese name of the capital is 'Wang-ching,' in Corean colloquial 'S'aul', which is simply a translation of 'Ching' court.

The West coast line is exceedingly irregular. The Province of P'ing An, starting from the mouth of the Ya-lu River, on which stands the emporium of I-chou, extends for the larger half southward, then trending eastward, forms a large estuary, the southern side of which again pushes out some distance westerly. To the south of this promontory is the Ya Tun or Great East River, upon which a hundred miles up in a north easterly direction is situated the Provincial capital, P'ing Jang Yu, one of the most beautiful places in Corea. A 'P'an-shu,' a civil mandarin of the second rank, resides there. Coreans and Chinese agree in saying that a small steamer could proceed easily to the city. Next comes the province of Hwang Hai, the southern portion of which juts out into a lofty promontory, called by the Chinese Tang-shan, by the Coreans Ch'ang-shan. Fifty miles to the north-east, and twelve miles to the south-west, lie respectively the island of Chian (chodo on the chart) and Pe-ling. The coast now trends inward easterly as far as the Bay of Hai-chou-fu, passing the little Island of Niu-t'o-taz. At the westernmost point of this bay, a mile between, lies the island of Mo-li, called by the Chinese Hoang-Hoa-Ts'ai-t'o-tsz. The coast then trends gradually in a south-easterly direction with the outlying islands of Ch'I Ling, Ch'ang Ling and the tiny island called by the Chinese Hsien-Tsz-Y'o. The mountain Island of Ten Shan (S'unni of the Corean) is next passed. The strait between this island and the mainland is about ten miles long, and has a breadth of about half a mile. It is much frequented by Corean junks, saving a distance of twenty miles at least. The southern coast of Hwang Hai now recedes in an easterly direction past No. 2 Ten shan, and No. 3 Ten shan, promontories of the mainland. Soon the inner Island of K'och'I and Shui-Ta – the two outer Ten-p'ings are passed, and the two imposing islands of Chian T'ng and Chaing Hwa

loom in the distance. They protect the entrance of the river 'Im Chin" that leads to Sheng To Fei, the famous district of the cultivated ginseng, and the river Han, better known to the Koreans by the name of 'Kyang K'ang', which leads to the capital of Korea, Wang-Ching or S'a-ul, which is situated on the northern side of the river about three miles distant from the bank of the Han.

I have found no reason for discrediting a native atlas of Korea, which I obtained from the capital. It contains the positions and names of more than three hundred well known mountains and sierras. There can be no very extensive valleys in the entire country. Korea has no lakes. Many districts were pointed out to me by a Korean contrabandist as containing gold, silver, copper, and lead. Gold is as dear there as it is at home. About three hundred ounces of gold dust, I am told, find their way here annually. The mines are under a strict surveillance, and very imperfectly worked. It would only fatigue the reader were I to mention the names of all the places which are said to produce the precious metals.

The great staple of trade between China and Korea is ginseng and paper. Of the former, about 15,000 catties, worth 180,000 taels, are brought here by the annual Embassy. The other day I saw six waggon loads of paper being discharged in what is called by Europeans 'Corean-street.' A member of the Embassy informed this formed part of the Imperial tribute. A few hundred sables are also brought by the merchants and sold at about one tael and a half a piece. The Koreans receive shirtings and silver in exchange. They made large purchases of copper utensils, Chinese pictures, moral sentences written elegantly on long pieces of coloured gilt paper (*tintsz*) for hanging on the walls of a room as we do engravings and pictures. Knives, musical boxes, watches, looking-glasses, all kinds of European goods, are readily purchased. Several of the merchants who accompany the Embassy have expressed to me their regret that there are no foreign traders in this city.

Near the northern bank of the Ya-lu river, about fifteen miles from the Chinese town of Fen-Hwa-Ch'eng, is the Pienmen (Ts'engmun) or Korean gate. It is opened for business three times a year. A trade is carried on the Chinese side in shirtings, brought from the open port of Ying-tsy (New-chwang) exchanged for ginseng, seaweed, bicho le mare (sea-slug), sea otter, tier and panther skins, &c., &c. I have been at some pains to collect statistics of this trade, but hesitate giving them to the public till I have further opportunities of verifying them. It may be set down as very insignificant as compared even to the Mongol Chinese trade. A word about the contraband trade on the West Coast. Yearly, in the autumn, about twenty small junks leave Shantung with shirtings, which they barter at 6 to 7 taels the piece, and bring back in the most successful seasons not more than 6,000 catties = 48,000 taels. The average price of ordinary ginseng here is 12 taels, on account of a heavy duty and expenses of transfer; at Chefoo about 8 taels. As I have mentioned, it is largely

cultivated at Sheng-to, a small town in the province of Ching-Chi, northwest of the capital. It is grown from seed under long low sheds, constructed of pine bark with an under-covering of matting. The seed takes about five years to grow to the size requisite for exportation. It is gathered and dried in the sun during July, August, and September, and is packed very neatly in catty parcels. The best quality consists of 20 roots to the catty – the next 30, &c. It is extensively used in Corea, the richer classes making an infusion of the root which serves for tea. Father Jartoux, in 1711, whilst on a journey in Eastern Manchuria, thus eulogises it: - ‘Ce quie est certain c’est qu’elle subtilise le sang, qu’elle le met en mouvement, qu’elle echauffe, qu’elle aide la digestion, et qu’elle fortifie d’une maniere sensible.’ I fancied I derived some benefit from constantly drinking an infusion of it when my tea had run short.

In spring about 200 large and small junks leave Shantung for the herring fisheries on the Korean coast. They do a little smuggling up north off the Tutung river in bicho do mare, and seaweed (Su-chue-ts’ai). Although the Japanese to the number of 300 are permitted to land and live in Corea, they are as jealously watched as were of yore the Dutch at Decima.⁶ In the south-east corner of the southernmost of the eastern provinces of Corea, Ts’ing shang, near the mouth of the Naktung river, is situated the walled town of Yung-Lai (the Chausian of our maps); within these walls the Japanese are strictly confined, but are permitted to carry on a small trade. The Coreans say that whilst they have to render tribute to the Chinese Emperor, the Japanese render tribute to the Korean reigning Prince. Consequently whilst no Prince can be enthroned at S’aul⁷ without the sanction of the Emperor of China and the presence of his ambassador, the Korean Prince appoints an ambassador to Japan when a new Emperor mounts the throne, so to speak. A Japanese acquaintance told me he had seen Coreans ten years ago at Yedo. They further assert that Japan is bound by an agreement to send there three hundred individuals, who are looked upon as hostages(!) since Taycosama’s disastrous retreat.

In the north of the province of Hsienchin, when the River Teu-mon⁸ is frozen in early winter, the Manchus and Chinese who live on the northern bank trade in furs, horses, &c., with the two Korean towns of Ham-nir and Chung-s’eng. Close to this river has crept a great Power, which is destined to exercise a greater influence on Corea than does the Ya-Ts’ing dynasty. Englishmen are attracted by commerce. Corea is not likely to tempt them. It produces no tea nor sugar, and but a small quantity of excellent silk.⁹ It has the mulberry and oak silkworm. The splendid rice of Chung-Ts’ing, Ts’ing-Shong, and Ch’en Lo, the fine cotton of Ts’ing Shong and Chung-

⁶ Nagasaki.

⁷ Seoul.

⁸ Tumen River.

⁹ Thomas noted: “The Japanese say the tea plant came from Corea.”

Ts'ing do not appear to be cultivated in such large quantities as to leave much for export. We leave the ginseng to the Chinese. I question if there is as much gold in Corea as in Japan.

The people are idle; in literature, mere echoes of the Chinese. As immoral as the Japanese, without their bright intelligence, they walk and dress like people did in the Ming dynasty; are centuries behind the Chinese in the arts. Is it worth while to open such a county? Poor, effete little country, it is beginning to tremble at the unprecedented success of the Russians on the east of the Teu-mon. The Russians might well have shouted 'Eureka, Eureka!' when their ships entered the newly ceded Gulf of Passiet. Whilst other harbours inhospitably opened themselves about half the year, the fine bay of Novgorod is closed only for six weeks. Before me lies a recent number of the 'Siberian Section of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society,' which, amongst other interesting papers concerning Mongolia and Manchuria, contains a luminous sketch of the advantages of this gulf and its bay over all other Russian harbours in this part of the world. As it refers significantly to Corea, I present a short analysis of it to the English reader, commending it especially to the consideration of the Russophobists.

Thomas noted that Passiet was very close to the Korean border and that the Russian author of the article observed that if the Russians built up a sufficiently powerful enough military force in the region that they might influence Korea to open up to Western ideas – much like “other decrepit countries in the East.” The writer also suggested Russian commercial influence could expand across the Tumen River and that a small fleet of powerful steamers that would be primarily used for offloading ships in the bay and could also be employed on the river.

But the Koreans were not interested in trading with the Russians: “The news reached China last steamer that 70 Korean families had gone over to the Russian territory. I was told in Corea that two merchants of a northern province had been beheaded for transacting a little business with the Russian.”

Thomas continued describing his trip to Korea:

The storm which detained us in Wei Hai harbour had evidently swept along the West Coast of Corea. Our junkmen picked up several large pieces of wood, amongst which was a 'koogoo', a kind of manger. Early on the morning of the 15th, passing a mile to the north of Ta-paw-lsz, we sailed slowly along the N.W. side of Pe-Lingh. This part of the island is singularly barren of trees, but the hills are clad with a bright green grass so pleasant after the bare hills of Shantung. The N. and N.E. part of the island is beautifully picturesque, quite grand in many places.

Perpendicular cliffs in storied, well-defined strata, at least three hundred feet high, fringed gracefully along their summits with fir trees and much underwood.

Gradually, as we sail on, high rocks are seen at the north point, standing out of the sea in all kinds of fantastic forms, some resembling monster statues, others recalling to mind the Isle of Wight Needles, some like strong ancient forts – old castles with many creepers clinging to the ruins. Giving the outermost of these rocks a pretty wide berth (a wide berth for a junk means a few feet), the pretty little harbour of Tung-men-chew opens out. Sailing within fifty yards of the shore we cast anchor. I was eager to go ashore. Yang-a begged me not to betray my nationality. The view from the junk was lovely in the extreme – hills from tip to beach or inland plain covered with firs, small oaks with very large leaves, and many shrubs. As yet our arrival apparently had not been observed. It is the usual policy of the Chinese junks to find anchorage as far as possible from villages and towns.

On landing we first met an old Korean woodcutter, Paga, and his two sons; they, like all these islanders, for years accustomed to the arrival of Chinese junks, can command sufficient 'Pedgin' to be tolerably understood. Paga begged for a knife. I invited him and his two sons on board. The elder son was a most interesting lad, with hazel eyes, and light-brown hair. I gave the boys a brass button each, having fortunately provided myself with a couple of dollars' worth of these cheap but very acceptable gifts. The sons sculled in their 'coro', small boat. The Koreans know nothing of calking - small boats and large junks alike leak incessantly. Constant baling is of course necessary. To prevent getting wet feet, a flooring of bamboo rods fits the lower width of the boat, and cut to its shape, forms the sitting place of the passengers. Yang-ga was not [to] be seen; he had given strict orders that his name should not be mentioned. All of a sudden Paga's son said to him with a scared look, 'Abadi, kaapsida, chori saram hanna, masso.' 'Father, let's be off, there is somebody come.' Somewhat against their wish I accompanied them ashore, and found squatting on the beach (in Japanese fashion) a shabby-looking member of the coast-guard.

The Korean coastguardsman immediately approached Thomas and asked him in Korean his name and purpose for coming to Korea. Thomas answered that his name was "Tu" and that he had come for no reason. The Korean then asked him to leave but Thomas refused and told him he would leave only after he had looked around. If we are to believe Thomas, this little dialog won over "the heart of the soldier, and they spent some time chatting on the beach "quite amicably." Thomas then made a request that frightened his new-found friend:

I requested him to conduct me to the residence of the small mandarin who, he had just informed me, had but recently arrived from the capital. He replied by significantly drawing his hand across his throat. I laughed, and telling him that I was a 'Western Oceaner', insisted on his guiding me. Very loath he proceeded by my side till we reached a broad, shallow, salt pool. He carried me over this and we made our way up the side of one of the hills on the south-east side of the little harbour. My attention was attracted by a magnificent wild rose, as fragrant as those in our English hedges. Ferns abounded on every side. Ignorant of botany, my eyes and ears were open only for the character and language of the Korean people. Half way up the hill we came upon a company of woodcutters, each possessing a very sharp axe. I was quite struck with the respectable and intelligent-looking faces of many of them. They were startled by my sudden appearance, and one or two turned pale when my friend, the coastguardsman, informed them who I was. I spoke to them of the 'Lord of the Heaven'; one of them seemed to have an inkling of what I meant. The grave circle around me, each one with his long uncut hair done up into a knot and the straggling hairs confined by a white cotton bandage tied around the head, the long whiskers carefully combed, and one or two with the beard plaited into a tail – the uniform unvarying white 'polda' (a native cotton fabric) clothes – the long pipes so solemnly smoked, with green tobacco heaped up in their capacious bowls made me feel I was in another country amongst another people.

Suddenly, whilst we were pleasantly chatting, their head man burst upon us in a great passion and was going to beat a boy. I took the stick out of his hand and flung it away. Proceeding up the hill with my companion Kim-a, he besought me to give up my intention of seeing the mandarin, as it would certainly be at the price of his head. I replied we might walk to the top of the hill to enjoy the view. And a charming panorama lay spread out before us. Nothing worthy of note in the island – all the villages were hidden by intervening hills, but northwards the promontory of Yan (ch'ang) shan, a lofty magnificent sierra – reminding me of the Guadarama in Estremadura – only some 10 miles off, to quote the expression of a Chinese traveler in Corea, 'laughingly invited me to ascend its summit.' Through my glass I could see a great deal of forest covering the sides. Kim-ga suggested dinner, and down we went to the bay where we found three Chinese junks had just arrived.

On nearly all the islands I visited, I found small oxen and very small ponies. The former belonging to the islanders are exclusively used as beasts of burden, for the ponies belong to the Government. I was told that they were formerly given to the Koreans by the Chinese during the wars between Corea and Japan. Towards evening the news of our arrival had spread to the authorities, and a large boat full of soldiers landed on the beach. I went ashore and invited the small officer in charge to come on board. He said he was a native of Wanking, and had visited Peking with

the Embassy. During the night the soldiers lit fires on the beach. Yang-ga was too anxious to sleep. 'Pray don't speak Corean to them,' said he, 'they will report your arrival, and I with three degrees of kindred shall surely die.'

On the 16th the same officer came on board and said that he had already heard of my religion in Peking, and would come in the middle of the night to speak more particularly about it. He was afraid to remain on board too long in the day time. All the contraband trade between the Coreans and Chinese is carried on at night. The ginseng trader usually remains at anchor about a mile or two off, in fine weather of course. The Chinese conclude a junk to be a trader if she anchors with no ostensible object at that distance from them.

Our skipper told me that last night he had given some shirtings in exchange for the 'bicho do mare' or 'sea-slug', a highly prized dish amongst the Chinese. Large quantities are found from the south of the Yang-shan promontory up to the Ta Tung River in the north. In the afternoon a fine breeze sprang up, so I gave up the hope of seeing the friendly officer. The harbour was too narrow to tack out, so we sank a small anchor in the sampan to be cast a few dozen yards ahead, then hauled the junk up to it, and this repeated till we were well out. Then off with the tumultuous tide. The tides on this coast rise to twenty feet and upwards, and rush along with inconceivable impetuosity. A small junk with fair wind and tide can do ten knots. Passing the small island of Moli t'o (Talom-som) and islet of Niu l'o lsy (Tsing mo) across the entrance of what is call Hai chia p'a bay, at dark we reached our destination, Maye taw, also called Hoang-hoa-ts'ai-to-lsy, a small island lying about half a mile off the mainland. I was sitting talking to Yan-ga when I heard a sailor sing out, 'Up with the helm, we are passing over the reef.' Getting on deck I found we had six feet of water. Our junk sails in four comfortably. When the tide is out this reef is visible nearly across the strait; and when a strong north wind blows it breaks the force of the waves. The south-east wind brings a sea in.

I will not tire the reader's patience with a minute account of my intercourse with the inhabitants of this small island. The same curiosity, mistrust, and fear. The inhabitants, like those in Peling and all the islands on this coast, subsist on rice, turnips and fish. A few Corean women whom I saw looked dirty and ugly; but they are poor and half-starved. I gained the affections of a troop of boys by doling out to them small quantities of sugar, which is not cultivated in Corea. The well-to-do get supplied from Peking through the north, and the others use excellent honey as a substitute. Today (17th), in accordance with Yan-ga's wish, we hoisted a flag with a red cross, as a signal to his anxiously expected vessel. A touching symbol at any time, but this quiet Sabbath day peculiarly so. This simple flag can summon junks to bear the brave Catholic missionary to the jealously guarded capital of Corea. No pencil can daunt these

devoted agents of the 'Gesei.' They recognise no 'terra incognita.' From Delhi to Lhasa, from Peking to Nanking, are they to be found. Neither men nor mountains can daunt them. Corea, guarded on the north by Coreans and astute Chinese, on the south by Coreans and the astute Japanese, has been conquered by them after the blood of more than one martyr has been spilt. Formerly amidst many miserable privations they made their way in a Manchurian winter over the frozen 'Green Drake River', whose southern bank is Corea, where they were met by those whose friendship had been secured in Peking, and well content were they with the rough accommodation of a native hut and native fare. Latterly they cross, as I have done, in a Chinese junk, and hoist a flag with a red cross to be recognised by the native junkmen, who at the peril of their lives conduct them inland.

Is it not a glorious record of their perseverance that now eleven missionaries are stationed in the capital and neighbouring provinces, and have so many converts that an intelligent native merchant told me the Government did not cruelly persecute as of yore, because the Christians were too numerous. The foreign priests adopts the disguise of mourning for father and mother, and most appropriately does the Roman Catholic enter the country in mourning for his father and mother. Slender chance of seeing them again on earth has he. Anyone can wear this disguise, so complete is it. An enormous hat made of bamboo slips (P'angnip), a horsehair net or cincture to keep up the hair (P'o mong), a coarse cap underneath the hat (C'on), a lap or veil over the face (P'osen), &c., &c., form such an admirable disguise that discovery from glances by bystanders is rendered next to impossible.

18th – A fair wind for our progress southwards, but we must first get through the important task of eating. Our fleet of four set off in company, tacking close into the shore of the island, where I observed a very picturesque natural arch formed by a huge rock, quite as striking as that at Biarritz, made so much of by the Bayonne engravers. Our course was along the mainland. We passed a few miserable huts, then a large yamen – the residence of a military mandarin of the fourth rank. The Coreans call the place S'okong.

It began to rain and blow; so getting near Ch'onglin Island, our destination, we ran up into shallow water on the north bank. At low water we had five feet, but the bottom was soft mud, and there could be no sea on, should the squall not shift round from the north to the west. It was very dark, and in finding our position the skipper, who couldn't find the compass, asked me now and then how we were going. On the morning of the 19th we went fishing, or rather poaching, in a Corean fish enclosure (Leaize-lsy); the two poor fishermen in charge with great good nature gave us a few fish, for which we gave in exchange tobacco and sugar. On entering the splendid harbour of Ch'ong-lin, we found ten Chinese junks at anchor – a beating of gongs quite deafening welcomed our arrival.

Much to my delight, the pilots of a neighbouring junk came on board to tell us that Yang-ga's vessel had arrived a month ago at this island. He says that it has a crew of two – an old man named Yuga, and a younger man of the name of Kinga. The old man every evening at night fall used to come to his junk and sit down to weep with anxious waiting. Now I trusted all would be well, and that I should get to the capital. We spied the little junk with one mast, lying high and dry on the shore. At midnight Yang-ga and myself were on deck anxiously waiting her coming. At last we heard the gentle splashing of the scull, and soon a small junk came alongside. Yang-ga could hardly stand from excitement; he was trembling with hope and fear. He cried out in broken Chinese, 'Shemmo Ch'uen?' (what vessel?). When he heard the voices of his friends, he was reassured. With a rapidity that I could scarcely follow, question succeeded question. 'All well?' 'All at peace,' was the comforting answer. Yang-ga feared his journey to China had been discovered, in which case his relatives would have been severely punished.

We all four went down into my cabin, where I prepared some excellent tea for our guests. They told me that a great inundation had taken place near the capital in the month of July – more than a thousand lives lost. After examining my hair and feet, they said I could pass for a Corean almost without the mourning suit, but it would be safer first to go to a retired place in the country and wait till my clothes should be ready. As their junk was very small, we agreed that on the morrow they should proceed to the island of Yeng-p'ing and there await us.

Sept. 20th – The Corean junk left at three o'clock this morning for the island of Yeng-p'ing, taking the short cut through the channel formed by the mainland and the island of Yenshan. We pass with a fair wind an hour or so afterwards on the outside close under the cliffs and romantic-looking caverns. Our pilot steers through the rocks with the steady cool carelessness of familiarity. The swift tide rushing over the rocky bottom at first alarmed me. One moment we were sailing through a confused, jumbling, fretful sea, though the wind was gentle and fair, then passed through violent eddies caused by some large mass of rock broken off long since from its parent cliff. The coast of the mainland down to Yeng-p'ing, and thence as far as the eye can reach, consists of ranges of mountains, ridged, scarred, and wrinkled by torrents, the seams of which are everywhere visible. We caught the Corean junk, exchanged salutations, but were afraid to go on board on account of these Corean vessels coming westward. Arriving near Yeng-p'ing with the breeze falling and the tide turning, we made for the small island of K'o-ch'I, three miles to the north. A charming little island, covered to the summit with thick brushwood, and inhabited only by two old crows and innumerable gaudy dragon-flies. Yang-ga and myself scaled the peak, about 400 feet high. We could see our little boat struggling, with the aid of a scull, to make for Yeng-p'ing island. The tide was now getting low, and the numerous rocks and

sandbanks which rapidly uncovered themselves would make an ugly impression on a British seaman. With the next tide we crossed over to Yeng-p'ing and joined the other Chinese junks which had followed us from Ch'ang-lin. The Korean vessel lay snugly at anchor in shore. The wind is rising – our anchorage a wild one, so we move around to the east side. Five junks proceed in line. The phosphorescence is remarkably brilliant.

I had packed up my bedding and lain down on the mats, expecting Yang-ga's vessel to come alongside at midnight. Suddenly I heard a rushing through the water. It was without doubt a trader. I swung myself on deck in time to see her drop her mat-like sails, which are set by means of hauling in grass ropes which run through pulleys fixed in the top of the crooked slanting masts. The arrival was a two-master; the fore-mast (more appropriately fore-stick) taller than the main-mast (main-stick). She dropped her long wooden anchor, and, carried by the tide, floated down near us. Almost simultaneously all the sampons of our fleet made for her at a superb pace – for sampons! Our skipper returned soon with the news that she had brought 200 catties of last year's ginseng, which would find no buyers. Awaking early out of uneasy slumbers I missed Yang-ga. One of the crew told me he had sculled him an hour ago over to his junk. I immediately went after him and brought him back. He had already doffed his Chinese dress and tail, and rigged himself out as a Korean. So timid was he, that the moment we returned to our junk he began once more to plait his hair into a tail. The sea is too rough for us to go on board the small junk, and three or four curious islanders are watching us from the hill. Yang-ga says they have seen me.

There is nothing remarkable in the appearance of the large or small Yen'ing islands. We can spy the common small oxen, carrying grass over the hills, and a few idle-looking ponies, which, being 'Government horses,' are not interfered with. The inhabitants of this island are very hostile towards the Chinese junks, trying by all manner of means to limit their stay to two or at most three days. They repeatedly argue, 'We are so near the capital, if you are not off at once the war junks will come down upon you.' It sometimes happens that when two or three Chinese junks only anchor too long off the island, boat after boat pushes off laden with Koreans who haul up the anchor, set sail, and drive them without violence away. Today a boatload of these vicious, starved, ill-natured looking islanders came off to beg (in their miserable sly manner) tobacco and wine. After having thoroughly enjoyed these luxuries they bade us begone at once. When about to leave they found to their dismay that their boat had gone adrift, and was swiftly floating ashore. We turned the laugh against them, ordering them to be off immediately. They looked very sheepish, and begged our sampon. No. We got up anchor, spread sail, and pretended to be running away with them. Fortunately a native boat returning from fishing took them on shore.

Instead of getting water on Yenp'ing we, in company with three junks, proceed to an uninhabited island to the N.E. about six miles off. The weather begins to look ominous. We lay in a supply of excellent water, but are soon compelled to shift our anchorage. In the midst of the night I was awoke by the pitching of the junk. The sailor on deck cried out that we were dragging our anchors. At daybreak we tried to run back to Yenp'ing, failing in that, with a roaring breeze and a rushing tide, we returned to Ch'wang-lin Island, I wish I hadn't spoken to our skipper about the autumnal equinox. He fully believes we shall have a storm this evening. Nothing particular took place the last two days. No sign of our junk following us. My time partly passed in study and talks about religion with the good-tempered islanders. They would sell me nothing, but I managed to exchange a knife for two plump fowls and forty fresh eggs. My stores were exhausted. Occasionally I indulged in the luxury of a dandelion leaf pudding. Our crew dined on these leaves, boiled in a thin covering of paste, about three times a week. On the 25th back again to Yenp'ing. A most charming evening. The green swathe of the Great Yenp'ing and lofty peak of the small island, the numerous islets clad with trees of dark green – one or two only telling us that Autumn was fully come. The sun is setting over the island, illumining in a most glorious manner a large, square dense mass of cloud, which trying in vain to shut out from us the glory, is itself irradiated into a dark velvety screen very glorious to behold.

Sept. 26. This morning the skipper and myself went on board a large Corean junk lying near us. It was a huge vessel of four hundred tons burthen. Being in ballast only, we had some difficulty in climbing up the sides. Twenty strong sailor-like individuals composed the crew. They invited us down into their large common cabin. Sitting down on a panther skin in Corean fashion, we felt quite at home after smoking the calumet of peace, drinking a little nasty acid rice wine and partaking of a piece of putrified parsnip. In honour of so large a vessel I had, in strange contrast to my otherwise Chinese costume, donned a pair of riding boots, which were duly appreciated. They complimented me on my Corean looks and speech, and amidst great laughter proceeded to dress me up in their fashion. The horsehair band kept up my tail and straggling locks. A white over garment tied with strings (the Coreans have no buttons), white trousers, socks, and straw sandals completing my attire. They assured me that I could fearlessly walk through the capital dressed in this manner. When it came to leave-taking I tried to buy my suit; but no, not for double their value would they part with them. The skipper had brought a piece of shirtings to exchange for rice. They promised to send us rice at night. These watchful islanders prevent any trade in broad day.

Towards evening we were startled by the discharge of a small cannon – a sign for us to depart. We fired a horse-pistol twice as an acknowledgment; the third discharge we took no notice of. The next day

(27th) four native boats came off, and ordered us to leave at once. I replied that not only would we not go, but that I would accompany them back, to make complaint to the head man of the village. I jumped into one of their boats, and sculled myself ashore before they had time to recover from their astonishment. The three remaining boats followed me, crying out to people scattered about on the hill, 'Iri onora, iri onora' (Come here, come here).

Before I had reached the village a crowd of ill-looking wretches met me, begging me to sit under shelter of an overhanging cliff. Soon followed the village head, a fine, tall British looking individual. We chatted a long time, and he promised to leave us in peace if we departed within three days. Whilst I sat on the beach waiting for our boat I was joined by a very intelligent-looking young man. We amused ourselves by tracing Chinese characters in the sand. He said he had at the capital heard of the 'Lord of Heaven.' In Corea, a country with a small trade, abounding with jealous gossip of idleness, Christianity will not long remain a hidden treasure. The words of a Roman Catholic missionary residing there in 1853 seem well founded: - 'Ils sont nombreux, ceux qui sont déjà convertis dans le coeur, mais la crainte de la persecution retient encore la verite captive. Ils nous aiment, ils nous favorisent; mais pour pratiquer notre sainte religion, ils attendant le grand jour de la liberte. Dans plusieurs endroits l'opinion est tellement prononcee en notre faveur que plusieu pensent et affirment que le Christianisme prendra necessairement possession de la Coree.'¹⁰

Sept. 28. - Back to Ch'onglin, driven from Yenp'ing by bad weather. I will not fatigue the reader's patience by recounting all the little adventures that befell us: very little business has been done as yet, owing to the fact that two Corean contrabandists were beheaded last year; the 'thousand catty merchants', as the Chinese term them, have not made their appearance. No junks bring more than 300 catties of ginseng at a time, and this, according to custom, is divided amongst all the junks which happen to be together when the trader comes. Plenty of cheating goes on nevertheless. For example, a Corean merchant comes on board our junk and tells our skipper he has perhaps 280 catties. He is told to give out that he has only brought 180, and the skipper throws in as a cumshaw a bit of pongee, &c.

Sept. 30. - A terrific gale; had a very narrow escape from shipwreck; 8 Corean junks driven ashore.

Oct. 4. - Today, the fifteenth of the Chinese and Corean month is a great day in this country. Yang-ga says eight out of ten get drunk. We sail in quest of our small junk. Passing the second Yen Shan, we saw on the top of a hill a native gesticulating in a most furious manner with his white ch'oksam. We sent our sampon on shore and brought him on board. He was very drunk, vociferating in the loudest manner that the inhabitants of

¹⁰ *Annals de la Propagation de la Foi.* - Tome 26, p. 396.

the large village on the mainland were his partners in trade, and that he was on most intimate terms with all the local authorities. He said he had vast quantities of the sea weed (Lu-chui-ts'ai) and ox hides at home, and that towards night he would meet us in the western bay, and signal his arrival by lighting a fire on the beach. We amused ourselves through the afternoon by catching shell-fish for dinner.

Towards evening, passing into the bay, we ran on a hidden sharp rock and broke the socket of our helm. We were greatly terrified, but the junk has not been injured. The helm is deeper in the water than the bottom of the junk. We were proceeding quietly in the bay when we saw a young Korean running down the hill. Could it be Kimga, one of the crew of Yang-ga's vessel? It was he, and brought us the sad tale that during the gale on the 30th the little junk had been dashed to pieces. He promised to come on board that night. About nine o'clock a fire was seen in two several places. We first got Kimga on board. He said that the only plan was for him and Yuga to return by land to the capital on foot and hire a vessel. In that case we should have to wait a fortnight. I gave him a letter for the missionaries there, telling them that I, a Protestant missionary, intended visiting them. I sealed my doom.

Oct. 5. – Today we returned to Ch'ang Lin, and found that the other Korean Christian, Kim Ch'ang-Ken, had got a passage to the capital in a rice junk.

8th. – In the middle of the night a trader came alongside of us bringing ginseng, and left a 'partner', a young man, originally from the town of Ichen, on the back of the Yalu Chiang, on board one of the Chinese junks – the usual assurance that the junk will come again. The days pass rather dull. Rambles on shore, practising conversation, distributing a few books; on board slender fare. We wait impatiently the arrival of our junk.

12th. – Off Yen Shan No. 1. This afternoon we anchored in a very retired position; soon a little vessel bore down boldly for us. A neighbouring junk, which seemed to recognise a passenger on board, sent out a sampon to bring off the merchant. Towards evening, though there was a heavy swell from the east, and the new arrival, Li Fang, was very sea-sick, he came to pay me a visit. I was agreeably surprised when he saluted me in pure Pekingese. He told me that eight years ago he had frequently visited Peking along with the Embassy. The duties, however, on all kinds of goods were so heavy and the profits so small (so he said), that he found it more advantageous to trade on the 'high seas'. He is an intelligent man of about 45 years of age. There can be no doubt of his having visited Peking, for I couldn't mention the name of a 'hu t'ung' (lane) that he was not familiar with. He says that he has come to announce the speedy arrival at Yen'ing of Pak-san-daneol, of the richer classes of contrabandists. The Chinese traders call him 'the thousand-catty P'ak who wears silks and satins!'

13th. – Off once more to Yenp'ing with a fair breeze, tide, and sky. A most enjoyable sail. Arriving at nightfall, Li Fang, who was on our junk, was looking out for Pak-san-dal's vessel. The small boat (coro) soon came alongside, and our skipper with Li Fang went on board the large Korean junk. They soon returned with Pak-san-dal, who wished to see me. Thinking that I was a Roman Catholic priest he prostrated himself before me. I immediately undeceived him. He told me that he had become a Christian a year ago. His appearance leads me now to think that he is some kind of Government official who cannot resist the dangerous pastime of smuggling. His style and dress resemble those of the smaller officials who come here (Peking) with tribute.

14th. – Just before daylight the vessels of Li Fang and Pak-san-dal moved out a respectable distance towards the main land with the intention of resuming trade tonight. It was well they did, for on the top of the hill under whose shelter we are anchored several of these suspicious islanders are seen peering at the vessels in the harbour. They have lighted a beacon, perhaps only to warm themselves. It is rather cold of a morning. Again tonight the traders came off and hastily disposed of their ginseng. Pak-san-dal sent me some Korean clothes, 200 cattles of rice, and a bag of chestnuts for some scientific and religious books I had given him.

18th. – Visited the small island of Ta-shiu Ya, 25 miles to the N.E. Our visit produced a great stir. All the small officials put on their large bamboo-slip hats and long white cotton dresses and came off to visit us; after being presented with sugar and tobacco, as usual, begged us to leave their shores. At night the islanders lighted five beacons, which were repeated on the island of Tian-shiu-Ya, and thence on the mainland near the provincial capital of the Kwang-Ha province – Hai-chouga. No war junks appeared, as some of our timid Chinese skippers anticipated. The weather very threatening.

26th. – A succession of dull days. Today a gale from the east. We anchored on the west side of Yenp'ing, in deep water but good holding ground.

Towards evening our skipper cries out to the junks lying near, asking them whether they intend trying to get round to the eastern side! I didn't understand the wisdom of his remark till midnight. At 12 p.m. the wind shifted to the N.E.N., blowing with unabated fury. We hastily got up our anchors, and profiting by a momentary lull in the storm, without sail, attempted to run around the southern side of the island. Narrowly escaping more than one rock – it was nearly pitch dark – we reached a port sheltered from the N. and N.E., let go our anchors on a rocky bottom. Suddenly the wind shifted to the W., and blew a furious sea in upon us. The small anchor went, and in imminent risk of being dashed to pieces, we got up our large anchor and trusting to Providence allowed ourselves to be blown out towards one of the N.E. islands. We couldn't get round to the eastern side on account of numerous reefs. Not a rag of sail, we were

whirled furiously before the wind. The junk compass was of no use. I announced the course every five minutes from my pocket compass. Again the wind went back to N.N.E., and drove us where we had never been before.

Daylight came, and no chance of finding shelter – the waves threatening every moment to engulf us. Three men at the helm. The spray dashing over the junk and pouring into my cabin. Yang-ga earnestly praying, and not showing the slightest fear. Our merchant passenger blubbering; our skipper drunk. Far away in the distance we could see what we supposed to be the mainland. We did not attempt to steer any course – merely went before the wind. A wonderful course. Our best sailor stood with a bamboo rod taking the depth when we passed over a shoal. A shudder went through us as it gave in one place only seven feet. The tide was going out. Not far before us stretched a long line of foam – two miles long; we were borne for it, and, thank God, through it, into calmer water, rapidly towards an island, or rather a cluster of islands. At 2 p.m. we anchored in a harbour sheltered from every wind. On one side the mainland of the province of Ching-Chi, on the other side about 20 small scattered islands.

27th. – Went ashore, and learned the island under which we had found shelter was called Yung Tsung. Very few inhabitants who were very hostile and seemed miserably poor. Yang-ga knew the place and said we were by a short country road only 25 miles from the capital. I was very much inclined to land and proceed there. Yang-ga very sensibly said, ‘you had better not – the officials in the capital will assuredly not harm you, but the people might kill you; besides, unless our little boat has been lost, it will surely soon come. I could go ashore and home without danger, but as I have pledged myself to conduct you to the capital I will wait with you.’

28th. – We are retracing our way to Yen’ing. Tedious work; no wind, and we can only row with the tide. We see all the dangers we so marvelously escaped.

30th. – Passed outside of the two important islands of Chian T’ung (Chodung) and Chiang Hwa (K’ang Hwa), the latter, a large island, with its imposing looking three-peaked mountain is interesting from its historic associations. It was to this¹¹ is and that, in the first month of the reign of the Manchu (Liau Tung) Emperor Tai Tsung (1626) the Corean King, Li Tsung, fled with his family.

The then warlike Manchus had entered Corea by way of Ichen, and having taken with ease all the towns in their southern march, were already threatening the capital, at this time fixed at P’ing Jang Fu.

We were going along merrily, when suddenly our helm struck; we found three and a half feet of water, and we were a mile from the nearest

¹¹ See “Works of Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking,” Vol. 1. P. 105, &c. (Russian).

land. The rising tide soon floated us off, and well for us, for the wind was rising. Our pilot remarked that the 'heaven was going to let fall a dragon,' and the dragon came surely enough in the shape of a very rough squall, that we were nearly upset. After battling with the wind for a considerable time we at last made Yen'ing. In the evening several skippers came on board, and we talked till late of the dangers we had so wonderfully escaped.

Nov. 1st. – Stormy weather. Woe betide our little vessel if she is out in it. We are lying between the island and a sandbank that is uncovered at low water.

2nd. – Last night the wind blew with such violence as to drive four junks, including ours, on the middle of the sand bank. It was next to impossible to stand, so strong were the gusts. About midnight the wind abated somewhat, and the tide being low, I went for a run along the sand bank in the now bright moonlight. With the returning tide all the junks were floated back into the channel.

3rd. – This morning half-a-dozen junkmen went ashore to catch shell fish, on which three of them were cruelly beaten about the legs by a score of cowardly islanders. Our little fleet of nine junks was in a state of high indignation. We could send fifty men to fight. In their own fashion they immediately loaded their rusty matchlocks and small guns with powder only! And taking to their sampans, flying their respective flags, amidst great beatings of gongs, made for the village. All the islanders were congregated like a flock of white sheep on top of the hill. Two or three of the fiercer ones were going through all kinds of warlike manoeuvres on a near cliff.

Steadily our flotilla advanced, firing volley after volley of powder – the more prudent ones fired about five hundred yards from the village. Two of the most daring boats advanced towards the shore, where, by this time, many of those from the hill had collected themselves and were engaged very vigorously in pelting stones; nothing daunted, these two boats seized a small junk lying off the beach, in a trice hey had lifted the anchor, and amidst great acclamations brought away their prize. It is a small tub and will be given up tomorrow.

4th. – Yesterday, stormy. Today two islanders fixed a small stick in the ground at low water with a piece of paper attached to it. I sent my writer for it; the following is a free translation: - 'This for you all to see. You are engaged in a contraband trade, a trade severely punished by our respective countries. Your vessels that come here are too much given to disturbances. You have been here already ten days. You have dared to cut wood on a sacred islet with a temple on it, rendering us liable to tempests. Your guilt is very great indeed. As we have none who look after the wood, you have taken it in a thievish manner. You are all a set of thieves. You indeed are a desperate set. One of our military officials will come with a thousand men, who will do battle with you and slay you. But now we are willing to make

it up and not report it. You much believe this document. The other day you snatched away a vessel; you must return it, and then we will not entertain hostile feelings toward you. Be quick, be quick.'

6th, - Li Tang with P'ak san dal returned today. The former brought me a supply of beef, honey, rice and pears, a very timely supply, for I had during the past three weeks lived exclusively on rice, water, and shell-fish. Li Tang offered to take me to the capital if I would stay till his return, with a small boat hired for the purpose. I declined, for it was too late in the season, and sorrowfully told Yang-ga to return with P'ak san dal, which he did. At the moment of going Li said, with tears in his eyes, 'I am so sorry my spiritual father has not been able to see the capital; return in peace to China, and come next year.'

11th. - As our junk wished to wait for P'ak san dal's last trip out, I took my boxes on board the junk called the 'Great White Ass', a larger vessel than ours, but with rotten hull, rotten sails, rotten cables, and rotten anchors.

Nov. 12th. - We tried to tack out; owing to her rotten tackle we got on the sand bank and broke the rotten socket of our rotten helm. We stuffed pieces of wood in, and binding them round with rope managed with the helm a thumping and a creaking to move out.

13th. - Nearly got on the rocks last night, owing to our helm being so stiff, whilst passing Yen-Shan No. 1. Cold; a snowstorm; ice on deck.

14th. - Arrived at Hoang Hua Ts'ai T'o Tsy (Molito); bought rice, small pigs, small pigs, eggs, &c. Our skipper has an admirable way of getting the suspicious Coreans to sell their things. Something like this:

On November 14 they arrived at "Hua Ts'ai T'o Tsy (Molito)" where they bought rice, small pigs, eggs and other necessities. Thomas was impressed with the way his vessel's skipper was able to convince the suspicious Koreans to sell things to the stranger. He would berate the Korean sellers and then offer them a supply of wine which apparently smoothed over the negotiations.

Over the next couple of days the vessel was plagued with "a regular winter north-eastern gale - snow - bitterly cold" On November 18:

Move up into Hai Chen Bay, and purchase about 160 catties of rice and 60 of beef. Waiting for a wind to be off. The junks had left the place on the 14th for Chefoo. It is so to be feared they will never reach it. The gale has been too strong to allow them to 'fang lautz,' i.e., when driven before the wind to cast out an anchor with a plank attached to make it float, and the tugging this behind retards speed.

22nd. - Started for Peling; at midnight got on a sand bank.

23rd. – Floated off, gave the Orphan Rock (covered at high water) a wide berth, and steered for Chian Tau (Chodo) of the charts, for we were afraid, the weather looking threatening, to proceed direct to Manchuria. Half way between Peling and Chodo our helm got out of order, but as the weather looked brighter we resolved to steer boldly for Hai-Yang, an island off the coast of Manchuria, a splendid wind and fair tide.

24th. – Last night we passed an anxious night. In the open sea a cloudy sky. ‘When will it be light?’ was the incessant question put to me by the crew.

25th. – Hai Yong visible through a slight fog. We have missed it by 10 miles, but as there are plenty of islands here we run for Chang Fy. How welcome the Chinese houses and Chinese islanders, who came off and pointed out the best anchorage. The island is not so favoured as many in Corea, but the industrious inhabitants make the best of it.

26th. – I can count twenty islands from the top of a hill here. This island has been very unfortunate. In June last some of the numerous bands that have been ravaging Manchuria for the last few years came over here in a stolen junk and frightened the four score unarmed islanders into paying them a ransom of \$500. The villains stole everything they could lay hands on. In 1863 they had visited them in a similar manner.

A small shopkeeper produced, to my surprise, the following documents, which he appeared to treasure carefully:

‘No. 1. Her Majesty’s ships *Blonde* and *Pylades* visited this island in search of water and provisions, and have been kindly and hospitably received. They beg to recommend its inhabitants to any of their countrymen or other European nations who may arrive. Given on board the *Blonde*, 23rd day of September 1840. Thomas Bourchier, Commanding Officer.’¹²

No. 2 speaks of the visit of *H.M.S. Dove* in 1860.¹³

¹² The HMS *Blonde* and *Pylades* took part in the Opium War in 1840. Supplying the British forces was a problem and in October 1840 an expedition was sent to Jeju Island in order to rustle some cattle. “Now they sent the *Nimrod* and a transport back to Quelpart, off the coast of Korea the *Modeste*, cruising idly about those waters, had found off Quelpart’s southeast tip a little island on which cattle grazed unattended. While the *Nimrod* patrolled the channel, preventing with occasional warning shots the indignant owners from crossing over, a party of Royal Irish went ashore, herded the animals out to a point, provoked them into a stampede, and managed to trip a number over a rope. In two days of this hilarious sport almost sixty head were captured. They were hobbled, brought down to the transport, and carried back to Chusan.” Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), pp.

¹³ The *HMS Dove*, commanded by Lieut. C. G. Bullock made several trips along the coast of Korea in 1859-1860.

28th. – Stormy weather since we arrived, but it is easy to land, as we all are well protected. Proceed to Kwang Li, and thence, on December 1st, to P'i-Tsy-Wo, a pretty harbour in Manchuria. At low water the bay looks one vast field of mud, but of such soft consistency that a boat can fly over or through it with great ease in a breeze. Many reports of robber bands about.

Proceeded in a cart to Newchwang (Yingsze), and learned that two days after leaving P'i-Tsy-Wo the rebels had made a descent on it.¹⁴ I shall not readily forget the hospitable reception given me by the foreign community at Newchwang. H.B.M.'s Consul, T. T. Meadows, Esq., was indefatigable in preconcerting measures for the defence of the foreign settlement in case of a rebel attack.¹⁵ Leaving Newchwang I proceeded over the frozen river on horseback towards the Great Wall. About sixty miles from Newchwang I met a small Mandarin, who three years ago had accompanied an embassy from the Court of Peking to the capital of Corea, for the purpose of sacrificing in honour of the deceased wife of the reigning prince.

Daily rumours were rife that all parts were teeming with rebels. We were supposed to have passed within five miles of one of their camps. I met with no adventures. Aid from Peking was momentarily looked for.

Passing through the Great Wall at Shan-Hai-kwan we met the first detachment of soldiers on their march to Shan-Yang (Moukden), and, as I had divested myself partly of my Chinese disguise, I was addressed in 'pidgin' Russian, 'Drashti' (How do you do), for the avant garde was composed of Solon cavalry from the banks of the Amoor. I had not proceeded many miles further when I met the 'Disciplined,' who chorused at me 'Fire! Halt!' Number One, in pidgin English and with a comical pinch asked me if I had seen their guns. It was biting cold, and the sheepskin coat allowed to each one of them was shoddy and comfortless-looking. They marched in fair order. When Hsian I passed early one morning. He was traveling in an ordinary Chinese cart.

Jan. 5 – I arrived here. From Pitzwo to Newchwang is about 120 miles; from Newchwang to Peking about 150.

¹⁴ In his letter to the London Missionary Society, Thomas wrote: "The Chinese Government had dispatched some four thousand troops to tranquillize Manchuria." Cited in Oh, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.

¹⁵ Thomas Taylor Meadows (1815-1868) after studying chemistry for several years at Hanover quit his studies and began to learn Chinese. In 1843 he served as the senior officer and interpreter at Hong Kong until he was moved to Canton when the British government opened an office there. In 1851 he was transferred to Shanghai.

Thomas appears to have been quite pleased with his voyage to Korea and proudly declared in his letter to the London Missionary Society: "To sum up, I have been four months, away from European society and travelled by sea and land nearly two thousand miles. I am well acquainted with the coast of the two western provinces of Corea and have made numerous vocabularies and dialogues in the colloquial of the capital, which will be useful in any future negotiations with that people."¹⁶ Judging from Thomas's letter we can see that he was eager to return to Korea. That chance materialized the following year after word was received in China that under the orders of Daewon'gun, the regent of Korea, a religious persecution was underway in Korea and that nine French priests had been executed. Ironically, Thomas had been assured during his first trip to Korea by an "intelligent" Korean merchant that there were so many Christians in the country that the Korean government was unable to persecute them.

The French government prepared to dispatch a naval squadron to investigate the charges but needed an interpreter. Naturally they looked to Thomas and he readily agreed. Unfortunately for Thomas, events in Indo-China required the French squadron to indefinitely postpone their voyage to Korea and so Thomas agreed to sail to Korea aboard the American schooner *General Sherman*.

It isn't clear why Thomas decided not to wait for the French admiral, some have speculated that he was seeking more information about the Korean coast and to learn more about the language – possibly for his future role with the French, others speculated that he was seeking to loot the graves of the old Korean kings (it seems they have him mistaken with Ernst Jacob Oppert) but according to the Mission Year Book of the Congregational Church for 1868: he went "in order to perfect his knowledge in the language, so as to be able to translate the Scriptures into that language, and establish a Protestant mission in that dark land."¹⁷ I believe another factor also played into his decision – Oppert.

Oppert, a German Jewish businessman in Shanghai, was eager to open Korea to the West and would stop at nothing to do so. Financed by the British trading firm, Jardine Matheson & Co., he traveled to Korea in April 1866 aboard the British ship *Rona* in hopes of establishing trade with the Korean government but he was unable to find the mouth of the

¹⁶ M.W. Oh, "The Two Visits of Rev. R. J. Thomas to Korea", *Transactions* Vol. 22 (Seoul, Korea: Royal Asiatic Society – Korea Branch, 1933), p. 104.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

Han River and was forced to return to Shanghai.¹⁸ Upon his return, Oppert began making preparations for his second trip to Korea. Thomas might have heard about his preparations and was worried that Oppert would return to Korea before he could and so when he was offered a position aboard the ill-fated *General Sherman*, he took it.

In early August the *General Sherman* departed Chefoo bound for Korea. At the same moment Oppert was off the coast of Korea aboard the British ship *Emperor*. Both ships had the same mission – to open Korea to trade. Both failed. Oppert suffered severe financial difficulties and Thomas lost his life. But both men have become legends in their own manner. History remembers Thomas as a martyr and Oppert, perhaps incorrectly, as a notorious grave robber due to his third and final expedition to Korea in 1867.

Robert Neff is a writer and researcher of the late Joseon era. He has written or co-written several books including *Letters from Joseon*, and *Korea Through Western Eyes*. He also writes a weekly column for the *Korea Times*.

¹⁸ Some sources list Oppert's first visit to Korea taking place in June 1866. William Strand, "Satanic Devils in the Hermit Kingdom", *Transactions* Vol. 77 (Seoul, Korea: Royal Asiatic Society – Korea Branch, 2002), pp. 146-147; Horace N. Allen, *Korea the Fact and Fancy* (Seoul, Korea: Methodist Publishing House, 1904), p. 153.

For Readers' Reference
Some Recently Published Books in Korean Studies

2014

Danielle L. Chubb. *Contentious Activism and Inter-Korean Relations*. New York: Columbia UP. 2014. ISBN: 978-0231161367

The Venerable Hyewon and David A. Mason. *Encyclopedia of Korean Buddhism*. Seoul: Unju-sa Publishers. 2014. ISBN 978-8957463666

Todd A. Henry. *Assimilating Seoul: Japanese Rule and the Politics of Public Space in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945*. University of California Press. 2014. ISBN: 978-0520276550

Yeonok Jang. *Korean P'ansori Singing Tradition: Development, Authenticity, and Performance History*. Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2014. ISBN: 978-0810884618

James Matray, ed. *Ashgate Research Companion to the Korean War*. Ashgate Pub Co. 2014. ISBN: 978-1409439288

Eugene Y. Park. *A Family of No Prominence: The Descendants of Pak Tōkhwa and the Birth of Modern Korea*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 2014. ISBN: 978-0804788762

Encountering Modernity: Christianity in East Asia and Asian America. Edited by Albert L. Park, David K. Yoo. University of Hawai'i Press. 2014. ISBN: 978-0824839475

Reflections of a Zen Buddhist Nun: Essays by Zen Master Kim Iryōp. Translated from the Korean by Jin Y. Park. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. 2014. ISBN: 978-0824838782

2013

Charles K. Armstrong. *Tyranny of the Weak: North Korea and the World, 1950-1992* (Studies of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University). Cornell University Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0801450822.

Robert E. Buswell Jr., Donald S. Lopez Jr.. *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2013. ISBN: 9780691157863; eBook: ISBN: 9781400848058.

Henry H. Em. *The Great Enterprise: Sovereignty and Historiography in Modern Korea* (Asia-Pacific: Culture, Politics, and Society). Duke University Press. 2013. ISBN: 9780822353720.

Christopher P. Hanscom. *The Real Modern: Literary Modernism and the Crisis of Representation in Colonial Korea* (Harvard East Asian Monographs). Harvard University Asia Center. 2013. ISBN: 978-0674073265.

Nicholas Harkness. *Songs of Seoul: An Ethnography of Voice and Voicing in Christian South Korea*. California University Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0520276536

Wada Haruki. *The Korean War*. Rowman and Littlefield. 2013. ISBN: 978-1442223295

Kallander, George. *Salvation through Dissent: Tonghak Heterodoxy and Early Modern Korea* (UCLA Philosophy and Religion Series, AKS Korean Classics Library), University of Hawai'i Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0824837167

Andrew Killick. *Hwang Byungki: Traditional Music and the Contemporary Composer in the Republic of Korea*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, (SOAS Musicology Series). 2013. ISBN: 978-1409420309

Suzy Kim. *Everyday Life in the North Korean Revolution, 1945-1950*. Cornell University Press 2013. ISBN: 978-0801452130.

Kim, Hwansoo Ilmee. *Empire of the Dharma: Korean and Japanese Buddhism, 1877-1912*. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2013. ISBN: 978-0674065758

Donald Kirk. *Okinawa and Jeju: Bases of Discontent*. Palgrave Pivot. 2013. ISBN: 978-1137379085.

Andrei Lankov. *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia*. Oxford University Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0199964291

Yumi Moon. *Populist Collaborators: The Ilchinhoe and the Japanese Colonization of Korea, 1896-1910*. Cornell University Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0801450419.

Oh, Yong Kyun. *Engraving Virtue: The Printing History of a Premodern Korean Moral Primer*. (Brill's Korean Studies Library), Leiden: Brill, 2013. ISBN: 978-9004249882

Pai, Hyung Il. *Heritage Management in Korea and Japan: The Politics of Antiquity and Identity* (Korean Studies of the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies). Seattle: University of Washington Press. 2013. ISBN: 9780295993058.

Brandon Palmer. *Fighting for the Enemy: Koreans in Japan's War, 1937-1945* (Korean Studies of the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies). University of Washington Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0295992587

Roger Shepherd. *Baekdu Daegan Korea: Mountains of North and South Korea*. Seoul: Hike Korea. 2013. ISBN: 9780473249304.

Suh, Serk-Bae. *Treacherous Translation: Culture, Nationalism, and Colonialism in Korea and Japan from the 1910s to 1960s*. (Global, Area, and International Archive) University of California Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-1938169069

Haekyung Um. *Korean Musical Drama: P'ansori and the Making of Tradition in Modernity*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate. (SOAS Musicology Series). 2013. ISBN: 978-0754662761

Colonial Rule and Social Change in Korea 1910-1945 (A Center for Korean Studies Publication). Edited by Hong Yung Lee, Clark W. Sorensen, Yong-Chool Ha. Seattle: Center for Korea Studies, University of Washington. 2013. ISBN: 978-0295992167.

De-Bordering Korea: Tangible and Intangible Legacies of the Sunshine Policy. Edited by Valérie Gelézeau, Koen De Ceuster, Alain Delissen. Routledge. 2013. ISBN: 978-0415637435

Imperatives of Culture: Selected Essays on Korean History, Literature, and Society from the Japanese Colonial Era (Korean Classics Library: Philosophy and Religion). Edited by Christopher P. Hanscom, Walter K. Lew, Youngju Ryu. Manoa: University of Hawaii Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0824838218.

Key Papers on Korea: Essays Celebrating 25 Years of the Centre of Korean Studies, SOAS, University of London. Edited by Introduced by Andrew David Jackson, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Brill. 2013. ISBN: 978-9004254589

A Korean War Captive in Japan, 1597-1600, edited and translated by JaHyun Kim Haboush and Kenneth R. Robinson. New York: Columbia University Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0231163705

New Women in Colonial Korea: A Sourcebook, compiled and translated with an introduction by Hyaewool Choi. London: Routledge. 2013. ISBN: 978-0415538497

Wrongful Deaths: Selected Inquest Records from Nineteenth-Century Korea. Translated by Sun Joo Kim, Jungwon Kim. (Korean Studies of the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies) University of Washington Press. 2013. ISBN: 978-0295993133

2012

Theodore Q. Hughes. *Literature and Film in Cold War South Korea: Freedom's Frontier*. Columbia University Press. 2012. ISBN: 978-0231157483

Vladimir Tikhonov and Torkel Brekke. *Buddhism and Violence: Militarism and Buddhism in Modern Asia* (Routledge Studies in Religion). Routledge. 2012. ISBN: 978-0415536967

North Korea in Transition: Politics, Economy, and Society. Edited by Kyung-Ae Park, Scott Snyder. Rowman & Littlefield, 2012. ISBN: 978-1442218123

Recently Published Books in Korean Studies

Selected Poems of Kim Sakkat, translated and edited by Kevin O'Rourke,
Korean translations by Han Kyongshim. Daegu: Keimyung University
Press. 2012. ISBN: 978-8975855931

2013 Annual Report
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
KOREA BRANCH

President's Report for 2013

I am happy to say that 2013 was, in very many ways, a good year for our Society. Membership has continued to grow and our activities have on the whole continued to attract good numbers, with our lectures drawing especially large crowds when the topic is related to North Korea. Attendance at lectures then rises to something like 120 and people are standing at the back of the room. Even with more demanding topics, it is almost unknown for the figure to be much below 50. We are extremely grateful to the management of Somerset Palace for allowing us to use their Residents' Lounge for our lectures, year after year, without payment.

In many ways, the most important new development of 2013 was the appointment of Ms. Yonjoo Hong to be our new Office Manager at the start of the year. With the retirement of Sue Bae at the end of 2011, we entered uncharted waters and for a while it seemed most unlikely that anyone would be prepared to take up the torch after her. There was an urgent need for all our operations to be computerized, and the office was in great need of refurbishing and modernization. In addition to possessing effective computer skills for administration and account-keeping, our Manager has to be able to answer the phone and field questions patiently at any moment about our many activities, in English and Korean. The work of our office involves updating membership records, replying to emails, keeping track of the numbers of those signing-up for excursions and making reservations of buses and hotels accordingly, booking the room for lectures, dealing with orders for books, and maintaining accurate financial records of everything, among other things. That Yonjoo Hong does all these things so effectively is a constant source of gratitude.

Equally wonderful is the transformation of the office itself. It now

houses the entire stock of books for sale, those published by us in past decades as well as books from other publishers. It also houses the RAS Library, with the most fragile and ancient volumes in secured shelving. Michael Welles, our Librarian, has been working tirelessly to bring into the computerized catalogue a large number of books donated recently by various members. The Library now contains nearly 3,000 volumes, all shelved in order with labels on the spine showing the shelf-marks. One interesting discovery was that a number of old volumes contain labels showing that they were in our Library in the 1930s. We are most grateful to those who have donated books and would like to encourage members to continue to send us any books in English about Korea that they think our Library should have.

Throughout 2013 we have continued to offer a variety of special activities in addition to our traditional lectures and excursions. The Reading Club led by Patrick Bourgo meets once a month in the Library of the Jongno District Office to discuss a Korean short story the members have read in advance. We are very grateful to the Library staff members that remain at their post so that we can use the room. The staff of the National Museum of Korea has also worked very hard to provide our members with a monthly guided tour in English of one small section of the Museum, often beginning with an in-depth lecture, and we are very grateful to them.

The only area in which we are faced with a challenge is that of our Excursions. In past decades, travel in Korea was difficult and there were no guidebooks; in addition, there was not much to do on weekends in Seoul, so large numbers of people took advantage of our program. Times have changed! It is easy to travel now, and Seoul has become a vibrant international city with a lot to do on weekends. We are no longer sure of having enough people for any of our excursions, even those that in times past were the most popular. This in turn has an impact on our finances, since we have always added a small percentage to the cost of tours to cover administrative expenses. One solution has been to offer more walking excursions within Seoul. These do not require us to rent a bus, they can start later and end earlier and there is no long wait in weekend traffic.

Toward the end of 2013, we began to organize a Colloquium in Korean Studies, designed as a service for the many people from across the world engaged professionally in Korean Studies, now living in Seoul as students, teaching faculty, and researchers, working in English. Here, presentations of ongoing research can be given and discussed informally, without the constraints of a formal academic conference and before an

audience composed uniquely of people with similar interests. This takes us back to the original purpose of the Royal Asiatic Society and our own Korea Branch. Until the Pacific War, our only activity was the presentation and discussion by members of scholarly papers that were then revised and published in *Transactions*. The change to lectures introducing some aspect of Korea to a more general public came when the RAS was re-founded after the Korean War.

We are extremely grateful to our Sponsors, without whose support it would be hard to continue. In particular, I must express our deep gratitude to Seoul Cyber University for providing a very generous monthly financial grant in recognition of the educational value of our activities. Samsung Fire and Marine Insurance and PCA Life have also provided financial support as sponsorship. We continue to hope for additional sponsors and have also decided to institute a form of Corporate Membership by which companies and organizations are able to send any five members of their staff to participate in our activities.

The main event in our social calendar was once again the Garden Party. We were kindly welcomed by the British Ambassador, Scott Wightman and his wife, and many members enjoyed a wonderful afternoon, with a performance of traditional Korean dance. We are very grateful to the Kooksoondang Brewery for having generously provided refreshments, including a large quantity of a new kind of *makgeolli*.

Finally, I must express my deep gratitude to the officers and Council. During the year, Betsy-Gay Kraft replaced Jennifer Flinn as Secretary while Jun Byung Geun took over from Jacco Zwetsloot as Treasurer. The Council has continued to grow and with nearly thirty members provides essential support and encouragement. All together, we feel that our Society, despite, or perhaps because of, its very limited financial resources, is going from strength to strength and re-inventing itself for the task of bringing a deeper understanding of Korea to an increasing body of members in the 21st century.

Respectfully submitted

Brother Anthony of Taizé
President, RAS Korea.

2013 RAS Lectures

January 15	Robert Neff Letters From Joseon: 19th Century Korea through the Eyes of an American Ambassador's Wife
January 22	Sheen Dae-Cheol Calm and Dynamic: Two Differing Aesthetic Aspects of Korean Traditional Music
February 12	Kim Dong-jin Crusader for Korea: Homer B. Hulbert
February 26	Jacco Sweetsloot The Long-Forgotten World War 2 Prisoner of War Camps in Korea
March 12	Peter Bartholomew The Catastrophic Losses of Korea's Architectural Heritage from 1910 and Continuing Today
March 26	Br Anthony Travellers' Tales : How the West First Learned about Korea
April 9	Andrei Lankov The female face of North Korean capitalism: North Korean gender relations in the post-famine era
April 23	Emanuel Pastreich Scholars of the World Discuss Korea's Future
May 14	Kenneth Robinson Pirates and Traders, and Fake Japanese, too: Korean-Japanese Relations from 1392 to 1592
May 28	David Mason The Distinctive Characteristics of Korean Buddhism
June 11	Dr. Tatiana Gabroussenko Yöngye kunin and North Korean national identity
June 18	Jaroslav Olsa jr. Han Hüng-su: a multi-talented but forgotten Korean scholar in Europe
June 25	Wayne Patterson Christianity, American Missionaries, and Korean Immigration to the United States, 1903-1915
July 16	Alex Švamberg Czechoslovak participation in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission from 1953-58.
September 10	Boudewijn C. A. Walraven Familiar Faces: the personal nature of shamanic paintings
September 24	Brian Myers Red Herring: North Korea's Juche Myth

Annual Report

October 8	Michael Kim Imagining the Dual City in Colonial Korea (1910-1945)
October 22	Kathryn Weathersby The Decision to Prolong the Korean War: The Roles of Stalin, Mao and Kim Il Sung
November 12	Robert Fouser Early Western Learners of Korean: What Can They Teach Us?
November 28	Darcy Paquet Evaluating Korean Cinema's Commercial Success
December 10	Yang Jong-sung Introduction to Korean Shamanism
December 17	Jocelyn Clark and friends Musical evening

Monthly Visits to the National Museum: 2013

February 13	History in Glass
March 20	Buddhist Sculpture Galleries
April 17	The Peranakan World
May 15	Calligraphy of Korean Zen Masters
June 19	Buddhist Guardian Paintings of Late Joseon Period
September 25	Silk Road Luxuries from Early Korea
October 16	Silla, A Brilliant Country of Gold
November 20	Musical Instruments of Joseon in America
December 18	Korean Ceramics and Maritime Silk Road

We are most grateful to the members of the Museum's staff who prepare the monthly guided tour in English for RAS members.

The RAS Reading Club: 2013

Each month members meet to discuss a Korean short story in English translation. Among the works discussed in 2013 were:

April: Ku Hyo-sŏ. *A Bale of Salt*

June: Lee Oyoung. *The General's Beard*

July: Park Min-Gyu. *Korean Standards*

August: Kim Young-ha. *The Man Who Sold His Shadow*

September: Yi Tae-jun. *Crows*

October: Yi Chong-jun. *Footprints in the Snow*

November: Ch'oe Illam. *Ballad*

December: Yi Munyol. *Garuda*

The Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch wishes to thank these sponsors for their generous support:



Books for Sale from the RAS Korea

The home page of the RASKB includes an RAS Book Store with lists of the many Korea-related titles available for sale from our office.

Click on <http://www.raskb.com>

Go to **RAS Book Store**

Anyone wishing to purchase books should send an email to the RAS Korea office: royalasiatickorea@gmail.com indicating the exact title and author of the books desired, together with the full name and complete mailing address to which they should be mailed. Please also indicate if books should be sent by airmail to an overseas address, otherwise books for overseas destinations will be sent by surface mail. Alternatively, those living in Korea may collect the books from our office. The RAS office will then calculate the total cost, including packing and mailing, and reply by email.

Current members of the RASKB are entitled to a significant discount on the price of books purchased. Payment can be made by Paypal (in US dollars etc, not Korean Won), by bank transfer, or by check. Credit card payments can be made at the RAS office. If you need the total price to be quoted in a currency other than Korean won, please tell us.

The books are divided into the following categories:

RAS Publications
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Food & Clothing
History, Economics, Politics
Korean Language
Korean Literature
Korean Studies, Korean War, North Korea
Philosophy & Religion
Society
Travel, Guides, Geography, Photography

The RAS Korea E-Book Library

In addition to its library of printed books, RAS Korea also offers members and friends access to a wide variety of electronic editions of books about Korea through links in its home page.

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- Monthly issues of the *Korean Repository*, 1892, 1895-98

- Monthly issues of the *Korea Review*, 1901-1905

- Links to many Korea-related e-Book available freely elsewhere on the Internet

- PDF files of the collection of 373 books and magazines belonging to former UK Ambassador to Korea Martin Uden, scanned during his term in Korea.

Our home page also contains a **Blog** section where **video recordings of lectures** are available as well as other echoes of our activities.

Please encourage others to become members of the Royal Asiatic Society Korea Branch.

Annual Report

Annual Report

Members of the R.A.S
(As of May 31, 2014)

