**COVER:** The seal-shaped emblem of the RAS-KB consists of the following Chinese characters: 槿 (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.”

**SUBMISSIONS:** *Transactions* invites the submission of manuscripts of both scholarly and more general interest pertaining to the anthropology, archeology, art, history, language, literature, philosophy, and religion of Korea. Manuscripts should be prepared in MS Word format and should be submitted in digital form. The style should conform to *The Chicago Manual of Style* (most recent edition). The covering letter should give full details of the author’s name, address and biography. Romanization of Korean words and names must follow either the McCune-Reischauer or the current Korean government system. Submissions will be peer-reviewed by two readers specializing in the field. Manuscripts will not be returned and no correspondence will be entered into concerning rejections.

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Brief Encounters Continued:  
Korean Perspectives on Four English Voyages in the  
Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries  
from the Chosŏn Veritable Records

William F. Pore

In their book Brief Encounters: Early Reports of Korea by Westerners (Seoul Selection, 2016), Brother Anthony of Taizé and Robert Neff have compiled and edited selections from a number of the known Western-language eyewitness accounts of Korea and Koreans written between 1653 and 1884. The result is an illuminating and comprehensive anthology. While these journeys originally had China or Japan as their main objectives – Korea at the time being only a secondary or accidental one – they resulted in the earliest Western contacts with and written records on Korea and its inhabitants. One of the best achievements of Brief Encounters is that through the perspectives in these accounts, as predictably sensitive, biased, informative, and amusing as they may alternately be, as first-time cross-cultural encounters of this type usually are, along the way we learn much about the Western sense of self, views of the other, and the ways these may have informed past and present perspectives on Korea and more broadly East Asia.

Interestingly, four of the brief encounters were also documented by Koreans soon after they occurred in the Chosŏn Veritable Records, and, in one known instance, in the Record of Korean Embassies to China (Korean: Yŏnhaengnok). These records, written in literary Chinese, about English ships that arrived in 1797, 1816, 1832, and 1845 provide counterbalance, depth, and rare Korean perspectives against which to compare the English accounts. As interesting in themselves as the Korean accounts are, it needs to be stated that just as it is sometimes difficult, even in one’s own language, to comprehend the meaning of certain words or the point of view in material written by those of even a few generations past, these difficulties were compounded in the literary Chinese texts the
Koreans wrote two hundred or so years ago. These particular translation difficulties, in some instances, led to the necessity of adding notes to the translated text stating that certain terms for places, the names of English personnel, details of English and Korean clothing, linear measures, and English and Korean official titles, for example, were untraceable, indefinite, or unknown. In time, further research may resolve these difficulties.

One other introductory comment is in order. It concerns assessing the motivations and outcomes involved in the encounters between the English and Koreans, or, writ large, between East and West. In their Preface to Brief Encounters, the editors provide some brief, plausible explanations, including the phenomenon in the West of industrial expansion and exploration. There are those and a number of competing explanations, such as, Chinese and Korean willful isolation, European fragmentation and resulting competition, contrasting geopolitical and economic development, Western religious proselytization, scientific inquiry, search for colonies and natural resources, European population pressures, and a shift in global power. In addition to these, in another perspective, it is possible to perceive these encounters between the English and Koreans among later and continuing episodes in East Asia of what Niall Ferguson in Civilization terms the “Anglobalization” of the world.1

1. Commodore William Robert Broughton’s voyage in H.M.S. Providence2 to the vicinity of Pusan in 17953

Commodore Broughton’s description of Providence’s voyage to Korea, like each of the other accounts in Brief Encounters, is much more detailed in ways that the Korean accounts of these voyages in the Veritable Records are not. The kind of detail that Broughton provides is especially notable for the inclusion of descriptions of several kinds of scientific observations that the members of the Providence and the later English

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2 Broughton served briefly with the British fleet in North America during the American War of Independence. Prior to Broughton’s command, in 1791 H.M.S. Providence, under William Bligh, had been used to transport breadfruit from the Pacific to the West Indies. It came under Broughton’s command after a refitting in 1793.
3 For Broughton’s full account, see Brief Encounters, pp. 66-83.
expeditions undertook. By this time, European exploration of other parts of the world regularly included a number of scientific and empirical investigations. Broughton even ventures some possible ethnological comments drawn from his travel experience to other parts of the world, as where he compares Koreans and Chinese. He further observed the gender dominance of males in the authority structure and the absence of women in his few observations on Korean society.

In some further detail, he describes the apparel and accoutrements of the Koreans, which in this case the Koreans did not record to much extent in their observations of the English sailors, but which are a conspicuous feature of their later accounts. Due to the lack of interpreters, language, as Broughton’s and the Koreans’ accounts so obviously confirm, was an acute problem for both during this encounter. While the contacts between each side in this instance were mostly tense, Broughton’s assessment of the Koreans was at times, even so, positive, as when he refers to them as “our friends” and notes their help in providing supplies. But he was also able rightly to gauge the Koreans’ general disposition during this short landfall as expressing a desire, made clear in the Korean record, for the English to be gone as soon as possible.

From: Chǒngjo Veritable Record, reign year 21, 9th month (c. September 1795)
(정조실록, 이십일년, 구월, 임신, 정주실록, 二十一年, 九月, 壬申)

On Imsin, the Kyŏngsangdo inspections official, Yi Hyŏng’wŏn, sent the urgent information that a foreign ship had sailed into Tongnae⁴ from the sea before Yongdangp’o. On this seagoing vessel there were fifty people. They plait their hair and some have hair hanging down their backs. They wear white felt headgear. Some bind up their hair and wear it knotted with a conical hat that is like our state’s war hats. Their bodies are covered in coarse hemp cloth or in black felt. Their clothes are like our state’s tongdalli⁵ and they are clothed in breeches. These people all have high noses and pale-colored eyes. When we tried to interrogate them, by inquiring into their state’s name and their reason for sailing here, the languages of Chinese, Manchu, Japanese, and Mongol were all not known.

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⁴ This is a former name of the city of Pusan. Tongnae is now the designation for a city ward.
⁵ This is a type of Korean traditional long, loose over garment resembling a light weight coat.
to them. When they were given a brush to write, the writing had the appearance of a painting of misty mountains — it could not be understood. Their ship is 18 $p'a$ long and 7 $p'a$ wide. On the lower part, on the left and right, are molded pine boards. It is bound with copper and iron strips. It is durable and very fine. Even a little water does not penetrate.

Yun Tūkkyu, the provincial maritime official, urgently informed the Tongnae deputy authority, Chŏng Sang’u, stating that in the direction of Yongdangp'o he saw the people who had sailed in and that their noses were high and that they had pale eyes like Westerners. He, moreover, saw the cargo they were carrying, such as glass bottles, telescopes, and silver coins with holes in them. All were products of the West. Their language and voices are as yet entirely not understood. The only words they know are the Japanese Nagasaki shima (Nagasaki island). It seems that this merchant vessel came from Nagasaki and turned in here to ask our people by pointing with their hands and fingers to direct them to Tsushima Island. By their words, they seemed to say that their intention was to await the wind. Fate complied with their wish. The wind arrived and sent them off.

2. H.M.S Alceste, Captain Sir Murry Maxwell, and Lyra, Captain

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6 There is no known source which identifies the text’s Chinese character ba ($把$), read $p'a$ ($파$) in Korean, as a unit of measure. It can be conjectured that this character may have been used to stand for the native Korean word for arm ($p'al$). If that was the intended unit, the length of a typical human arm, that is, one $p'al$, could have been about two to two and a half feet. On that basis, the dimensions of this ship would be about 45 by 17.5 feet. That, however, would be too small for the known dimensions of the H.M.S. Alceste at 152 feet, 5 inches in length and a beam of 40 feet. These dimensions, if correct, suggest that the Korean party were estimating the size of the Lyra, the smaller of the two ships.

7 samdo t’ongjesa (삼도통제사 三道統制使) This title may have been one applied to a military post in command of naval forces in the Chŏlla, Ch’ungch’ong, and Kyŏngsang provinces during the Chosŏn dynasty.

8 The name of this ship was derived from Alcestis (Greek: Ἀλκηστίς), the wife of Admetus, who saved her husband’s life by dying in his place. She was brought back from Hades by Herkules. In being so named, the Alceste followed an established practice in the British Navy of naming vessels for Greek and Roman mythological figures. The Alceste had originally been the Minerve, a ship built in France during Napoleon’s First Empire. It was renamed and put into service in
Basil Hall; Lord Amherst Mission to China and Exploration of the West Coast of Korea, 1816

This voyage resulted in three accounts by the officers of the English ships. The account found in *Brief Encounters* is excerpted from Captain Basil Hall’s book. In early 1816, the primary duty of the *Alceste* was to transport Lord Jeffery Amherst to a meeting with the Chinese emperor on issues relating to the East India Company in Canton. From August 1816 to January 1817, Amherst travelled widely in China. During that time, the *Alceste* and *Lyra* were dispatched on surveying expeditions to Korea and Okinawa (Loo-choo as it was then known). As noted concerning Broughton’s voyage to the environs of Pusan, on this expedition the English were scientifically engaged in observing many features of Korea, animate and inanimate alike. When the personnel of the two English ships on the 1816 voyage first directly encountered the Korean people, they were struck by their apparently hostile reaction to the English setting foot on shore. As with Broughton and his company’s encounter with the native population, language was again a formidable barrier to interaction and understanding. The language issue seems somewhat problematic, however, in as much as the Korean account states that there was printed matter in Chinese on one of the ships. The English and Koreans stated that the main means of communication became hand movements and gestures. Yet, the English party did make observations not only of the Koreans’ language, but also of their appearance, dress, habits, and reaction to their presence, as the Koreans in the *Veritable Record* entry similarly did of the English.

After their first landing, in an incident at a second, nearby village, it is evident that misapprehensions were present on both sides. Then, a Korean official, whom Hall refers to as a “chief” in elaborate robes along with his attendants, paid a visit to the *Alceste* and *Lyra*. This official was presumably one of those the *Veritable Records* account mentions, but which one he was cannot be ascertained precisely. The incidents on the English ships involving the interaction of this Korean official and his retinue with the officers and crew of the two ships form the major part of 1806 as the *Alceste* after it was captured by the British in the same year. In 1814 it served as a troop ship transporting British soldiers to North America during the War of 1812. In 1816 it carried Lord Amherst on his mission to China, of which the Korean segment presented here is a part.

9 *Lyra* is likely derived from the lyre of Orpheus or Hermes.

10 For a summary of the three accounts which resulted from this voyage, see *Brief Encounters*, pp. 105-129.
the Korean record. Both the English and Korean accounts register major
attention to this and several other events that were apparently of mutual
interest during this voyage. The Korean record is of particular interest for
its description of the Korean party’s visit on board the English ships,
during which they made a detailed inspection of the ships’ structure,
personnel, stores, and armaments. At the conclusion of one event on board
the Alceste, Hall was magnanimously able to remark that, despite the
meetings with the Koreans being mostly wordless, after a few days of
interacting with them he felt a “striking uniformity” existed among all
societies. Nevertheless, following another English excursion on shore
before their departure, the Koreans gave Hall a final impression, by means
of threatening gestures suggesting bodily harm, that they would wish them
soon gone. So Hall, in departing Korea’s shores, closed his account with
an overall negative assessment of the people and place. The Korean
account is particularly revealing in its attention to the technological
application of certain items on the English ships and a certain awe at the
ships’ capabilities.

Sunjo Veritable Record, reign year 16, 7th month (August 1816)
(순조대왕실록, 순조 16, 7월 純租大王實錄, 純租 十六年, 七月)

The maritime administrator\textsuperscript{11} of Ch’ungch’ŏng province, Yi Chaehong,
has written a statement to the effect that in Ma’ryang magistracy below
Kalgot two foreign ships drifted in. The subordinate official, Cho Taebok,
and the local posted authority,\textsuperscript{12} Yi Sŭngryŏl, made a spate of reports
stating “these ships sailed in and harbored there. Although much
manpower was expended and many boats were engaged, none could pull
in these ships. Therefore, on the fourteenth day, at dawn, the subordinate
official and the other officer together went to the place where the smaller
of the foreign ships was. There inquiry was first made by means of “true”
writing [Chinese], but [the ship’s company] not being able to understand,
shook their heads. Then, again, by means of Korean script, they were
questioned, but, once more, showing that they did not understand, they
waved their hands. The questioning of the ship’s [company] having
progressed with this kind of difficulty, after an extended time, it ended
without arriving at a solution. Finally one of the officers (of the ship)

\textsuperscript{11} susa (수사 水使).

\textsuperscript{12} piinhyŏn’gam (비인현감 庇仁縣監).
himself seized a pen and what he wrote resembled seal characters, but they were not seal characters, and they also resembled Korean script, but they were not Korean script. No one could distinguish their top or bottom.

From a place in the upper chamber, among the number of volumes of books, an [English] officer picked out two. One volume he gave to the subordinate official and one to the local authority. When they opened the volumes and examined them, they saw that they were also not in seal characters or in Korean script. Since no one could give a clear explanation of them or communicate their meaning, they were firmly refused, but they (the English) would not take them back. So we placed them in our sleeves. We will investigate the books to find out if any have “true” writing. The pages had what resembled the said country's hand script. This is thus the means by which they were received.

Since these people were regarded as foreign, they were all from a place where they cut their hair. Here and there among them some had black hair and some had braids. The form of their hair had the appearance of a mortar bowl. As for their clothes, their upper garments were generally white hemp cloth or black felt. On the right side they were folded over and held by a single metal fastener. The bottom garments are mostly white hemp cloth and were like breeches in appearance. They are made very tight and resembled those of boys. Their stockings are generally of hemp cloth. Their shoes are made of black hide and, in appearance, it seems as though nothing binds them and that is the way they wear them. Some of the things they wear included ornamented gold and silver rings, decorated swords and knives, tortoise shell, and one held a telescope. Each part of the ship was fully staffed with personnel. It was difficult to count their exact number, but it would appear that there were nearly eighty or ninety of them.

When later [the Korean officials] went to the larger ship and inquired into its situation, there too the people were dressed in the same way as those on the small ship. These people were also interrogated in “true” writing and in Korean script, but they too, since they all did not understand, shook their heads. The number of people on this ship seemed to be many times more in comparison. In the chambers in the upper part of the ship, some were sitting, some were standing, and others were going back and forth. This caused a great deal of confusion in calculating their number, the volumes of books, and paraphernalia. It is possible that there were many more of these than on the small ship.
Whether it was the small or the large ship, their construction and shape were very unusual. Every tier and every area had valuable instruments and curious things. Besides iron and wood, they employed such materials the names of which are not known. It was difficult to take in and calculate everything, but there were also women in the lower part of the ships. We saw one of them. She was wearing red with white. Both ships were constructed using metals. They also had cannon and cannon balls and bullets and such things. When the magistrate and the local official left the ship, they each had the books which they had received on the small ship.

The northwest wind was unpredictable, but both the large and small ships fired their cannon and raised their sails in a fixed order, then set off into the sea toward Yŏndo in the southwest. The open sea was beyond the island. The magistrate and the local official followed after them in their boat, but there was no way for them to keep up with the ships. They seemed to be of a flying nature. Until the sun set, they could be seen only as vague images when they looked far ahead.

From within the two ships, miscellaneous and crafty items were ascertained and recorded, extending to the portfolio of “true” writing booklets obtained from the small ship, which have been mentioned, as well as the printed, bound books that were offered. The books from the small ship were printed and copied ones. The English naval officers and staff handed down these books as a clear statement of this affair having occurred and we have sent these to the authorities to serve notice of their possession.

This year in the intercalary sixth month, in the period of the first ten days, we have encountered five English ships which are sending a communication from the English king stipulating regulations. All the accompanying people went to Tianjin. From there, by way of the Lian River, the [English] king’s envoys entered the capital to visit the [Chinese] emperor. Because the sea around Tianjin is shallow, if there were a great wind, the ships would unavoidably have been ruined. Therefore, all ships in that area risk punctured hulls, so they do not anchor there. They want to return to Guangdong to await the [English] king’s envoy\(^\text{13}\) and then return to their country. That is why they have passed by us here to ask the appropriate authorities to provide food stuffs, fresh water, and beverages.

\(^{13}\) That is, Lord Jeffery Amherst.
This [communication] has been printed with the approval of our king’s official seal. Jiaqing 2

3. Voyage of H.M.S. Lord Amherst to China and along the western coast of Korea; supercargo Hugh Hamilton Lindsay and the missionary Charles Gutzlaff; Captain Thomas Rees, 1832

Accounts of this voyage in English are from two sources. One source is that of Hugh Hamilton Lindsay, the son of a director of the East India Company and, in his own right, a businessman with a special interest in China who served as supercargo on the Lord Amherst. The other source is that of Charles Gutzlaff (originally Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff), a Protestant missionary in China, Siam, and later Korea, who was born in East Prussia. Both Lindsay and Gutzlaff were aboard the Lord Amherst on this voyage when it sailed along the coast of China, the western coast of Korea, the Ryukyu Islands, and later Siam in 1832. The captain of the ship, Thomas Rees, is of some interest due to his brother John’s participation in the opium trade in China through his connection to Jardine’s, the major merchant supplier of the drug. In fact, it is possible to speculate, even though it is not so stated in either the English or Korean accounts, that opium was among the ship’s stores on this occasion.

This voyage, in bringing this expedition to the coast of Korea, is remarkable for one particular difference from the previous two English voyages, in that both Lindsay and Gutzlaff were competent in Chinese, which, to an extent, at this time made at least written communication with the Koreans they met more likely and indeed did help to clarify the intentions of the English. This linguistic ability seems to have also influenced the amount of information about this voyage included in the Veritable Records entry, since it is the most extensive of the four Korean records produced on these four English voyages.

Lindsay and Gutzlaff arrived in Korea with plans. These plans included their intent to “communicate with the rulers of the land.” To do that, they had drawn up a “petition” to the king of Korea, which they hoped by whatever means would be conveyed to the capital. The announced objective in their petition was to establish trade. To facilitate their own reception and acceptance of the petition’s objective, some gifts, not specifically described in the English version of the petition, were

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14 This reign year of the Qing Jiaqing emperor is equivalent to the Western Gregorian calendar year of 1816
15 For Lindsay’s and Gutzlaff’s accounts, see Brief Encounters, pp. 139-153.
offered. As the English accounts state and the *Veritable Records* verify, Lindsay and Gutzlaff’s plans did not go smoothly. When the English party did get a chance to communicate in writing with some “senior” Koreans, it was made clear to them that the English presence was not welcome and their intentions not acceptable. Lindsay attributed their not being treated even more harshly to the fact of their carrying arms. Stops at other villages and on other islands all resulted in the English having the same apprehension about the people.

After these additional discouraging attempts at peaceful relations, Lindsay and Gutzlaff were informed by a delegate from a local “mandarin” who came aboard their ship that they would be received by authorities of a proper station in due course. In a few days or so, two Korean officials came aboard the *Lord Amherst* and a thorough interview by both sides ensued. In the English account, as that of the Koreans also reveals, both parties closely observed the sartorial appearance of each other, besides numerous inquiries on a variety of topics being exchanged. As a result of this meeting, attitudes of both the English and Koreans seemed to improve greatly. Lindsay, presumably with Gutzlaff, subsequently wrote out for the Korean officials the items that they wished to present to the king, adding some additional ones that they thought might facilitate their acceptance. All of these items were duly registered in the *Veritable Record* account as well. The books the Korean account mentions were, according to the English account, on various subjects, but also included Bibles.

Some days following the meeting with the Korean officials, Captain Rees informed Lindsay, who returned to the *Lord Amherst* after being away on shore, that one of the Korean authorities, surnamed Kim (Lindsay refers to him as “Kin Tajin”) had returned to the *Lord Amherst* in a boat bringing the letter and all three boxes of gifts intended for presentation to the king. Rees refused to accept the return of any of these. In response to this turn, Lindsay and Gutzlaff went ashore to meet with the official Kim. When they met with him, they were told that a “great officer” was coming from the capital to settle matters. When this official from the capital arrived and negotiations began, the English became dismayed then angry with the Koreans’ perception of the truth of the matter. In the explanation of the Korean position, the English were told by the officials that the possibility of relations or commerce between Korea and Great Britain could be determined only by Korea’s overlord, the Qing Empire.

As stated in the *Veritable Records* account, in the Korean view of this affair, presenting this matter to the king was presumptuous and out of order. The English, becoming as equally haughty as the Korean officials,
persisted in their position, but to no avail and refused to take the return of their petition and gifts. This exchange between the two sides was exemplary of the clash of Western legal mindedness and Eastern customary practice. Another issue of discomfiture for the English arose when they also learned that the provisions they had requested had not by this time arrived. General anger by the English at the Korean officials on the latter matter may have led to the provisions arriving some time later. In the end, the English felt betrayed and suspicious of the Koreans and assertive of their moral and institutional superiority. As evidenced in the Veritable Records’ account, the Korean perception of their own position was evidently equally correct and moral.

Sunjo Veritable Record, reign year 32, 7th month [July 1832] (순조대왕실록, 삼십이년, 칠월 純租大王實錄, 三十二年, 七月)16

The governor of Kongch’ung province,17 Hong Hāikun, has filed a statement that on the 25th day of the 6th month a ship18 of a foreign appearance with three sails from a certain country drifted into Hongju from the sea beyond Kodaedo. It is said to be an English ship. The regional official and the Hongju district officer, Yi Minhoe, were dispatched. The naval patrol officer, Kim Yǒngsu, proceeded to inquire into the situation with haste. When they did so, it was difficult to communicate with these people, but when they conversed in writing, they stated that they were from England, which is further designated Great England.19 They live in London City and Hindustan. England, Ireland, and Scotland together form one country and it is thus named Great England. The King’s surname [sic] is Wei [William].20 The size of their country is the same as China. The area of London is 75 li [in

17 This is another name for Ch’ungch’ong province.
18 The text literally states that it was “a bamboo ship” (chuksŏn 竹 선). 
19 Both Lindsay and Karl Gutzlaff were competent in written and spoken Chinese and presumably could have been carried out this exchange with the Korean officials. However, the Chinese they spoke may have been a southern dialect. It is also possible that there was a Chinese interpreter on the ship who conducted the correspondence with the Koreans.
20 i.e. William IV of Great Britain
circumference]. There are many mountains in their country but few lakes and rivers. They have all of the five grains. From their borders near the Koukun Mountains, they together set out from a river in Yunnan province, having originated from an area of England which broaches the ocean. They are about 70,000 li from Beijing by the land route or 40,000 li by the sea. By the sea route, they are also 70,000 li from Chosŏn. They have travelled through France, Australia, Luzon, and Dalian.

The ship is constructed of jujube wood. The body of the ship is like a split melon in shape. The front and back are pointed. It is 30 pa long and 6 pa wide. The planks have iron nails inserted in them. In the upper part and in the center, the storerooms are numerous. There are ten large rooms and twenty small ones. At both the front and back of the ship, there are figurations of spirit turtles. In the central hold of the ship, there are black and white goats. Duck and chicken cages and pig sties have also been installed. From the front to the back of the ship, every color of flag flies. There are quarters for all of the ranks of personnel. Men stand in front of the doors in armor wearing swords. All day long they stand straight to interdict people going in and out. There are four boats suspended to the left and right. When they are put to use, they are lowered into the sea.

In the front, center, and rear are masts. Each has three levels of white hemp cloth. The sails are separated into three types. They use [eating] utensils, dishes, writing instruments, jars, bottles, and glass. The spoons are silver. The weapons the ship has are thirty curved swords, thirty-five firearms, twenty-four lances, and eight large cannon.

There are sixty-seven men on the ship. The master of the ship is

21 The exact wording in Chinese states that there is “little water” (水小).
22 The characters used here are 昆連, pronounced kunlIan in Chinese. These are not the characters now used for Koukun, so that place name is only a conjecture. Another possibility is that Kunlun, the mountain range in northern Tibet, was intended.
23 The Chinese characters for this place are pronounced di li ya (地理亞).
Lacking a better alternative, “Dalian” has been conjectured.
24 This may be a description of the color of the wood, rather than the actual type of wood used in the ship’s construction. Jujube is a small to medium sized fruit tree. The frames of English ships of this type were typically made of oak.
25 Again the length of a p’a can only be guessed. If, as previously assumed, it was approximately equivalent to two or two and a half feet, the dimensions of this ship would be 75 by 15 feet at most.
of the forth rank [of nobility], a viscount. This is Hu Xia Mi [Hamilton, i.e., Hugh Hamilton Lindsay]. There is a sixth level licentiate, Risa [Rees], a naval officer. The first officer is Palu [Paul], the second officer is Shinson [Simpson], the third officer is Rohan [John]. There is also an artist, Diwen [?], and the record keeper, Laodugao [?]. [Several more names of people phonetically rendered in Chinese and their duties or positions which follow have been omitted.]

In their appearance, some are white like face powder or are black like deep black ink. Some completely shave their hair and some do not. Many of them have a strand of hair in front and on the crown of their heads which they plait and wear over their clothes. Some have Western clothes and some wear a diversity of fabrics. Some are in hemp cloth or varied colors of satin. For their upper garments, they have overcoats, and some are in narrow-sleeved garments that they tie up with red satin. If they wear red topcoats, they fasten them under the right lapel with gold, and have round bars [buttons?] on the lapels. Some of their sleeves are wide and some are narrow. The men of rank have satin stripes which are brand new. Hamilton’s stripes are of blue-green satin. He has a black angled decoration in front. Some others are of black felt and some of black hemp in appearance. Some wear hats like our kant’u horsehair hats and some have hats that shade their heads. Other [hats] are of woven grass in appearance. Their stockings are white and of thin silk. Some are white hemp cloth without a seam on the back. Their shoes are of black leather and resemble komusin.26

In a cursory list of the goods the ship carried, there were 500 glass plates, 1000 catties of saltpeter, 20 measures of flint, 50 rolls of calico, 100 knives, 100 scissors, 20 wax candles, 30 lamp stands, 40 lanterns, more than 10,000 buttons, and 60 daggers. They also had 80,000 strings of silver.

Being equal to Qing and more than equal to it in power, [the British] do not advance tribute from their state to Beijing. They do not kowtow to the [Qing] emperor. [Although] the emperor treated these people from afar kindly, the immediate outcome was that the [Qing] authorities did not respect the memorial that was presented [by the British]. So that is the reason the imperial favor did not extend to these guests from afar. Moreover, [the British] stated that the [Qing] authorities

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26 These are a type of traditional Korean flat, untied, slip-on shoes. There also was a similar type that was tied.
coerced them and this caused much difficulty and perturbation.

The countries with which [the English] trade are Europe [sic], France, A-ren-min-la, Zhi-er-ma-wei [Germany?], Great Luzon, Po-er-du-cci, Africa, Shi-li, Ling-ding-du, and the Qing Empire. The countries with which they have relations are Wo-lo-si [Wales?], France, Holland, and Po-lu-si. The territory of England is in Europe and it has an aristocracy. They further have very large territories in America. Moreover, they have abundant islands in Xi-xin-jing [the West Indies?]. In Africa, many reside in an extreme southern point, [the Cape of] Good Hope, which they have seized. In the South Pacific, England has many areas which have come under its control and they have enlarged. Finally, on the continent of Asia, [the English] have many sea islands, in addition to Hindustan, that they took over long ago. All of these are printed on English maps.

Those areas nearest to China which have come under English control are Xian-ning-po, Ma-ti-pan, Malacca, and Singapore. They came here this year in the second month on the twentieth day following the southwest winds. By order of their king, they offered a memorial and ceremonial gifts [to us]. They have memorialized his Korean majesty stating that they seek only a reply to their request for a treaty of trade. They have presented Western cloth, broad cloth, plumes, raw silk, glass wares, clocks, and other items of trade [in exchange for] such things as gold, silver, copper, and herbals. The items that they have for “tribute” are: broadcloth in red, purple, and blue-green, one roll each; plumes, in red, blue-green, purple, and palm brown, one roll each; Western cloth, fourteen rolls; telescopes, two; glass items; six; decorated gold buttons, six rows; books of their native thought, twenty-six.

Besides this, in the seventh month on the twelfth day, there was a small boat of a foreign appearance which drifted in from the sea before Sŏsan on Kangwŏldo toward the harbor at Chusa ch’angni in T’aean. There they shouted for the local people to come forth and handed out several volumes of books in that region. They then returned to the ship and departed. There were four volumes in total and two were in cases. There were also seven volumes with one in a case, altogether making twelve volumes. There was further one volume without a case and four just as they were. The Kodaedo investigating official, inquiring further about this affair, reported that “on the twelfth at the myo hour [5-7 a.m.] they alighted from the ship and afterwards boarded it and headed north. By night they were out at sea. On the thirteenth day, before sunup the
same seven men came and handed out seven volumes of books. The names [of the books] are unknown.”

These men wrote a list of things that they requested: provisions, refreshments, greens, chickens, pigs, and other assorted things. Accordingly, they were given two oxen, four pigs, eighty chickens, four racks of salted fish, twenty catties of a variety of vegetables, twenty catties of ginger, twenty bunches of greens, twenty catties of garlic, ten catties of peppers, fifty rolls of white paper, four tan of husked grain, one tan of wheat flour, fifty tan of honey, one hundred catties of liquor, and fifty catties of leaf tobacco. They entreated us to transmit their memorial and gifts to [His Korean Majesty], but this was firmly rejected. We did not accept their things and they were thereupon thrown into the river bank. The three small books and the offerings along with their names were recorded on two documents.” From the capital, a specially appointed interpreter, O Kyesun, hurriedly went personally to inquire into the circumstance of the documents and the gifts. “In the end, these people [the English] would not accept the return [of the items]. For a number of days, they [the English and Koreans] wrangled with each other. On the 17th day, in the evening at low tide, with these people [the English] shouting and calling out loudly, they broke off and separated their ship from our connecting line. They raised their sails and departed heading straight in the direction of the southwest. When their ship was pursued, it accelerated rapidly. Our boat determinedly followed, but was unable to catch up. As reported, their memorial document and gifts could not be returned to them.”

The Office of Border Preparedness received this message: “This ship must be one which carries on sea trade with a number of countries and, by chance, arrived on our state’s boundaries. [The English] conveyed their memorial and gifts as measures toward establishing trade. But this request was not complied with. [The English] not being able to find a resolution, and also not retreating [on their position], left their memorial and gifts, not taking them in return. These things [the English] set before us were peculiar and suspicious. As to the dealings of these people from afar, although it is difficult to assess the propriety of their being in our jurisdiction, we ordered an investigating officer, an interpreter, and

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27 担 tan (단) The size or quantity of this measure could not be determined.
28 Piguk (비국 備局) = pibyônsa (비변사 備邊司)
several others to make an official inquiry to verify their accounts precisely and to gather all of their observations into a dossier together with the books and things they had given us here and at other places. Out of precaution, everything [the English had given us] was sealed up and placed in the official, local repository.

When the Kongch’ung naval officer, Yi Chaehaeng, the officer of naval incidents, Kim Hyŏngsu, and the Hongju administrator moksa (목사 牧使), Yi Minhoe, made inquiries, there were hindrances and obstructions leading to blunders and confusion. Following moral precedent, the officials having discussed, evaluated, and expressed themselves according to the regulations on such matters, begged to dismiss this [incident] from their official duties and it was so granted.” Further, word was received stating, “Although this place named England does not subscribe to the regulations of the superior state’s [i.e. Qing’s] tributaries, from an examination of the books that were received from them, if [the English] have been trading with Min (Fujian) and Guang (Guangdong) and other places no less than 60 or 70 times, as stated, the matter relating to their sailing to our state at this time, while not a concern to be transmitted to the Great State, cannot be blocked from being made known in our state. The Foreign Affairs Communications [bureau] should draw up all of the facts and enter them in an official, expeditious dispatch to the [Qing] Board of Rites.” Follow this up.

4. Voyage of H.M.S. Samarang to Chejudo and the Southwest Coast of Korea, Captain (later Admiral) Sir Edward Belcher, 1845

Accounts of this voyage to Chejudo (known to Westerners at the time as Quelpart) in June 1845 were published by Captain Belcher and Arthur Adams in 1848 and compiled in the Korean Veritable Records for the reign of King Hŏnjong. This expedition included a Chinese interpreter who at times was able to offer assistance with communication. When the members of this expedition first made landfall along the southern coast of Chŏlla-namdo and then moved on to Chejudo, as a precaution, they did so with a show of arms but, by order, did not engage in any direct confrontation with

29 yŏnggoewŏn (영괴원 令槐院)
30 The name of this ship is derived from Semarang located in north central Java. It previously served as a warship during the First Opium War (1839-1842).
31 For Belcher’s full account, see Brief Encounters, pp. 155-173.
the Korean populace. Chejudo was the main area of the expedition’s activity, but it did move about to other islands.

When the English found a person literate in Chinese, the interpreter explained the expedition’s intentions as astronomical observation and navigational measurement. The Korean record takes note of those activities, but the expedition also quite thoroughly examined as many of the natural and human features as they could. From the beginning of their landing on shore, Belcher and the other members of the expedition regarded the Koreans who immediately came near them on land as not so much dangerous as bothersome. That assessment soon changed to what seemed to the English in one instance to be outright belligerence, but proved only to be a bluff show of power by the Koreans. In a later incident near a city on Chejudo, real violence did erupt but was diffused without serious consequences by the show of superior English firepower.

Other encounters between the English and Koreans were uneven; one involving a “chief” from another location on the island who visited the Samarang ending in a very friendly manner. Belcher and this Korean “chief” exchanged some small items, which presumably were the gifts referred to in the Korean record. In a relatively extensive English accounting of this expedition compared to the minor entry in the Korean record, Belcher observed, among many other things, the outward appearance and habits of the Korean people and commented on several aspects of their society, something that, in this case, the Korean record omits about the English. Late in June the Samarang was visited by another Korean “chief,” who from Belcher’s description had military authority, since he refers to him as a “general.” Belcher states the in the general’s appearance he and other people on the island in some ways resembled the people of the Ryukyus.

Belcher ends his account by referring to the experience and observations of the Alceste in 1816 in the same waters. Interestingly the Korean record, in a similar fashion, makes reference to the previous Korean experience with the English in 1832, when the Lord Amherst appeared at Hongju. Each side was now able to draw on these previous encounters for comparative and reflective reference. Belcher believed that since the 1816 voyage there had been progress toward better relations with Korea and its inhabitants. In a summary of his perceptions, sensing that changes for the better have occurred since the earlier voyage, Belcher was even seemingly empathetic toward the country and people and kindly disposed further contact. On the other hand, the Korean perception of the Belcher voyage and the 1832 voyage, show little progress or change toward better relations of understanding motives. While actually rather
neutral overall, the Korean record still demonstrates cognition of the duties and primacy of the obligations owed to the Qing and its role as the final arbiter in these situations, no matter what more positive, particularized Korean opinions there may have been on this occasion.

Hŏnjong Veritable Record, reign year 11, 6th month [June 1845] (憲宗大王實錄, 十一年, 六月)

This month a ship with a foreign appearance came and went at Hongnam in the Honam\textsuperscript{32} region and the coast of Cheju island. This ship, which has described itself as an English ship, appeared suddenly among the various islands. They [the people on the ship] use a white banner to make observations, take depth measurements of the sea, and erect stone position markers. They set up a telescope on top of three wooden legs and they bend down around it to seek the north. When the Cheju interpreters hastily went to inquire into this situation, the [English] presented what they said are records with names on papers and maps of various countries. They gave two palm fans as presents. Eventually they opened their sails and went in the direction of the northeast.

Regarding the above, His Majesty and all ministers above the third grade, the Official for Defense Preparedness, Kim Tohŭi, and the minister of the left of the Supreme Management Ministry were informed that a ship of a foreign design had made inquiries into conditions in Cheju. The items received from the foreigners were of several varieties that were stored in Cheju until their return with an official seal. For about a month this ship travelled about freely to three villages. It was difficult not being able to inquire into these circumstances in detail due to our being far removed. Already during \textit{Imjin} in the previous reign there had been the case of an English ship arriving on its own in Hongju. Although the ship soon departed, this time as before the motive was the same. Having been informed in a dispatch of the Board of Rites' initiative, again afterwards in the \textit{Kyŏngja} year [1840] there had been the matter of a ship paying a visit to Cheju. Due to its sudden appearance and departure, what is to be made of it? At present, then, comparing this to the affair in \textit{Imjin}, it involves an unfathomable foreign case, and inquiring of the Manchu interpreter as to their actions, it is feared that there will be the same anxieties as in the former affair. In conformity with the example in \textit{Imjin}, in the annual

\footnote{32 This is an epithet for the Chŏlla pukdo and Chŏlla namdo region of Korea.}
tribute embassy dispatched to the [Qing] Board of Rites, we will ask for an imperial decree for instruction on the foreign anchorage in Guangdong which we will request to allow as a matter of concern in a separate position.

This was approved and there was further memorializing on it. This spring, when the imperially decreed embassy’s interpreter as before conveys this information, it will arouse attention and unease. In our state, we are not at ease with that which is not properly in order. Only when the imperial orders are promulgated involving a major and minor emissary, then on that occasion we will receive and entertain [those directives]. A single interpreter cannot deal with these long distance affairs. Therefore, we also cannot give the consideration that this is due. After this, when the edict embassy is sent, let it express the intent to appoint one or two more emissaries. This should be included with the embassy in the return dispatch to the Board of Rites. Approved.

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Alice Hyun and Wellington Chung: Paradise Lost

Korean Americans Crushed by the Cold War

Hlásny Vladimir and Jung Byung Joon

Alice Hyun and Wellington Chung were Hawaii-born Korean-Americans who chased their ideological dream beyond the Iron Curtain, but became crushed by the regimes of the cold war. Alice may have been executed in North Korea as an alleged US spy around 1956, while Wellington committed suicide in Czechoslovakia in 1963. Their stories are little known but reflect one of the tragic paths of the Korean diaspora during the Cold War era.

Alice Hyun was the first Korean-American to be born in Hawaii in 1903 as the first daughter of Reverend Hyun Soon, a famous Korean patriot and independence movement fighter during the Japanese colonial period. Over the years, manifold images have emerged of Alice Hyun from different intelligence agencies. At first Japanese police argued that she was a communist contact who traveled between Shanghai and Vladivostok to carry out secret missions on behalf of communists in 1923. During the 1945-1948 US military occupation of Korea, the Chief Intelligence officer cried that she was “the devil who ruined our job.” Then North Korea claimed that she was the first lover of Pak Hŏnyŏng, the concurrent Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs of North Korea, during his stay in Shanghai in the early 1920s, and that she was a US spy. At the same time, the US House Un-American Activities Committee referred to her as un-American and a communist. Most recently, in the early 2000s, South Korean newspapers carried articles calling Alice “Korea’s Mata Hari.”

Her son, Wellington Chung, was born in Hawaii in 1927. He was educated in Honolulu, Los Angeles and Prague. He strove to be a physician and to go to North Korea with his mother. He graduated from the Medical School of Charles University in Prague and became a surgeon.
But his mother was put to death in North Korea and his uncles and grandfather in the US were harassed by US authorities. US agencies labeled him a communist, while North Korean officials kept requesting that Czechoslovak security services monitor him. He renounced his US citizenship, but could not get a travel permit to North Korea. He was stuck in Czechoslovakia, at the whim of the security services. He struggled for years to cope, but at last committed suicide.

Alice and Wellington were raised in a Christian family and received good-quality international education. They advocated the Korean cause, and struggled to become independence fighters against the Japanese rule. However, they became entangled in a radical political movement in Korea, China and the US. After Korean liberation, Alice Hyun was determined to join her old companions in North Korea promptly and at any price. She dispatched Wellington Chung ahead of her to Czechoslovakia, and followed him within months to make her way to P’yŏngyang.

This is the story of their destinies based on dense archive and interview research in Korea, Japan, the US, Czechia and Russia. We traveled the world they passed through, and interviewed their family members and acquaintances.

Alice Hyun

Alice Hyun (Hyŏn Miok. 1903-?) became known as “Korea’s Mata Hari” and was the first lover of Pak Hŏnyŏng during his stay in Shanghai in the early 1920s. Her life symbolizes the Korean diaspora that emerged through colonization, the division of the Korean peninsula, the Korean War and the Cold War clash between two opposing regimes.

She was the first Korean baby born in Hawaii to be naturalized as a US citizen. She was educated in Seoul, Shanghai, Japan, and New York City. She was involved with the Korean independence movement and became a communist. After the end of the Pacific War she served on the staff of the US military intelligence organization in Seoul for half a year. She was banished by the US Army Military Government in Korea because of her contacts with Korean and American communists. She struggled to join her colleagues in North Korea, and left an important footprint in Central Europe on her uncertain journey to P’yŏngyang. During the Korean War, she was arrested by the North Korean authorities and was presumably executed around 1956. North Korea argued that she was a US intelligence agency spy cooperating with the traitor Pak Hŏnyŏng.

1 This section is based on Chŏng (2012, 2013, and 2015).
Alice was born on May 8, 1903, in Hawaii where her father Hyun Soon worked as an interpreter for early Korean immigrants. In the following years, Hyun Soon became a Methodist minister in Korea and served in several churches in Seoul. Alice returned to Korea in 1907 and was raised in Seoul. In 1919 she enrolled in Ewha Girls College. When the March First Movement of 1919 erupted, however, her father moved to Shanghai to support the Korean independence movement, and his family followed him.

Hyun Soon served as a leader of the Korean independence movement in Shanghai. He traveled to Hawaii, Washington DC, Vladivostok and Manchuria on diplomatic missions of the newly established Korean Provisional Government (KOPOGO), as well as to Moscow to request help from the Russians. He was in contact with nationalists as well as socialists to seek their support for the Korean cause, but the tide among Korean patriots in Korea and abroad in the early 1920s was to embrace socialism and welcome Russia’s support. The entire Hyun family was involved with the revolutionary movement in Shanghai, and had good relations with Korean communists there.

In Shanghai, Alice Hyun studied at a Chinese girls’ boarding school. Her family also sent her to study in Japan in the early 1920s. During these years Alice met two men who would forever affect her life. She befriended Chung Jun, a young independence movement fighter who studied in Japan along with Alice. She also met Pak Hŏnyŏng, who eventually became a legend of the Korean communist movement, and chairman of the Korean Communist Party after Korea’s liberation. Alice and Pak Hŏnyŏng could not have imagined in 1920 that their friendship would last a lifetime, that they would reunite in Seoul a quarter century later and that they would eventually perish together in P’yŏngyang. Alice’s younger brother admired Pak Hŏnyŏng as a revolutionary and hoped that Pak might get engaged with his sister. But Pak married another independence fighter, Chu Sejuk, in 1920 and Alice married an ardent young patriot, Chung Jun, in 1922.

The March First movement of 1919 was the key factor that led Alice Hyun and Chung Jun to fall in love and get married. Alice Hyun was a daughter of a Korean patriot who strove to transmit and amplify the voice of the Korean independence movement in Shanghai and the United

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2 Pak was also a leader of *Soh-Nyun Hyung-Myung Dan*, a Young Revolutionary Society composed of Korean boys between the ages of thirteen and fourteen years. Peter Hyun, *MAN SEI*, pp.108, 172.
States. Chung Jun had suffered Japanese imprisonment for his participation in the March First Movement.

Alice Hyun became deeply involved in revolutionary activities, and traveled through Korea, Japan, Shanghai and Vladivostok to carry out secret liaison missions for the Korean communist group. In 1923, Hyun Soon became a minister of the Korean Methodist Church in Honolulu. The rest of his family joined him there in the following years. Alice Hyun arrived from Shanghai on January 30, 1924, on the *Tenyo Maru* (Passenger and Crew Lists, 1924). She was appointed a secretary of the Epworth Christian Young Adults’ Association of the Korean Methodist Church in August 1924. In 1927, Alice Hyun divorced Chung for political reasons and because of his affair with another woman. As she was separating from Chung, however, she was already expecting a baby with him. Her son, Wellington Chung, was born in Honolulu.

Alice Hyun traveled back and forth between Hawaii and China during 1927–30. She finally settled down in the US in 1930 and became naturalized. In 1931 she enrolled in Hunter College in New York City but by 1935 gave up her study and returned to Hawaii.

Before Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor, Alice Hyun probably officially joined the Hawaiian branch of the Communist Party of the USA (CPUSA). Alice and Peter Hyun acted as members of the Hawaiian Communist Party (Holmes, 1994:75–88). Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, CPUSA ordered members to destroy all materials related to the Party and to take a submissive position. Alice and Peter decided not to destroy their materials but to bury a boxful of them on their rented estate near Koko Crater. On May 30, 1943, a farmer plowing the ground found the box full of propaganda booklets and newspapers. He reported his

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4 According to Doris Kim, niece of Alice, Alice ran a business to trade China goods. Interview with Doris Kim Pummill (Jung), San Francisco, January 31, 2017.

discovery to the military intelligence, who set up a trap to catch the Hyuns. The raid happened on a Sunday, when Alice Hyun was at Robert McElarth’s house with Ichiro Izuka, Ah Quon McElarth and Jack Kimoto, all leaders of the labor unions in Honolulu and key Communist figures in Hawaii. Suspected of bringing in the newly found materials from the Hyun estate, they were arrested by the military intelligence. Alice, Izuka and Kimoto were detained for several hours (Holmes, pp.75-88; Izuka, 1947; HUAC “Scope of Soviet Activity in the United States”).

During the Pacific War, Alice went to serve in the military information agency of the Department of the Army. In November 1945, she was sent to Tokyo and then Seoul as a linguist for civilian sensors. Alice’s brother Peter was serving in Korea at the time. Together they were in contact with South Korean communists including Pak Hŏnyŏng. In the spring of 1946, Alice and Peter Hyun were put under close surveillance by the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) of the United States Army Forces in Korea (USAFIK). In May the USAFIK Military Intelligence raided the Headquarters of the Korean Communist Party and discovered secret documents titled the “Communist Diary”. Implicated in the discoveries from the raid, the Hyuns were expelled from Korea. Their visit to Korea lasted barely half a year (Chŏng, 2013).

Back in the US, Alice Hyun moved to Los Angeles in the middle of 1946. With her brother Peter, she opened a liquor store at Bunker Hill. The store was a commercial success, and allowed Alice to buy a large house on the outskirts of Los Angeles near Silver Lake. She invited her parents, siblings as well as Wellington to join her there from Hawaii.

During the Pacific War, Hyun Soon had been a strong supporter of the Korean National Revolutionary Party (KNRP, established by the Korean left-wing fighter Kim Wŏnbong in China) and a cofounder of the Korean Independence weekly newspaper in 1943. Hyun Soon was the only senior member in the Korean Independence group who had participated in the independence movement since 1919. Alice Hyun joined her father as a staff member of the paper. She was appointed secretary of the board, member of the standing committee and member of the editorial staff of the paper. She was also appointed secretary of the Korean Democratic Front in North America, and chairwoman of the Korean-Americans for Henry Wallace Committee (FBI 1950b).

During her tenure at the Korean Independence news, Alice Hyun and her son Wellington Chung resolved to set out on a journey to P’yŏngyang. Based on reports that Czechoslovakia might be a suitable transit point, Wellington Chung applied for admission to Charles University in Prague, and left the US in October 1948. Alice Hyun
undertook the trip to Prague in February 1949. She would spend nine months there, furthering her political work, before continuing to P’yŏngyang in November.\(^6\)

Figure 1. Wellington Chung with his mother Alice Hyun at the World Peace Congress, Prague, April 1949

Front: Kim Ch’angjun (Christian Democratic Party leader and pastor), Han Sŏrya (North Korean writer, Chairman of Korean Writers Association), Pak Chŏngae (Chairwoman of Korean Women’s League) Back: Alice, Wellington

While in Prague, Alice Hyun focused on promoting the issue of Korean independence and unification to the Czechoslovak public, teaching Korean at the Oriental Institute, and reporting on developments in Central Europe to the *Korean Independence News*. In April, Alice Hyun and Wellington Chung participated in the World Peace Congress – the Prague Section (refer to figure 1).\(^7\) Officials of the Korean Democratic Front praised Alice Hyun’s work at the Congress. On August


\(^7\) *Korean Independence*, September 7, 1949.
22, 1949, Alice Hyun served as a delegate to the Second World Festival of Youth and Students and the Youth Congress held in Budapest.\(^8\)

In November Alice Hyun left Prague for Moscow and then for P’yŏngyang. In P’yŏngyang Alice was appointed personal secretary of Pak Hŏnyŏng, now Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs.\(^9\) That is the last reliable report about Alice’s life.

Reports exist claiming that she was detained at the Moscow airport, just before the Korean War, carrying secret military plans signed by Kim Ilsŏng, and was released to North Korean authorities (Balkansky, 2011, p.136), but the source of this information is unclear. Searches of Russian archives did not yield any evidence of Alice Hyun’s transit through the Soviet Union.\(^10\)

Alice Hyun was probably arrested in March 1953 when widespread arrests of South Korean Communist leaders started in P’yŏngyang. In 1955, contacts of the Czechoslovak embassy in P’yŏngyang still reported that Alice Hyun was alive and working at a high level of the state apparatus, but this could not be confirmed (Bařinka 2014). She was accused of being a US imperialist spy and a liaison between Pak Hŏnyŏng and US intelligence agencies. She was executed around 1956 without standing a formal trial. For her alleged relationship with Pak Hŏnyŏng and her lifelong intelligence service to the movement for Korean independence from Japanese and US occupation, she became known as the Korean Mata Hari.\(^11\)

**Wellington Chung**\(^12\)

Wellington Chung (1927–1963) was educated in Hawaii, California, and Bohemia. He became the first Korean surgeon in Czechoslovakia (refer to figure 2). He aimed to join his mother in North Korea, but the Korean War and the Cold War broke off their correspondence as well as their chance.

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\(^9\) Peter Hyun, *In the New World*, p.273.

\(^10\) The consulted archives include the Central Archive of the Federal Security Services of the Russian Federation, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Russian State Historical Archive of the Far East, and the Russian State Archive of the Economy.


\(^12\) This section is based on Hlásny and Jung (2014).
of reuniting. He was stuck alone in Czechoslovakia. His uncles in Los Angeles were summoned to hearings of the HUAC and threatened for decades with deportation. Known as a communist sympathizer and a son of Alice Hyun, he could not safely return to the US, and could not correspond with his family freely. He renounced his US citizenship, perhaps in a vain hope that this would earn him the trust of communist regimes including North Korea. After the news of Alice’s arrest and execution in P’yŏngyang arrived in Czechoslovakia, he lost all hope of being allowed to leave Czechoslovakia. He struggled to survive, but at the end lost all his resolve and committed suicide. His surviving Czech wife, baby girl, and step-son relocated to California with the help of the Hyun family, and were warmly welcomed by the Hyuns as family members (refer to figure 3).

When Wellington Chung was born in Hawaii on October 4, 1927, his parents were divorced and his mother was caught up in running trans-Pacific missions for the Korean independence movement. He was raised by his grandparents. From his childhood he aspired to become a physician. He completed high school in Honolulu and in 1944 enrolled in the University of Hawaii, taking natural-science subjects. In the following year, while his mother served in Seoul, he became a sailor in the merchant marine, aiming to reunite with his mother in Korea. He sailed out of New York City in January 1946 and visited Poland, Denmark, Panama, Canada and China on the way. He planned to enter Korea from China, but could not disembark because of civil war in China.\footnote{ASFCR, Folder 319-40-15, p.34, Document: Ministerstvo národní bezpečnosti [Ministry of National Security], file Sv-1895/50-56, subject: Welington Chung – podání zprávy [reporting], February 27, 1956.} He finally reunited with his mother in Los Angeles in the middle of 1946 and they settled down together. Wellington enrolled in the pre-medical program at the University of California – Los Angeles.

Wellington Chung shared his mother’s dream of supporting the reorganized Communist party in Korea. Having been acquainted with the Korean Communist leadership, they were eager to join the administration in P’yŏngyang. However, they both failed to take root in Seoul. As they supported the independence cause through their work with Korean organizations in Los Angeles, they searched for opportunities to reestablish contact with the P’yŏngyang leadership.

At that time, Professor Han Hŭngsu’s correspondence with Koreans in Los Angeles delivered new inspiration on how to support the P’yŏngyang regime, and perhaps even eventually resettle to North Korea.
In the fall of 1947, Wellington Chung resolved to go to Charles University in Prague for his medical studies and to continue to North Korea when the situation allowed it. He may have also reasoned that there was little chance for an Asian to become a medical doctor in the US, so it would be better to study medicine in Moscow or Prague. He joined the CPUSA-affiliated Mike Quinn Club of students (FBI 1950b:43), either under the influence of Alice, uncle Peter, and other Hyun family elders, or in preparation to travel to the socio-democratic bloc. He applied to the Medical College of Charles University.

In October 1948, Wellington Chung traveled to Prague, carrying a letter written by a group of four Korean nationalists in California to Kim Ilsŏng and Pak Hŏnyŏng. Upon reaching Prague on October 20, 1948, Wellington Chung passed this letter to Korean delegates traveling to P’yŏngyang, settled down, and started learning the Czech language.

During his studies in Prague, Wellington Chung pursued various political activities. He participated as an observer in the 1949 World Peace Congress and the 1950 Second World Student Congress in Prague. During the Korean War, Wellington Chung wrote a brochure for the International Union of Students on “Students in the Struggle for Korean Independence,” possibly even publishing an abstract of it in a Czech newspaper. He served in the press department of the International Union of Students and as secretary of the Association of American Refugees in Czechoslovakia. During the Korean War Wellington Chung organized two fundraising events for the Korean cause. He taught English at the Institute for Modern Languages in Prague, and later gave conversation lessons to his colleagues. He translated two art books into English.

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16 Original title in Czech: Studenti v boji za svobodu Koreje. ASFCR, Rose Lavoott Report, p.3_1–4_2. Newspaper article with the same title, newspaper and date unknown, was signed by Hjun Ćul (courtesy of Jaroslav Olša Jr.), possibly a pseudonym protecting Wellington Chung (Hyun) and his US relatives during the time of HUAC hearings against their circle of friends.
17 CUA, p.13, Document no.3584, Note on withdrawal from university, June 18, 1951.
19 Translations: Lubor Hájek’s books Chinese Art in Czechoslovakia and Exotic Art; and Blahoslav Rejchrt’s study “Léčení poleptání očí tzv. novosibirskou metodou” [“A Novosibirsk Method cure for chemical burns of eyes”].
He already spoke English with the proficiency of a native (Vácha, 2013), and was fluent in Korean. In Czechoslovakia he also became fluent in Czech and German. In the spring of 1949 Wellington Chung was finally admitted in the medical program of Charles University. His studies were funded by his mother as well as possibly by the American Youth for Democracy (FBI 1950b:43). Wellington joined a community of expatriates whom he met through his university and his political activities. Wellington Chung’s contacts with Koreans, on the other hand, were limited. North Korean delegates at student congresses that he attended were reluctant to associate with him, as were North Korean students studying in Prague or the North Korean embassy staff themselves.  

Wellington Chung was allowed to graduate and was certified as a physician in February 1955. He was assigned by the Ministry of Health to a district hospital in Ružomberok, Slovakia, about as far as it gets from Prague. He was then ready to start planning his departure for P’yŏngyang, and so he applied for a Korean entry visa. At this time, North Korean and US embassies inquired to the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs about Wellington Chung’s status in the country. The State Security Service started to monitor Wellington Chung and in February 1956 reported that “at his place of residence and at his workplace, he associates with people who generally have a negative attitude toward our national democratic establishment.” The North Korean embassy denied Wellington his entry permit, and informed the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs that North Korea did not object to anything that Czechoslovak authorities did to him. The State Security Service took advantage of his vulnerable state and his relations in the expatriate community, and trapped him into becoming an informant. 

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20 ASFCR, Rose Lavoott Report, p.3_1–4-2, 39_2. Also, Bařinka (2014).
21 Evidence obyvatelstva - přihlašovací listek, Dr. Chung Wellington (Population census - registration card), 1960, State Regional Archives of Karlovy Vary (SRAKV).
22 ASFCR, Folder 319-40-15, p.43, Letter by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the ambassador of North Korea in Czechoslovakia Jan Jen Sun [Yang Yeong Soon], April 7, 1956; Also: ASFCR, Rose Lavoott Report, p.39_2.
23 ASFCR, Folder 319-40-15, p.43, Rudolf Barák’s letter to ambassador Jan Jen Sun, April 7, 1956.
25 Document subject: CHUNG Wellington - zpráva (report), Krajská správa Ministerstva vnitra - Karlovy Vary (Regional Administration of the Ministry of the Interior), Document no. A/3-0054/361-58, June 3, 1958, ASFCR, Folder 319-
Wellington Chung was caught in Czechoslovakia, because he could not continue to P’yŏngyang, nor could he go back to Los Angeles, due to his mother’s, uncles’ and own record of political engagement. In 1958 he got into a relationship with a fellow medical worker in his hospital, Anna Šafránková (née Šoltýsová), and begot a baby with her. That year the North Korean embassy once again enquired about Wellington Chung’s status in the country, either because he applied again for an entrance visa or in connection with his mother’s conviction and demise in P’yŏngyang, stoking once again the interest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and formal correspondence between the Ministry and the embassy. Wellington Chung stayed under state surveillance – his mail censored and someone named Mr. Ruda watching over him – and was not allowed to travel abroad. Wellington Chung’s daughter Tabitha was born in October 1958, amid these precarious existential conditions in Wellington’s life. Wellington married Anna, forfeited his US citizenship and became naturalized as a father of a Czechoslovak woman’s baby. In his own words to Czechoslovak authorities: “I do not know my mother’s whereabouts, and I have never met my father, so I live apart from any close relatives, and I want to start my own family here.”

40-15, 15.

26 In May 1958, North Korean embassy contacted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for information about him (ASFCR, Folder 319-40-15, p.15).


28 North Korean or Czechoslovak authorities may have informed Wellington about his mother’s downfall. Tabitha is a biblical name of a woman raised from the ashes by Saint Peter.

29 Evidence obyvatelstva - přihlašovací lístek, Dr. Chung Wellington (Population census - registration card), 1960, (SRAKV).

After gaining recognition as a physician, Wellington Chung coauthored three research articles to be published in scientific journals, and presented his research at domestic medical symposia. In 1962, Wellington Chung was appointed the head physician of anatomical pathology and chief of hospital laboratory in Cheb. However, this professional success did not translate into a sense of personal fulfilment for Wellington Chung. He was trapped. By now he knew that his mother had perished, and he gave up hope of reuniting with his US relatives. Always an outsider, distrusted by local authorities, and shackled by what the security services knew about him into being their informant, he was bound to live a restricted existence. On October 28, 1963, the national holiday celebrating Czechoslovakia’s independence from Austria-Hungary, Wellington Chung took his life. He went to his laboratory and overdosed on medications. The circumstances of his death are unclear, as there was no police record made, and Czechoslovak security services have since destroyed the majority of Wellington Chung’s files as part of standard procedures.

The Korean Independence News and the 2 Korean Radicals

When Alice and Wellington traveled to Prague, two other Korean-Americans accompanied them. One, Lee Samin, succeeded at getting to P’yŏngyang but disappeared along with Alice Hyun. The other, Sunwoo Hakwon (Harold Sunwoo), was refused entry to North Korea and had to return to the US.

Their relationship and story traces back to the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war of 1937. The Korean society in the US started a movement to support anti-Japanese war efforts of the Chinese people and of the KOPOGO in China. The movement advocated military measures against Japanese troops in China and raised funds for war efforts of the Chinese and Koreans. After the Pearl Harbor attack, the group organized a

32 In 1961, Dr. Otakar Bořík presented joint research with Dr. Miloš Vitěz and Wellington at an otolaryngology symposium in Karlovy Vary. In 1963, Wellington presented his own research on “Mucous cysts of the maxillary sinuses,” and “Histochemistry in applied anatomical pathology” (Boříková, Jana et al., 1996:83,85,149,153,214).
33 Karlovy Vary Hospital Personnel files – Wellington Chung, 1958, Archives of the Karlovy Vary Hospital (AKVH), accessed October 7, 2013.
34 Karlovy Vary Crematorium, Cremation and Burial Records, October 1963.
US branch of the KNRP, and started publishing the *Korean Independence News*.

In late 1944 a wide-spread split arose among KNRP members regarding whether to favor KOPOGO or not. Pro-KOPOGO members joined the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in early 1945. After the end of the Pacific War, the KNRP was disbanded and the ex-OSS members gathered around the *Korean Independence News* in Los Angeles. The *Korean Independence News* thus became the center for Korean independence movement fighters in the US. But the *Korean Independence News* staff became more and more radical, because they followed the rhetoric of South Korean communists including their stance against the US Army Military Government in Korea, against the right wing, against Syngman Rhee, being pro-left-wing and pro-North-Korean. That led to their isolation in the Korean-American society that was mostly very conservative and held Christian views.

The *Korean Independence* group was eager to establish contact with the North Korean leadership and wanted to receive news about the political development on the Korean peninsula. In October 1946, Korean architect Kim Kyŏnghan arrived in the US from Czechoslovakia and brought the news that his colleague, archeologist Han Hūngsu, was residing in Prague and successfully engaging in correspondence with North Korean leaders. Kim Kyŏnghan and Han Hūngsu had studied in Central Europe, and during World War II lived in Prague and contributed to the founding of Korean studies at Charles University. The Korean Independence group established contact with Han Hūngsu and started publishing his articles on the political situation in Europe and other progressive theses. Their relationship would continue until the moment Han Hūngsu received a North Korean visa and embarked on his journey through Moscow to P’yŏngyang in March 1948.

The Korean Independence group thus discovered a channel allowing the transmission of correspondence – and eventually even personal passage – to North Korea, through Czechoslovakia. The key members of the *Korean Independence News* started sending letters of support to the North Korean leadership (via Prague or Seoul), and dreaming of their own return to North Korea. The most famous letter was written by Lee Samin and Sunwoo Hakwon on November 15, 1948, to Kim Ilsŏng and Pak Hŏnyŏng. This letter was discovered by the US Army at the building of the North Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs in P’yŏngyang during the Korean War. The letter contained the names of seven Korean communists in the US: Choonho Penn, Diamond Kimm and Alice Hyun in Los Angeles, Sunwoo Hakwon and Lee Samin in Seattle,
and Shin Doosik and Kwak Chungsoon in New York. According to this letter, the seven communists were attempting to get in touch with P’yŏngyang through the channel that Han Hŭngsu had identified, and pledged to support the P’yŏngyang regime. This letter was used as critical evidence to accuse Korean radicals in the US of pro-communist and un-American activities.

The radical group in the US saw their return to North Korea as their only hope. Their travel visas to South Korea had been rejected by US authorities. Their letter to Kim Ilsŏng and Pak Hŏnyŏng stated that the way back to P’yŏngyang via South Korea was impossible. “The only way to repatriate is through East European countries.” At his testimony in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), Sunwoo Hakwon commented that “at the time there was no diplomatic mission in Eastern European countries. If there was, we wouldn’t hesitate to use it. We are referring here primarily to Dr. Han, individually” (Testimony of Harold W. Sunwoo, p.6501).

After Han Hŭngsu’s successful transit to P’yŏngyang in 1948, four members of the Korean Independence group – Wellington Chung, Alice Hyun, Lee Samin and Sunwoo Hakwon – tried reaching P’yŏngyang via Czechoslovakia during 1949–1950. They were all naturalized US citizens who had the liberty to travel and got entry visas from the Czechoslovak embassy in the US. They left the US voluntarily to support the Korean cause, even before the political situation on the peninsula settled, at substantial risk to their lives. Indeed, the Korean War erupted within 1–2 years of their departure from the US. They all stayed in Czechoslovakia for an extended period of time and all integrated their layover into their political work for the benefit of the Korean independence movement. Their fates, however, differed. Wellington Chung studied and practiced medicine in Czechoslovakia, but faced hardships because of his political background, and eventually committed suicide. Alice Hyun and Lee Samin succeeded at arriving in P’yŏngyang in 1949, joined the government administration, but fell out of favor in the aftermath of the Korean War and were likely executed as US spies around 1956. Sunwoo Hakwon received his doctoral degree at Charles University in Prague, but then returned to the US.

35 US National Archives, RG242, Entry – Captured Korean Records, Box no. 8, Doc. 200710, 「李思民. 鮮于學源이 金日成. 朴憲永에게 보내는 편지」 (Nov. 15, 1948).
Lee Samin (Lee Kyŏngsŏn, Yi Sen Min. 1900–?) was an ordained minister of the Methodist church who came to the US on a mission in 1938. He became radicalized in the following years, and advocated military measures against Japanese invaders in China and Korea. He joined the Korean Independence News, and in 1945 served as an agent of the OSS in China (OSS, 1945). After World War II, he changed his name from Kyŏngsŏn to Samin, denoting a person who is concerned about other people, started presenting himself as a communist, and joined the CPUSA in Seattle. He became a naturalized US citizen on account of his military service. In 1949 he followed Wellington Chung and Alice Hyun on a journey through Czechoslovakia to P’yŏngyang where his family still lived and where his political utopia lay. In P’yŏngyang, he worked for the North Korean government during the years before 1952. Then, Lee Samin was arrested along with Alice Hyun, and they were tried for their alleged links with Western powers. North Korean indictment documents argued that Lee Samin and Alice Hyun entered Czechoslovakia pretending to be political emigrants. Pak Hŏnyŏng allegedly granted them North Korean entry visas by the order of the commander of USAFIK, secured them important government offices, and promoted their spying activities. Lee was singled out as a critical figure connecting Pak Hŏnyŏng and US intelligence agencies. Lee’s career as an OSS agent for the Korean independence movement was used as hard evidence about his involvement with the US intelligence agency and about his spying activities. He was presumably executed around 1955–56.

The other person, Sunwoo Hakwon (Harold Sunwoo. 1918–2015) was a renowned activist fighting for Korean independence and reunification. He was educated in mission schools and hoped to become a minister. He came to the US in 1938 and studied at the Bible Institute in Los Angeles, Pasadena Junior College, University of California –

36 Sunoo, Harold W., Korean Progressive Movement in America.
37 Mimořádná polit. informace o procesu se zrádcem Pak Chen Jenem [Special political report on the trial of traitor Pak Hŏnyŏng], P’yŏngyang, January 19, 1956, document number 141/1956, p.3, Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (AMFA), Folder 155/39.
38 Document number 09212/56-90/1, Subject: Kvak Čun Sun s manželkou – přijezd do ČSR [Arrival in Czechoslovakia], January 16, 1956, document number 08513/56, AMFA, Folder 155, documents 39, 112.
Berkeley, and University of Washington. He became radicalized and a communist sympathizer during the Sino-Japanese and Pacific Wars. During 1945, he served in the US Army Air Force in Phoenix, Arizona. For his service he was naturalized in December 1945. Sunwoo Hakwon then joined the US Communist Party in Seattle. As of January 1947, he was the Educational Director of the 32nd Section of the party (Kings County, Washington). He became a dedicated communist who gave seminars to criticize US involvement in South Korea, and who subscribed to CPUSA’s magazine *Political Affairs* and to the collected writings of Vladimir Lenin.

After the war, he joined the ranks of the *Korean Independence* news, and in 1949 traveled to Prague in his colleagues’ footsteps. He enrolled in the History program at Charles University, and successfully submitted his doctoral dissertation in May 1950. North Korea, however, declined to issue him a travel permit to P’yŏngyang, so he returned to the US voluntarily. He left Prague on May 22, 1950, and returned via Austria and Italy to the US just before the outbreak of the Korean War.

The FBI and CIA interviewed him several times during the Korean War. He also had to testify at theHUAC hearings in Seattle. He confessed that he had been a communist but claimed that he turned his back on communism after his experience in Czechoslovakia. He renounced his past activities and communist ideology. He was the only Korean-American testifying at theHUAC who received a favorable hearing from the congressmen. He survived the McCarthy witch hunts unscathed, and was allowed to lead a long and successful life. After returning to the US, he worked in the editorial office of the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

He continued as a public figure in the Korean-American society in California, joining the democratization and reunification movements after the 1960 fall of the Syngman Rhee government. By the 1980s he had become a leading figure in the movements. He led a long and successful career writing Political Science books and lecturing at universities. He visited North Korea many times and got a Prize for the Reunification of

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41. MI&AASCR, Schůze lektorů [Lecturer meetings], Folder 41, p.34, Zpráva o klasifikační poradě Školy orientálních jazyků 10.6.1950 [Report on a classification meeting of School of Oriental Languages lecturers, June 10, 1950]. Also: HUAC, “Testimony of Harold W. Sunoo.”
the Fatherland by the North Korean government. He passed away in 2015 and was buried in P’yŏngyang.

**Postscript**
Wellington Chung took his life shortly after his family arrived in Cheb, before his wife could find a job of her own or develop any sort of personal connections. After Wellington’s passing, Anna had nowhere to go, and no family who could help her cope with the misfortune. She returned to Karlovy Vary where she had old friends, and resumed work in the hospital laboratory. Her children were old enough so that Anna could leave them to take care of themselves, and went to work as the family’s sole bread winner. Anna and the children were traumatized, but returning to their familiar environment helped them deal with the tragedy better. Anna’s interaction with her ex-colleagues and the children’s games with their old friends helped to soothe their sorrows (Kunešová, 2013). Tabitha started going to kindergarten and later elementary school, and Jan finished his middle and high school. After high school, Jan decided that school was not for him, and enrolled in vocational school to become an auto mechanic.

![Wellington’s portrait photograph, ca.1955 (courtesy Eleanor Wheeler, 2013)](image)

Anna stayed in touch with Wellington’s relatives in California. She had received instruction in English language from Wellington, and started studying the language intensively now. Wellington’s grandparents regarded her and her children as family members and tried to help them. Finally in 1969 the grandparents managed to arrange an escape route for Anna and her children to the US. On March 25, 1969, the family left
Czechoslovakia for Klagenfurt, Austria, and from there they traveled to the US.\textsuperscript{42}

\textbf{Figure 3. Wellington’s Family, ca.1974 (courtesy Eleanor Wheeler, 2013)}
Photo taken by Eleanor Wheeler Sr. Note on the back states that Tabitha was 15 years old. Front: Anna, Tabitha, Jan, Mary Hyun. Back: David Hyun, George S. Wheeler.

In Los Angeles, Wellington Chung’s relatives took care of the family financially as well as socially. Anna was introduced to a family acquaintance, David C. Walden. Within three months, on July 24, 1969, they got married in Los Angeles. At that time Anna was 42 years old and David was 54. They moved together into a small suburban house by a water reservoir, north of Pasadena. Tragically for Anna, David died of a stroke several years later (Kunešová, 2013). Tabitha attended high school and California State University – Los Angeles, and became a public health nurse. Thus, Tabitha survived the tragedies afflicted on her parents and grandparents by political regimes of all persuasions, and finally realized the dreams of Alice and Wellington’s for a free and peaceful future.

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**US House of Representatives’ Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)**

“Testimony of Harold W. Sunoo,” *Investigation of Communist Activities in the Pacific Northwest Area – Part 7 (Seattle)*, Hearing Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, US House of Representatives,

**Interviews**

Bořík, Otakar, and Jana Boříková (2013). Email interview by V. Hlásny, Karlovy Vary, September 2, 2013.

Vladimír Hlásny is an associate professor of Economics at Ewha Womans University. He received his doctorate from Michigan State University. His main research areas are economic governance in labor markets and other industries, and economic inequalities around the world. In History, his interest lies in the Korean relations with Europe and the United States in the post World War II period.

Jung Byung-joon is a Professor of History at Ewha Womans University. He has published books on Korean political figures and modern Korean history, including Syngman Rhee, Lyuh Woon-hyung, the Korean War, Dokdo, and Alice Hyun. He earned awards including the Korean Publication Culture Award for Academic Book twice, and the Wolbong Book Award for Korean Studies.
This paper describes the development of Korea’s transport system from the first tram in the 19th century to a tram renaissance through new light-rail technology in the 21st century. It draws the development of Korean cities and its prosperity can be shown through major milestones in Korea’s transport development.

We will follow how transport supported Korea’s rapid economic growth and which issues had to be overcome to establish a convenient and efficient public transport system that is now being exported to emerging countries.

The structure of the paper is not completely chronological, and after the introduction, the general concept of transport development is explored, along with different modes of public transport in Korea.

**Concept of Transport Development**

Barter’s 2004 model of transport development sets a clear and simple framework that can be used as a narrative for Korea’s transport system. The model explains the development of transport from a low mobility city to a large city with high levels of mobility, with several possible paths. The concept sees walking as the dominating method to move through a city with little mobility. With growing population and economic activity, cities encounter an increase in mobility. Depending on policy-makers’ decisions, a city can follow a public transport-dominant trajectory or a private mobility pathway. An absence of public transport measures leads to uncontrolled motorization.

The following figure summarizes the concept:
Seoul in the 1970s is seen as a bus/paratransit city, and the current Seoul is alongside Hong Kong and Singapore labelled as a transit city by Barter (2004). It emphasizes the success of Seoul, keeping motorization levels relatively low and being able to build a strong public transport network.

**Korea’s History from the Transport Perspective**

1. **Trams**
   Prior to the first tram, walking and horse riding were the only methods of travel. Even bicycles had not been introduced before the late 19th century. The first bicycle is known to have been brought by the American Lieutenant Philip V. Lansdale and it caused a large stir of interest among the population, according to Neff (2007). King Gojong invited Lansdale for a demonstration of the two-wheeled vehicle.

   However, the tram was the first mode of public transport, arriving a just couple of years after the first bicycle. Thus, after one hundred years as a walking city, Seoul suddenly became a paratransit city at an early stage.
The first trams opened for operations in Jongno on May 17, 1899. It was a significant milestone for the Korean Empire, not only because it was the first type of public transport, but because it was a major stepping stone on the road to modernization.

The idea for the tram system in Seoul did not come locally, but from two American businessmen Henry Collbran and Harry Bostwick. Collbran and Bostwick convinced Emperor Gojong of the benefits such a tram system could bring to the city, and ended up embarking on a joint venture which became the Hanseong Jeongi Hoesa (Seoul Electric Company), today known as Korea’s largest electric utility KEPCO. While electricity had already been introduced to Seoul, infrastructure was scarce, and the duo were tasked with putting in street lighting for Seoul along with the tram.

The original tram system had eight 40 passenger trams plus one private vehicle for the emperor. It was the second tram service to open in Asia, the first being located in Kyoto, Japan. There was much excitement from the general public over the launch of the trams, with people coming from all over Korea just to ride it, some spending the entire day on it.

However, the jubilant atmosphere was marred by what is known as Korea’s first traffic accident, when a five year old was struck and killed by a tram. The tragedy was a massive shock to the public, who had never witnessed an accident from such a big vehicle, and as a result the crowd went into a frenzy. The child’s axe-wielding father reportedly went after the conductor, who managed to escape. The tram was set on fire by the mob and completely burnt out. It was the beginning of many mishaps on the road as people became accustomed to trams and later, motor vehicles.

In 1909, the electricity company, which had then changed its title to “American Korean Electric”, went into negotiations with the Japanese. Colbran sold the company to Japan without telling Emperor Gojong about the deal and fled to London, leaving the Emperor furious, but able to do nothing.

The trams had no separate stops like buses or trains, and passengers were required to jump on and off as they travelled. As time went on, the services continued to be successful and the number of rolling stock grew with passengers. In 1937, the city had 150 trams with an average of 150,000 passengers per day.
Tram routes were extensive and travelled to all major areas in Seoul at the time, including Seoul Station, Cheongnyangni, and across the Han River to Yeongdeungpo Station. Trams also spread to other cities around Korea, including Busan, which operated a system from 1915 to 1968, as well as Pyongyang from 1923 to 1950. Trams made a return to Pyongyang in 1991 and still run today alongside trolleybuses that have been in the city since 1962.

Following the war, trams continued to operate in Seoul despite infrastructure damage, and still had strong patronage in the 1960s, with 350,000 passengers and 197 services a day in 1966 (Joongang Ilbo, 1966). Despite this, there was little expansion of the tram network following the war. The rise of the motor vehicle had led to roads becoming extremely busy, and the infrastructure and vehicles had begun to age.

Trams officially went out of service in 1968, and from then until the first subway line opened in 1974, bus was the only public transport available in Seoul. A restored tram from the 1930s is permanently on display outside Seoul Museum of History.

2. Buses
Seoul continued to grow under Japanese occupation and buses were introduced. The city passed the 1 million population mark in 1942, but it wasn’t only Seoul’s population that was growing. Seoul’s city limits were
also expanding, but the tram network did not follow the expansion and other forms of public transport were needed.

According to official statistics in 1965, the bus replaced the tram as the major public transport mode. Over half of all trips (54.4%) in 1965 were made by bus.

![Public Transport in 1965](image)

During the economic boom, the “miracle on the Han River,” the bus was the only public transport method able to keep up with the dynamic development, because subways required a long planning and construction phase.

The first buses were not designed for comfort or a pleasant experience. Their purpose was to transport a large amount of people, and the most efficient way was to have standing passengers. The first buses didn’t have any seats and were created with the pure intention of transporting a large amount of people without any regard for convenience.

One main characteristic of the bus era was the female conductors. Every bus had a female conductor to collect fares, tell the driver when to stop and when to depart. In post-war Seoul, the strategy to employ female conductors was introduced in 1961. The job was fairly popular as it only required basic education, and besides a salary, female conductors received free board and lodging which was beneficial for women who came from other parts of Korea to Seoul. In 1965, there were around 17,160 female bus conductors employed. The profession of female conductors disappeared abruptly in the late 1980s due to modern technology.

Bus services became a big financial burden for Seoul, while other issues such as corrupt hiring practices and inefficient management were also present. The city decided to privatize buses in 1972, but it was a bad decision with bad timing.
The privatization of bus services in the 1970s was a mistake, as bus operators had the freedom to choose their routes which meant that they focused only on the most profitable areas. A large number of buses served major routes, competing to transport as many passengers as possible, and in this way still following an outdated approach. Most importantly, the buses often neglected elderly, young children and people with disabilities, as waiting for them to get on the bus was a disadvantage in the race to the next bus stop.

Besides the bus privatization, the 1970s can be also seen as the start of slow private motorization and the subway era. These two factors accelerated the rapid decrease of bus trips. In 1971, 74.2% of trips were made by bus in Seoul, but by 1995, the modal share of buses fell to 36.7%. A vicious circle began — low bus service quality pushed people to buy their own cars, which caused traffic jams and lowering the bus service quality even further.

Seoul tried to break the vicious circle in 1997, but improvement plans failed. It wasn’t until 2004 that Seoul was able to revolutionize public transport. A major milestone in Korea’s bus history is the Cheonggyecheon Restoration project, with the so-called public transport reform under Lee Myung-bak as the mayor of Seoul. The project removed an elevated urban freeway and restored the former stream as a new public space. The public transport reform was implemented in parallel and officially launched on July 1, 2004. It was introduced city-wide, as a previous trial in a small district failed due to the scale. It consists of the following elements: (1) semi-public bus management system, (2) bus only lanes, (3) bus classification and (4) transportation cards with an integrated fare system.

First, the city took again the control over bus operations, but it didn’t completely remove private stakeholders. While the city government decides the fares, subsidies, routes and bus frequencies, private companies still own and maintain the vehicles, provide the bus service, collect fares and pay the drivers.

Secondly, bus-only median lanes were introduced in various parts of the city. They are high occupancy vehicle lanes that allow vehicles that exceed a certain number of passengers to use them — the main advantage being an increased driving speed. Seoul previously had a few hundred kilometers of curb-side bus-only lanes, but as such a system causes many conflicts between buses and right-turning cars, such lanes don’t offer any speed advantages.

Thirdly, the buses were newly categorized and the four colors (blue, green, yellow and red) were introduced. The blue buses are trunk
buses which pass through large parts of the city, and green buses are feeder routes that usually connect to subway stations. Intercity buses are red, and yellow buses are loop routes which operate in a few neighborhoods. These are not the only bus types, but the main types that were introduced through the reform.

And lastly, probably the most important new feature for public transport users has been the integrated fare system. It allows the use of public transport with a single card, and transfers within a certain timeframe between different buses and subways. It is impossible to imagine Seoul’s public transport without this feature.

While it was officially called a public transportation reform, it can be rather described as a public bus reform. Best practices from other countries were investigated, and the median bus lanes and bus categorization structure was adapted from the Brazilian city Curitiba.

The results of the bus reform were an increase in bus service quality, proven through user surveys, and the downtrend of bus users was stopped. As mentioned earlier, buses escaped the gridlock of traffic jams and the operational speed of buses increased, too. Bus accidents decreased, even though there was initially an increase directly after the implementation. The transfer system also reduced transport costs for citizens.

3. Metro
While bus patronage was dropping before the reform, Seoul’s subway system was gradually being developed and becoming a preferred mode of transport for many. However, if we look at how Seoul’s subway originally came about, it took some time for construction plans to be acted upon.

Travelling around Seoul for commuters had became difficult after the tram system was abandoned in 1968. Plans to build four subway lines in Seoul had been considered even prior to trams being removed, but the government did not show much interest and was inevitably delayed. In the period from 1960 to 1970, census results show that Seoul’s population exploded from approximately 2.4 million to more than double that at 5.52 million, boosting the need for a transport solution even further. Progress had been notably slow until Mayor Yang Taek-sik became the 15th Mayor of Seoul in 1970. Yang was previously head of the Korea National Railroad, and knowing the importance of building a metro system, he got started on building it right away.

Construction on Seoul’s first underground subway — Line 1 between Seoul and Cheongnyangni — began in 1971 and was completed in August 1974. While the subway section had only five stations, it was
also the start of metro services to northern Seoul via the existing railway, ending at Seongbuk Station, now known as Kwangwoon University Station. Southern services also stretched to the Incheon and Suwon areas. It was hoped that this would disperse some of growing population from Seoul to neighboring cities, as well as reduce traffic congestion and pollution. There were several events planned for the opening of the subway, which had been scheduled to take place on the National Liberation Day of Korea, August 15. However, most plans were cancelled when the first lady at the time, Yuk Young-soo, was assassinated on the same day.

Rough plans for other subway lines to follow Line 1 had been drawn up, but changed multiple times over the years. When Yang stood down the same month after opening Line 1, new mayor Ku Ja-chun took the lead on the next project, Line 2. Plans had already been through multiple revisions, including changing the line to a loop. It’s been documented by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (2013) that Mayor Gu drew the route himself in about 20 minutes with a coloured pencil on a map. Somewhat amazingly, the line was built from this rough plan into Line 2 as we know it today, with very few changes.

Although Line 2 was planned as a loop, it was built in stages and opened gradually over four years from 1980 to 1984. The first section of track was from Seongsu to Sinseol-dong, which operates today as a secondary service off the main line. Construction began from Sinseol-dong, not only because it was a transfer point, but also because rolling stock was able to be transported directly onto the new line via a connection to Line 1. A section from Seongsu to Sports Complex was also built at the same time, and both sections opened on October 31, 1980.

Remaining sections were completed and opened over the following years, with the final 19.8km section from Seoul National University to Euljiro-1-ga opening on May 22, 1984. For 28 years Line 2 was the world’s longest metro loop at 60km, until it was surpassed by Beijing’s Line 10 in 2012. Today it’s the most used subway line in the country, transporting over two million people a day, and making up over 30% of all subway use in Seoul (Seoul, 2014).

Seoul Metro was established in August 1981 when it became responsible for operating Lines 1 and 2, as well as picking up the construction and future operations for the remaining two lines. Lines 3 and 4 were built and both opened on the same date in October 1985. The next stage for the development of Seoul’s metro system was building lines 5 to 8, which was transferred to new public corporation Seoul
Metropolitan Rapid Transit in 1994. The first construction began on Line 5 in 1990 and all four lines were open by August 2000.

Seoul’s metro system has continued to grow over the past two decades, with many new lines and extensions providing an efficient means of transport to cities and towns all across the Seoul Capital Area. It is also important to note that other major cities around Korea also built their own metro systems, starting with Busan in the 1980s and followed by Daegu, Incheon, Gwangju and Daejeon. For all these cities, metro systems play a huge role in how people commute and travel.

For Seoul, the metro system is a vital lifeline and the highest used mode of transport. It boasted a modal share of 37.1% in 2014, with buses and cars at 28% and 23.5% respectively (Seoul, 2014). Even delays of ten minutes make news headlines as crowds waiting for services often amass very quickly, even during normal operations. Seoul’s metro is a very large system by international standards and is sixth longest in the world, with 331.9km of track — soon to surpass Moscow at fifth place.

While metro systems are often referred to as subways, not all lines are underground or standard rail, and over recent years we’ve begun to see the addition of various light rail lines all over Korea.

4. Light rail
What made large agglomerations in Korea special was the equal mix of bus and subway lines. The public transport reform was basically a large bus improvement package and it emphasized the importance of bus services in the capital. However, the tide changed in 2011 as Mayor Park Won-soon introduced plans to build ten new subway lines in Seoul. This indicated that the current subway-bus system was not sufficient enough and that the city is moving towards a higher ratio of rail-based transport.

Seoul is not the only city increasing the modal share for rail, with new lines opening in different parts of the country almost every year. However, there has been a much stronger preference to build light rail over traditional standard gauge systems in the past decade. Since 2011, seven new light rail lines have opened across Korea, more than the number of standard gauge lines that have opened over that time. While many of these new lines have been successful, light rail originally got off to a shaky start with projects marred by accidents and delays.

The first form of light rail scheduled to open for use as public transport was the Incheon Wolmido Eunha (Galaxy) Monorail. The plan was to build a loop track around the Wolmido area and it was hoped that the new system would revitalize this tourism focused area which had become dated and dropped in popularity. Although the monorail was
completed in 2009 and scheduled to go into service later that year, the opening of the line was repeatedly postponed, and operations came to a full stop after a wheel came off during trial operations and injured a woman who was passing below.

The incident resulted in a full investigation which revealed multiple flaws. Despite efforts to repair the line and get it up and running, the Eunha Rail was doomed to never open, and trains were finally removed from the track in 2016. However, the track itself was not dismantled, and a tourism venture plans to use the infrastructure to operate smaller vehicles on guided rails.

The next light rail line that was supposed to open after that was the Everline in Yongin, but this project also sat dormant over the city for three years after construction was finished. This was due to a number of issues between Yongin City and the line’s operator YongIn Everline, including a spat over the minimum revenue guarantee (MRG) for the project. The line finally opened in 2013, forfeiting the title of Korea’s first light rail line.

Busan, on the other hand, opened two light rail lines in 2011 — Busan’s Line 4 was opened in March 2011, while the Busan–Gimhae Light Rail Transit (BGL) was opened in September 2011. Since then, other light rail lines have opened in Uijeongbu (2012), Suncheon (2014), Daegu (2015), and Incheon (2016). Seoul is currently preparing to open its first light rail line in the north of the city September 2017.

However, not all of these systems are the same. The definition of light rail can be debatable, and for the purposes of this essay, several different modes of transport come under this term. Light rail can be at street level, raised or underground; Incheon’s line 2 is an example of both underground and aboveground. Certain types of light rail, like trams, share roads with other traffic, while others have their own dedicated track.

Automatic Guideway transit is the most common type of light rail system, and Korea has several rubber and steel-wheeled AGT systems such as the U Line (Uijeongbu) and the Everline (Yongin). Daegu’s third rail line is Korea’s first monorail used for public transport, and Suncheon has a PRT (personal rapid transit) system at its famous wetlands location. While not technically light rail, another new type of train system operating is Incheon International Airport’s urban maglev line, which is the world’s fourth commercially operating maglev system.

It is clear that Korea is not shying away from trying new technology and transport methods to help the public travel more efficiently. Moreover, all of Korea’s light rail lines are automated, with no driver operating the vehicles. This type of automated signal system isn’t
limited to light rail, and standard gauge rail lines such as the Sinbundang Line are also automated. Korea currently has the second highest number of automated metro lines in the world, and its transport operators plan to continue implementing the technology on new and current lines.

**Conclusion**

Korea’s transport system has been through many changes over the past century, but has ultimately been successful in implementing efficient modes of transport throughout the country. While public transport improvements were previously often Seoul-focused, now many of Korea’s cities are active in trying to develop transport infrastructure through new rail lines, bus systems and technologies.

Most interestingly, many cities are now looking to implement trams again, almost 50 years after they were scrapped. Seongnam, Daejeon, Incheon and Suwon have all expressed interest in operating trams, with the first line expected to open in the tech-hub of Pangyo. Many citizens may find the return of the transport mode surprising, and the announcement of Daejeon’s Line 2 as a tram line has indeed received a mixed response.

While Korea's, and especially Seoul’s public transport is now emulated by many other cities around the world, there is still much room for improvement. Local governments are trying to encourage less use of private motor vehicles, not only to relieve congestion, but also to reduce carbon emissions — something desperately needed in a city like Seoul.

Nevertheless, as transportation infrastructure comes full circle with the reintroduction of the tram, we can look forward to a promising new future for Korea’s public transportation. New technologies and environmentally-friendly measures will be key in developing a better transport ecosystem for everyone.

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A most striking image can be found on an old postcard of downtown Busan. Dating to the 1930s-1940s, the scene consists of locals on the sidewalk, a trolley car in the main street, and, most interestingly, a strip of Streamline Moderne influenced buildings. Centered on the similarly styled Minakai Department Store, the photo is representative of one of the many less talked about aspects of architectural history in Korea. (Figure 1)
Art Deco arrived in Korea at roughly the same time as the rest of the modernizing world. The term Art Deco is often used very broadly to describe a group of specific styles between the 1910s and 1940s. This is largely due to temporal and stylistic overlap between designs, as well as the fact that the term “Art Deco” was only applied decades after it first occurred. Indeed, the term Art Deco was never used during the time that it originally existed in, but rather it was simply called the “modern” style in various languages. When we consider that the Beaux Arts, Art Nouveau, Expressionism, Style Moderne, Bauhaus, Secessionism, and Streamline Moderne are all connected to each other and to what we now call the greater Art Deco style, it is easy to see why some would resort to using a broad term. We have a similar issue in the Korean language, where all architecture from the 1900s to 1945 is commonly conflated under the general term geundae geonchuk (근대건축), meaning nuances of early modern styles are often lost rather than fully explored. Yet it is important that these sub-styles are identified and discussed as they are the products of global trends that reveal another aspect of early modern Korea.

To understand how architecture was changing in 1920s Korea, the time at which Art Deco began to take off as an international phenomenon, we must step back and take a global view, exploring what had been happening in the West and in Japan.

Art Nouveau had been employed throughout various Western nations roughly between 1890 and 1910. Though examples of this exist in Japan, and even within Korea, it was the more traditional forms of late 1800s European and American architecture (think Victorian-Gothic clapboard, Renaissance Revival, and Beaux Arts buildings) that were trending on both the Japanese archipelago and the Korean peninsula into the 1910s. In France, Style Moderne, which would later fall under the general term Art Deco, was being developed in the 1910s and 1920s. What we could call true Art Deco then hit its stride in the 1920s before evolving into Streamline Moderne in the 1930s and 1940s.

During all of this time, Beaux Arts, a Neo-classical influenced style commonly featured in government buildings, continued to be used here and there throughout the 19th and 20th centuries in Asia and the rest of the world. It’s important to note that Secessionism, Expressionism, and
Bauhaus architecture, which connected to Art Deco in different ways, also found global use during Korea’s early modern period. For the purposes of this article, “Art Deco” will specifically refer to the ornate style used in the 1920s. The term “Art Styles”, as opposed to “Art Deco” as a broad term, will be used as a blanket term to refer to all of the aforementioned modern styles.

Korea’s Art Deco influence then came at a time when it had already been annexed by Japan. Japan’s rise to the world stage allowed for it to participate in some of the most significant international art and design exhibitions. Though it only showed the more classical forms of Japanese architecture, the imperial nation had a presence in both the 1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes and the Chicago Century of Progress World’s Fair of 1933 (the 1893 exposition in Chicago did have a relatively small Korean pavilion). These two expositions, which defined Art Deco and Streamline Moderne, respectively, had just as much of an impact on Japanese architects as they did on Western designers. For example, Kazue Yakushiji, a Japanese military-trained architect, attended the 1925 exposition in Paris himself and is credited as an early introducer of Art Deco into Japan given two residences he designed in 1926 and 1928. While other architectural styles were also popular, Art Deco flourished in mainland Japanese urban centers.

Yet even before the 1925 exposition was held in Paris, Japanese architects were experimenting with designs that we would now call Art Deco. For example, the recently demolished 1917 Mitsukan Co. building in Tokoname, which blurred the lines between what is currently considered Art Nouveau and Art Deco, was arguably an even earlier introduction. In Okazaki, a 1917 Chamber of Commerce building similarly shows French Style Moderne influence. Then, in 1923, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Imperial Hotel in Tokyo was completed as an example of a vein of Art Deco that called for the “ethnic” influence of Mayan design.\(^2\)

\(^2\) Within the Art Deco style, there were even more sub-styles that focused on “ethnic” patterns and geometry found in Ancient Egyptian, Roman, Pre-Columbian (Mayan), and Classical Asian architecture, allowing for themed buildings in some cases.
which left an interesting mark on modern architecture design in Japan. Japanese architectural journals circulated during this period as well, showing both local and international examples of new buildings. Thus, Japanese architects were well aware of international trends and buildings making use of the Art Styles were constructed throughout the archipelago during the early modern period.

It is difficult to predict what direction architecture trends and urban development would have taken under a different government, but it is accurate to say that Korea’s Art Deco architecture was a product of colonization. The Art Styles, for better or for worse, were then employed frequently as early modern Korea developed. While relatively many such buildings still exist in Japan, it may come as no surprise to anyone that very little of Korea’s Art Deco architecture remains today. Some are of the opinion that the movement more or less skipped the peninsula altogether. The elaborate motifs found in 1920s Art Deco architecture were, in fact, uncommon in Korea. However, once Streamline Moderne hit its stride in the 1930s, the style was actually employed relatively often.

One of the likely reasons for this is that Streamline Moderne is simpler in design than the first wave of Art Deco that occurred in the 1920s. Streamline Moderne, at least partially an effect of the Great Depression, shied away from what became considered excessive ornamentation in the previous decade and focused on clean, simple horizontal lines. Drawing from the precision found in machines and machine made products, Streamline Moderne architecture frequently incorporated the curves and rounded features of nautical and aeronautical designs. With less ornamentation, it was a generally less expensive style to build in.

Buildings in Korea still made use of other styles, but Streamline Moderne made it more possible to construct buildings with an Art Deco flavor because of the lower cost. Therefore, Streamline Moderne became a more economical, yet still trendy, way of bringing modern architectural aesthetics, as opposed to the expensive, decorative first wave of Art Deco, to colonial Korea. The Streamline Moderne buildings found in Korea were often even more stripped down than their counterparts in Japan and the West, so much so that it may be easy for the casual viewer to miss the
Art Deco influence. With regard to government buildings, it is evident that Japan was spending more on its mainland than its colonies. This is not say that Japan wasn't investing quite a bit abroad. The Japanese government was spending large sums of money on developing infrastructure, among other things, in Korea and Taiwan. However, relative to the Japanese archipelago, it is plain to see that the government and commercial buildings in colonial Korea had less funding.

It is also important to note that, in the same way that early modern buildings in Korea are blanket labeled as geundae geonchuk (근대 건축), some buildings are broadly misclassified as being only Renaissance styled. This may largely be a result of, for example, the decorative string courses and other embellishments that blur the lines between Renaissance Revivalism and Art Nouveau or the Beaux Arts, which influenced Art Deco.

While it's true many Japanese-built early modern buildings were rather eclectic mixes of various styles - and that some were in between the designs of Old World Europe and international modern styles - many buildings arguably exhibit designs specifically more in line with one style or another. Rather than fully exploring the structures’ architectural elements, many Art Deco influenced buildings in Korea have simply been labeled as Neo-renaissance, Modern, or something in between the two.

**Art Deco Architecture in the Public Space**

One of the more obvious, yet often overlooked, examples of Art Deco influence can be found in the middle of downtown Seoul. The City Hall, despite sometimes being classified as a transitional Renaissance-Modern structure, exhibits elements specifically in line with Art Deco. (Figure 2) Built in 1926, its turret and walls can vaguely look like a European Renaissance Revival government building at a glance. In actuality, it is the quintessential Art Deco government building.

The turret arguably displays Egyptian obelisk design that was somewhat popular globally in Art Deco (Figure 3) while the exterior walls have dramatic, yet simple vertical lines with subtle setbacks that create a shape akin to a locomotive engine or the wide hull of an early modern steamship. (Figure 4) This machine-like frame is difficult to unsee once...
recognized. On close examination of the clock, relief brings out the horizontal lines and helps carry on the setback theme found in the main walls. The turret’s column work is one of the few parts that is of Renaissance or Beaux Arts influence, with the majority of the structure drawing from Art Deco.

Interestingly, a similar design was implemented in the turret of the National Diet Building in Tokyo, which was under construction when Seoul City Hall was completed. The design choice is a socially important one. By using the new Art Deco style, rather than appealing to an Old World European design, Seoul City Hall would have been a declaration to all that Keijo was not a backwater little town, but a growing modern metropolis. One could easily imagine it blending into a major American cityscape from the same time.

Figure 2. Seoul City Hall (서울시청)

Seoul City Hall was just one of the many government, commercial, and school buildings to use Art Deco. The exterior of the South Manchurian Railway Headquarters was entirely Streamline Moderne, as was the Yeosu District Office and Suin Station in Incheon. Even the Government-General building had a subtle mix of Mediterranean (Roman/Egyptian) and Mayan Deco ornamentation in its columns and spire. The old Dong-A Ilbo building in Seoul features similar geometric
designs found in Pre-Columbian influenced Art Deco architecture and is a reserved mix of the Art Styles.

Figure 3. Seoul City Hall.

In contrast, the current Seoul Metropolitan Council building, which today almost looks modern enough to be a 1960s-1970s
industrialization era structure, was done in a style influenced by Bauhaus - a style which both stood in opposition and contributed to Art Deco’s later cousin, Streamline Moderne. Built in 1935, it is a blocky departure from the rounded edges of Streamline Moderne, yet one could argue that its mixture of horizontal and vertical lines makes it a blend of Bauhaus and Streamline Moderne sans the slick, blownback look. (Figure 5) Similarly, some of the 1940s buildings from the former Keijo Imperial University that have since been renovated beyond recognition still retained their Bauhaus, Streamline Moderne, and Fascist influence until recently.

Figure 5. Current Seoul Metropolitan Council Building (서울특별시의회).

The now demolished Bizenya Hotel (unpictured), which dated to the early 1930s, was another very clear example of Streamline Moderne that featured all the hallmarks of the style: nautical lines, rounded walls, and circular windows.

Myeongdong Theater, built in 1936, is another example of a somewhat misclassified building. (Figure 6) Sometimes called Art Nouveau, the facade does indeed contain ornamentation influenced by Nouveau or the Beaux Arts. Yet the rounded corner entrance and
blownback, aerodynamic lines exhibit the bullet train and ocean liner influence of the time, showing Streamline Moderne influence rather than only Nouveau. The regal, flowery exterior is surely an appeal to the grand theaters of old Europe since, by 1936, Art Nouveau as a global trend had already passed. Tokyo had similar mixed theater buildings that incorporated ornate old world designs.

Dating to the early 1930s, the Ilseon Shipping Office in present day Incheon is a reserved example of Art Deco that seems to be more influenced by European Art Deco rather than American. (Figure 7) With the exception of the decorative entry, the building has a rather clean, unornamented design indicative of Streamline Moderne influence, yet is not slicked back in the American style. The Seoul Central Meteorological Observatory is another European Art Deco influenced building that displays a similar simplicity.

Figure 6. Myeongdong Theater (옛명동국립극장).
Art Deco Architecture in Korea

Figure 7. Former Ilseon (일선) Shipping Office.

Figure 8. The Busan Meteorological Observatory (부산기상관측소).
The old Busan Meteorological Observatory on Byeokbongsan near the former Japanese concession is a clear example of a nautically themed Streamline Moderne building. (Figure 8) Built in 1934, it was an incredibly modern structure at the time. Centered on a rounded corner entry that mimics the hull of an ocean liner, its vertical-horizontal lines, porthole windows, and tile work are all the very definition of 1930s modernity. Though it's been called a Renaissance structure, it is anything but. The stylistic origins of the ornamented crown molding is perhaps a little ambiguous, but the shape of the building is entirely Streamline.

Art Deco porthole architecture can also be found in the staircase of the former Namseon Electric Office (1932). The building exterior is a rather ambiguous blend of early modern styles perhaps leaning towards Beaux Arts, but its curvy stone porthole staircase is undeniably influenced by Art Deco. (Figure 9) The old Sohwa Building (1932) in nearby Nampo-dong is another example of a basic, stripped down Streamline Moderne or Bauhaus building that had few curves or decorations even in its original condition. It is almost unrecognisable in its current state. (Figure 10)
The old Provincial Daegu Hospital (1928) is another remaining Art Deco building that contains a square turret similar to Seoul City Hall. (Figure 11) Its mostly intact foyer is also of the same Deco style. In a departure from most of the other buildings mentioned so far, the former Daegu Medical College (1933) just across the street contains Expressionist influence. (Figure 12) This is even more obvious in the single-story annex building next to it. The Daegu Medical College made use of imported Chinese bricks, and all three of these buildings are good examples of red brick Art Deco despite it not being so common in Western countries.
One building that stood publicly unknown and unidentified until recently is the former Miryang Brewer's Guild. (Figure 13) Dating to 1936, it was used by the Gimhae Tax Office from 1950 to 1985, after which it was converted into a cafeteria space. The structure is a mix of Streamline Moderne and Expressionism, showing similar lines to the former Daegu Medical College. It is scheduled for demolition later this year.
The former Yamaguchi Porcelain Company building in Daegu, which likely dates to 1929-1930, was a rather extravagant building in its original state. Little of the original form remains, yet one exterior section down an alley shows the elaborate, curvy Art Deco walls that previously wrapped around the building’s facade. (Figure 14)
Art Deco influenced corner building architecture can be found in Gunsan and Mokpo. The former Gunsan Branch of the Joseon Food Corporation, built in 1943, is a model Streamline Moderne building. (Figure 15) Displaying traits more in line with American architecture than European, its lines are reminiscent of the gas stations and diners of 1940s America. Similarly, a former franchise branch store in Mokpo which sold for Hwasin Department Store displays Streamline Moderne characteristics as well. (Figure 16) Built in 1931, when compared with the former Joseon Food Corporation building, we can see the global evolution of Art Deco into Streamline Moderne even in isolated, colonial Korea. The 1931 store building looks like a first wave Streamline Moderne building while the 1943 building interestingly shows American influence despite Japan being engaged in WWII at the time.

Figure 15. The former Gunsan Branch of the Joseon Food Corporation (구 조선식량영단 군산출장소).
Perhaps the best remaining example of ornate first wave 1920s Art Deco is the Central Temple of Cheondogyo in Seoul. (Figure 17) Built in 1921, it's been called a Secessionist building, yet it is important to understand that Secession design was purposely undefinable because it lacked style rules.
Secessionist artists and architects were part of a movement more than a particular style. As such, despite the temple's Secession influence, it may be better to describe it in the way that it appears - as that of an Art Deco styled building. The dramatic vertical lines, the staggered geometric edges around the central tower windows, the repeating circular windows, and rounded corners arguably contribute to it being more of an Art Deco building.

The former Yongsan Railway Hospital then sits as the kind of barebones Art Deco building commonly found in post-1920 commercial corner businesses and lesser government buildings. It vaguely follows the horizontal and curved lines of Art Deco. While it’s true that, throughout the Japanese empire, red brick was going out of style by the 1920s in favor of reinforced concrete structures with tile facades, red brick was still quite common in Korea into the 1930s. This was especially true of school architecture, where Art Deco was commonly used, albeit in simple ways. (Figure 18)

Figure 18. Former Yongsan Railway Hospital (용산철도병원 본관).
Art Deco in School Architecture

One reason for the widespread use of red brick in school architecture may have been cost. Reinforced concrete, despite being used in Japan during the 1920s and 1930s, may have been relatively expensive in the “frontiers” of Korea and Manchuria. Alternatively, it’s possible there was a lack of experienced concrete workers and that red brick was easy to source. One good example of brick Art Deco architecture is the Chonnam Girls’ School in Gwangju. (Figure 19) Centering on its multi-level entry, it features Art Deco ornamentation on the facade. It may be fair to say that without this ornamentation and the lines provided by the central tower, the school would be an otherwise unremarkable and non-Art Deco structure. This is arguably true of most red brick Art Deco school buildings mentioned here.

The main building of Seoseok Elementary School (1935) blends Expressionism and blocky Streamline Moderne (Figure 20) while its gymnasium (1930) shows subtle Wrightian influence akin to the Jiyu Gakuen Girls' School in Tokyo or Yoshiya Tanoue’s 1927 Oguma house in Sapporo. (Figure 21)
Art Deco Architecture in Korea

Figure 20. Seoseok Elementary School main building (서석초등학교).

Figure 21. Seoseok Elementary School Gymnasium (서석초등학교).
The former Jinju Public Primary School (1938), despite being built well into the 1930s, displays older 1920s Art Deco influence in its facade, perhaps drawing from the geometry of Pre-Columbian designs. (Figure 22)
The former Gyeonggi Commercial High School, whose main building and gym date to 1923, is another good example of brick Art Deco architecture. (Figure 23)

Figure 23. Former Gyeonggi Commercial High School main building (경기상업고등학교).

Figure 24. Former Gyeongnam Commercial High School (부경고등학교).
We can also see Art Deco design in the main building of the former Gyeongnam Commercial High School in Busan (1927). (Figure 24) A recurring hammer or paddle-like motif is used throughout the facade.

**Art Deco in the Home and Why It Was So Rare**

Despite widespread Art Deco influence in urban Korea, it is important to note that the Art Styles generally appeared in government, commercial, and school building designs. One of the reasons Art Deco may not have been widely implemented in home design in both Korea and Japan is that there were other competing design ideas being discussed. These ideas about what a modern home should look like were still being negotiated on the Japanese archipelago, some of which centered around bunka jutaku, or culture house, design.

Bunka jutaku is perhaps defined by the Japanese catalogues and newspapers that both presented and discussed the designs that best suited the “cultured” lifestyles of the middle-upper class Japanese. As this group became increasingly interested in a life that represented a cultured, international character, so their homes became reflections of this desire and mediums through which their modernity could be expressed. Early modern bunka jutaku (not to be confused with mid-century bunka jutaku, which use the same term) were often pastiche, stylized versions of Western homes. Examples of this can be seen in the catalogue known as *Japanized Small Western Houses*, launched in 1924, which contained plans for various Western home designs that evoked the high-class lifestyle of American, Swiss, German, and French country estates.³

Evidence of bunka jutaku is still present in Korea and is perhaps epitomized by the former house of the wealthy landowner, Kumamoto Rihei. (Figure 25) Dating to the 1920s, at the height of the bunka jutaku craze, it was constructed outside of Gunsan as a holiday house in the form of a Swiss chalet. With a few exceptions, like the home’s Korean room that has since been renovated and no longer remains as it did, the exterior and interior design is stylistically identical to the remaining bunka jutaku

homes in Japan. The building is remembered as the Yi Yeongchun House after the Korean doctor and caretaker that took up residence here in 1935.

Figure 25. The former Kumamoto house, aka Yi Yeongchun house (이영춘가옥).

Figure 26. Former financial co-op president’s home in Cheongju (우리예능원).

It is then important to understand and view even the smallest Japanese-built Western styled houses in Korea and Japan as not mere
copies of things abroad, but as the products of an entire cultural wave that occurred during a time of changing social ideas. For example, the 1924 home of a financial co-op president in Cheongju, despite being rather insignificant in the grand scheme of things, is a perfect representation of how culture houses were desired even out on Japan’s colonial frontier. (Figure 26)

The influence of bunka jutaku can be seen in more traditional forms of wooden Meiji style homes that were built in Korea. This influence can be found in the added Western styled studies or drawing room-like spaces that were used to receive guests. Though relatively common for businessmen to have in their homes, few remain in Korea today, let alone many pure examples of bunka jutaku like the aforementioned Kumamoto house. The former Sunagawa House, which dates to 1941, and the former Tamada House, built in 1943, are both good examples in Busan that show a Western styled reception room or office attached to an otherwise Meiji styled wooden home.(Figures 27 and 28)

Figure 27. Former Sunagawa house in Busan.

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4 The former Sunagawa House has been in private hands since liberation and is supposedly being turned into a cafe.
5 The former Tamada House had various uses over the years and is currently being used as a cafe and public space.
Art Deco Architecture in Korea

Figure 28. Former Tamada house in Busan, whose Western reception room is concealed by a tree on the right side of the image (문화공감 수정).

Just as the definition of a modern home was being made in Japanese circles, ideas about modern Korean home life were also being publicly discussed by figures like architect Park Gil-ryong. The hanok did evolve during the early modern period, being adapted for city life and snapped to a grid in city block form. These urban hanok featured materials like Western red brick and glass windows - things that were typically absent from Joseon styled architecture - yet we never specifically see Art Deco influence in such buildings.

Some elite Koreans did make use of Western-styled homes that may have come more from Japanese bunka jutaku ideas than actual Western sources. For example, the small remaining villa that sat on Yun Deok-young’s massive Byeoksu Sanjang estate to the west of Gyeongbokgung is built in a Western style that comes from Japanese influence (Figure 29). The glazed fireplace tiles are Taizan-esque, suggesting Japanese workmanship (Figure 30). Additionally, Westerners living in Korea seemingly never made use of European countryside styled

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6 Taizan was a Japanese ceramics company that created tiles for buildings in the Kansai region of Japan. Their more interesting and desirable tiles were glazed and rich in color.
villas such as this one. There were traditional Victorians, Neo-gothics, Queen Annes, American bungalows, and Midwesterns in the early 1900s, but the annexation of Korea by Japan limited what Westerners could do there later on. Thus, it seems Westerners didn't take part in building homes that followed bunka jutaku designs or any of the Art Styles.

Figure 29. The remaining villa from the former estate of Yun Deok-young (옥인동 박노수 가옥).

Figure 30. The interior fireplace from Figure 29.
While the adoption of bunka jutaku can be seen by both Japanese and Korean elites, there seems to be no evidence of a Korean ever specifically making use of Art Deco in a modern building, with one exception. Korean architect Park Gil-ryong is credited with working on the slightly Art Deco influenced Keijo Imperial University administration building, but it is not a Joseon influenced structure. (Figure 31) It's also unclear how much say Park had in the final building design.

Figure 31. Former Keijo Imperial University Administration Building (예술가의집).

Aside from Park’s work on Keijo Imperial University, there is no clear evidence of a Korean architect ever using Art Deco in a modern building, let alone in a Joseon (giwajip) styled building. It then becomes very easy to say that Art Deco was never a part of Korean culture in the traditional sense, and that the style was entirely brought over by the Japanese. However, there are some curious Art Deco elements found in Changdeokgung. Two structures known as Huijeongdang and Daejojeon, which were moved to Changdeokgung from Gyeongbokgung in 1920, functioned as living quarters for the Korean royal family after the Japanese annexation of Korea. Both structures were rather unique due to mixed architectural influence. For example, the exterior of Huijeongdang is mostly Korean in design (aside from the carport), with its interior done
in a Victorian-esque mixed European style. There is then a curious series of flowery, wrought iron roof supports installed along its exterior wall that, when imagined separately from the rest of the Korean structure, begins to look very Art Nouveau or French Style Moderne. (Figure 32)

Figure 32. Nouveau-Moderne metalwork on the rear exterior of Daejojeon (대조전), though more can be found on Huijeongdang (희정당).

This same metalwork can be found on the rear exterior of Daejojeon, which otherwise contains Chinese and Korean architectural design. The fact that a full kitchen and bathroom featuring French Style
Moderne influence was installed in the neighboring Daejojeon building helps to further support the idea that the exterior metalwork is also some early vein of the Art Deco style. (Figures 33-35)

It is important to note that the movement of these two buildings from Gyeongbokgung to Changdeokgung neatly lines up with the time at which Style Moderne was growing in France and roughly when Art Deco began to take off as an international style in the 1920s. As a side note, the nearby greenhouse that was built thirteen years before Huijeongdang by a French company in a Beaux Arts or Nouveau style perhaps compliments the metalwork found on Daejojeon and Huijeongdang. In light of these points, it appears that some part of Art Deco did touch traditional Korean (Joseon styled) architecture, however briefly.
Figure 34. An interior photo taken through the window.

Figure 35. The French Style Moderne bathroom.
While cost wouldn't have been much of an issue for the royal family, it would have been for commoners. Another reason for the lack of Art Deco homes is how enormously expensive the style was relative to simple clapboard buildings and chogajip homes. Both the ornate, first wave design of Art Deco and the later Streamline Moderne style may have been too expensive for some of the financially well-off, let alone the average Korean or Japanese. Additionally, the specialized workmanship that Art Deco called for may have been difficult to come by.

Even with enough money and resources, there was the issue of the design being mismatched with traditional Korean and Japanese lifestyles. A true Art Deco interior would be, perhaps by default, a Western interior. Since even bunka jutaku did not always implement Western interior design, we can see that total acceptance of Western home life by Japanese or Koreans was uncommon, offering another explanation for Art Deco not being widely used.

Yet we might be able to see the influence of Art Deco at home in small ways. For example, the circular Japanese marumado window is incredibly similar to the Art Deco porthole window. When viewed in isolation, even pre-Art Deco traditional Japanese buildings (Edo to Meiji era architecture) featured these circular windows that, in retrospect, can appear to be Art Deco. It's probably true that most marumado in buildings from the 1920s to 1940s are simply following earlier Japanese designs, and any similarities between these and Art Deco designs are coincidental. But when glass marumado are found on occasion, there is an argument to be made for them being modernized, Art Deco-ized versions of the traditional marumado. The pink house in Jagalchi market is one such example that, if nothing else, begs the question of which style its architect intended the circular window to be derived from. (Figure 36) The similar geometric designs sometimes found in traditional Japanese and Art Deco buildings are another string of interesting coincidences. (Figure 37) At the very least, these architectural elements are evidence of how harmoniously Art Deco and traditional Japanese design could blend together due to their similarities.
The only true Art Deco homes remaining on the Korean peninsula, and possibly some of the only ones ever built, were constructed in Daejeon in the 1930s. Designed as a village for Japanese government officials, the largest and most impressive home was for the provincial governor. The former Chungcheongnamdo Provincial Governor’s house was constructed...
in 1932 with what appear to be red clinker bricks (overly heated bricks) following distinctly Streamline Moderne horizontal lines. (Figure 38)

Interior renovations to the structure have left most of the rooms in a 1980s-1990s Korean style, and the current rear balcony overhang was not included in the original blueprints, yet the exterior and select areas are still intact. Inside the entry and stairwell, there are lines and geometric stained glass that are the very definition of both Art Deco and Streamline Moderne interior design. (Figure 39)
However, even this home did not completely follow the style when it was first built. It still featured traditional Japanese tatami rooms and incorporated the Korean ondol heating system. Between the second floor landing of the Deco stairwell and the second floor tatami room, the stylistic ambiguity of the interior circular window is the perfect example of how the Art Deco porthole and the Japanese marumado can seamlessly blend together. (Figures 40 and 41) When climbing the stairs, a larger circular window containing geometric lines in the stairwell makes quite an impression.

Figure 40. The landing of the second floor in the stairwell shows a circular window peering into a tatami room.

Figure 41. The interior of the tatami room, whose circular window looks out to the stairwell.
Regarding the brickwork, which follows an English bond of alternating headers and stretchers, the use of clinker bricks is rather curious as this material likely would not have been the first choice of an architect wishing to pursue pure Art Deco design. Perhaps a result of the eclecticism that some Japanese architects were prone to using during this time, these clinker bricks might come across as odd to the Art Deco idealist. The design choice may have been a result of the resources available, but the Streamline Moderne lines on the exterior could have easily been better emphasized by simply cementing over the bricks. Then again, given the vast number of popular, competing architectural styles over the course of Korea’s colonial period, the mix of styles was likely a calculated design choice.

A parquet brick design can be found on the rear terrace and in the front entry. The string courses are covered in vertically laid tiles that imitate red brick. Since these tiles are generally located near windows, they may have been a renovation that was a result of newer metal framed windows being put in at some point. Vertically placed original clinker bricks can be found around the main entry and in the other six homes down the street.

These other six homes are less elaborate, but feature circular bay windows and horizontal lines in the same style as the former governor’s house. Post-liberation, newer sections were added to some of these buildings, and glimpses into their interiors seem to show that they have significantly changed. The original blueprints show seven houses, including the governor’s, but four vacant lots indicate that the designers planned for more homes to be built in the future. (Figure 42) Drainage moats surround the homes, allowing water to run downhill from the properties. The four homes on the western side follow one identical floorplan, while the two homes on the east side are identical to each other but follow a floorplan different to the other four. (Figure 43)
Figure 42. A copy of the blueprints for the Japanese officials’ village. These plans are in the public domain.

Figure 43. One of the smaller Japanese officials’ homes on the east side of the plan.

The only other surviving house of this type is a mixture of Streamline Moderne and Bauhaus design. Built in 1937, it was used as the Jeong Pediatric Clinic from 1947-2009. Making use of circular windows and horizontal lines that were popular in 1930s Streamline Moderne, it favors blocky Bauhaus influenced corners over the rounded, blownback look of Streamline Moderne. (Figures 44-46)
Much of the original interior was changed during its time as a clinic, yet the remaining interior staircase features decorative elements that suggest Nouveau, Deco, and bunka jutaku influence. Perhaps another example of the odd design choices made by early modern Japanese architects, the structure's hipped roofs are arguably mismatched with the rest of the home's style. While the roof pitch is rather low, a flat roof is expected in Streamline and Bauhaus architecture. Yet, if eclecticism was the stylistic goal of this house, then the architect certainly achieved it.

Figure 44. A rear exterior view of the former Jeong Pediatric Clinic (정소아과의원).

Figure 45. The former Jeong Pediatric Clinic’s entryway.
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Figure 46. An alternate view of the front facade of the former Jeong Pediatric Clinic.

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Syngman Rhee: Socialist

David P. Fields

“Communism is cholera and you cannot compromise with cholera” is the closest that Syngman Rhee came to giving posterity a memorable one-liner. These words still define Syngman Rhee as he is remembered today by both his friends and his enemies. The image of Rhee as a staunch right-wing anti-communist is the one that endures. To his supporters, Rhee’s anticommunism was his supreme virtue. They believe that he saw the dangers of communism early and successfully prevented the southern half of Korea from being swallowed up as a Soviet client state. To his critics his anti-communism lies at the root of the reactionary politics that fostered the division of Korea and suppressed a leftist social revolution on the peninsula. In the name of anticommunism, the Republic of Korea’s attempts at fostering democracy were dashed and the state morphed into a military dictatorship. The myth then of Rhee being a far-right-wing anticommunist has been beneficial to both sides. But is it true? By 1950, Syngman Rhee held explicitly anti-communist views, but were these the views that he held his whole life? Was anti-communism really at Rhee’s ideological core? Is anti-communism the same as right-wing politics?

This essay will make two claims that run counter to much of the received wisdom about Syngman Rhee’s political beliefs. First, it will argue that Syngman Rhee’s politics for most of his life were left-of-center.

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at least according to the American understanding of the terms “left” and “right.” In fact Rhee’s beliefs for much of his life would have resonated more with the ideals of left-wing social democracy than with right-wing free-market capitalism. Second, it will argue Rhee’s anti-communism was more instrumental than philosophical. In fact, for much of his life, it would be more accurate to describe Rhee as anti-Soviet rather than anti-communist. Finally, it will suggest that the most salient aspect of Rhee’s ideology was his commitment to Korean independence, a commitment that lasted his whole life since he believed that a divided Korea was not an independent Korea. Nearly everything in his mind was subordinated to this. This was his one consistent ideological test. Would any given ideology, politics, or strategy further the cause of Korean independence?

The title of this essay is somewhat misleading. It will not argue that Rhee was in fact a socialist. However, it will argue that labeling Rhee a socialist would actually be a more accurate description of his politics for most of his life than labeling him a right-wing anti-communist. To make this argument, I will look at three topics: Rhee’s associates, his writings, and his policies.

**Rhee’s Associates**

One of the most surprising discoveries divulged by Rhee’s diary, published in 2015, was how many of his friends, associates, and influences were left-of-center or even socialist. The American missionaries who were responsible for Rhee’s western education were theologically conservative, but they were also social reformers. It was through them that Rhee first encountered socialistic thought. During his five years of imprisonment, Rhee’s missionary friends kept him well-stocked with various reading materials including Lyman Abbott’s weekly magazine *The Outlook.* In his excellent study of Rhee’s experience in prison, Professor Chong-sik Lee devotes several pages to describing the

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importance of *The Outlook* to Rhee’s intellectual development. Rhee appears to have read fifty issues of the magazine and Lee claims that “Abbott effectively became Rhee’s teacher and spiritual guide.” While Professor Lee correctly describes Abbott’s liberal theological beliefs, he somehow overlooked the fact that Abbott was also a devoted socialist. During the period of Rhee’s incarceration, *The Outlook* ran no fewer than 25 articles with “socialism” or “socialist” in the title. A keyword search over the same period reveals that more than 180 articles at least referenced socialism.

Abbott was a socialist of the Christian and non-radical variety and devoted *The Outlook* to the cause of social reform. Abbott’s socialism emphasized the gradual transformation of government and industry beyond the “wage system” and into an economic arrangement where the “spirit of brotherhood” taught by Jesus Christ would become a reality. In a 1908 editorial on socialism, Abbott made a key distinction between what he called democratic socialism and state socialism. What Abbot calls state socialism in this editorial is more akin to communism, with the means of production and all property communally owned and all workers employed by the state. Abbot condemned this type of socialism as impractical and also unjust, as he believed workers would be deprived of the freedom to choose their vocation and better themselves until they reached their full potential as human beings. Democratic socialism on the other hand, was evolutionary; ownership of most property would remain in private hands, but the state would intervene to ensure equal educational opportunities, upward mobility, and an equitable distribution of wealth.

Through Abbott’s *The Outlook* and his missionary teachers, Rhee was exposed both to the conservative and liberal strains of American Christian thought. That Abbott’s ideas had more practical impact on Rhee’s than his missionary teachers is undeniable. Whether working for the YMCA in Seoul in the 1910s or at the Korean Christian Institute in Hawaii in the 1920s and 1930s, education and social reform were the hallmarks of Rhee’s activities, not proselytizing.

Rhee’s next documented encounter with socialism was by way of Finnish nationalist Aino Malmberg. When Koreans learned that Malmberg—a famous Finnish nationalist leader”—would pass through

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5 This information was ascertained by searching the holdings of *The Outlook* available at <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Outlook>. [Accessed 11 May 2017]
Hawaii on her way to New York to attend a meeting of the League of Small and Subject Nationalities (LSSN) in 1917, they called a special meeting to receive her. Her account of the Finns’ attempts to free themselves from Imperial Russia made a “deep impression on the minds of the Koreans who attended the meeting.”

Malmberg urged them to also send a representative to the LSSN conference, which they did. Rhee did not make the trip himself, however, he agreed to be listed on the LSSN’s council as the official representative of Korea. Rhee may or may not have been aware that Malmberg was a socialist. He probably did not know that she had used her travels between Scandinavia and the United States to smuggle funds to Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky then in exile in New York. However, he could hardly have been unaware that the LSSN’s leadership contained a number of prominent leftist and pro-Soviet figures such as Lincoln Steffens, W.E.B. Du Bois, Lajpat Rai, and Frederik C. Howe, or that it championed the cause of the Russian Revolution as well as the rights of oppressed nationalities. LSSN’s politics were probably unimportant to Rhee, in so much as it offered Koreans a chance to publicize their national aspirations at a moment when many observers believed the plight of colonized peoples was becoming prominent. Even if Rhee had been an ideologue, this was no time for ideological purity.

Rhee could certainly not claim ignorance when he hired one Laurance Todd to work as the publicity agent of the Korean Commission—a quasi-embassy for the Korean Provisional Government established in Washington, D.C. in 1919. Rhee must have been aware that Todd was a socialist before he hired him since Todd was previously the secretary of Meyer London, one of only two members of the Socialist Party of America to be elected to congress. At the same time he was working for Rhee he was also a reporter for The Non-Partisan Leader, which was the organ of the Non-Partisan League, a leftist populist political party advocating for state ownership of financial and industrial

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7 Syngman Rhee, “The 1919 Movement,” n.d., “March First Movement” Folder, Syngman Rhee Institute (SRI), Seoul, South Korea
10 David P. Fields et al., eds., The Diary of Syngman Rhee (Seoul, South Korea: National Museum of Contemporary Korean History, 2015), 104.
assets in the rural Midwest. Todd was unique among Rhee’s left-of-center friends because he would actually become a communist; he would spend almost thirty years as the Soviet TASS news agency’s correspondent in Washington, D.C. Only one letter from Todd to Rhee, dated 30 December 1919, survives but it reveals that Todd was an ardent supporter of the Russian Revolution and hints that Rhee may have been optimistic about the revolution as well:

“Meanwhile the sands of a new hour in history for both hemispheres have run, and as they have run my own hopes—and I think yours, too—have risen to confidence, that the time of a vast liberation is at hand. One need not be a warm sympathizer with Soviet Russia—as you know I am—to feel that the extension of Soviet power is the most potent fact in human affairs since August 1914. Indeed it seems the most momentous shift in power since the French Revolution. Its influence upon Asia and notably upon Korea, we need hardly mention.”

Although Todd did not work for Rhee long, they remained in touch. In 1933, the Soviet Embassy sent Todd on a courtesy call to thank Rhee for a letter of congratulations Rhee sent the Soviet Embassy after their normalization of relations with the United States.

Over time Rhee and Todd came to occupy positions in rival ideological camps. In 1954 Todd wrote two articles attacking then President Rhee in the leftist New World Review. Without acknowledging he had worked for Rhee in the late 1910s, Todd revealed that Rhee had “hinted at sympathy with the Russian Revolution” in his early days in Washington, but had later converted to fascism after a visit to Hitler’s Germany. Todd’s latter claim is untrue. Rhee’s only visit to Germany was in 1910, well before Hitler’s rule. A few months later Todd reviewed Robert T. Oliver’s biography of Rhee, The Man Behind the Myth, for the Review. It was not a positive review. Again without revealing that he personally knew Rhee, Todd criticizes Oliver for leaving out portions of

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12 Fields et al., The Diary of Syngman Rhee, 282.
Rhee’s biography, such as his impeachment by the Korean Provisional Government. Todd also criticized Oliver’s characterization that Rhee’s 1933 trip to Moscow was made only after Rhee was rebuffed by the League of Nations. To the contrary Todd claimed that Rhee had been working for months to secure a visa to the Soviet Union in order to propose a “grand alliance” between himself, Stalin, and Chiang Kai-shek against the Japanese. Todd’s connection to the Soviet embassy as a journalist may have put him in a position to know such details.

Todd was hardly Rhee’s only left-of-center associate. In 1934 Rhee started a magazine titled Orient with longtime friend, Charles Edward Russell. Russell was a journalist, a Pulitzer Prize-winner, and the author of books such as Why I am a Socialist, Socialism the Only Remedy, and The Passing Show of Capitalism. Russell, like Lyman Abbott, was by no means a radical. He came to socialism by way of muckraking journalism—investigating the corrupt practices of many of the United States’ richest individuals and most valuable companies. Russell’s interest in socialism also appears to have been more pragmatic than doctrinaire. His 1919 book Bolshevism and the United States showed as much sympathy for Russian peasants as it did thinly veiled contempt for the Bolshevik project. Bolshevik ideas were vague and unworkable in Russell’s opinion, especially the abolition of private property and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Russell was in favor of a “social revolution” but not one that would result in “chaos.” Russell was also opposed to putting the interests of the international socialist movement ahead of the nation. He would be expelled from the Socialist Party of America for his support of the U.S. entry into World War I.

Although Russell was credited as the editor of Orient, Rhee and another life-long friend, Homer B. Hulbert, did most of the work in New York while Russell was bedridden in Washington. The magazine was not a success, appearing to have had a run of just two issues. However, the single surviving issue contains both an editorial praising Franklin D.

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17 Fields et al., The Diary of Syngman Rhee, 285–86, 292.
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Roosevelt’s decision to reestablish relations with the Soviet Union and also the first installment of a serialized novella titled *The Broken Net*, which, at least judging by the first chapter, is a tale about well-heeled American adventurers making contact with Korean guerilla fighters in Japanese controlled Manchuria.\(^{18}\) Given that most of the guerilla fighters in Manchuria had close connections with the Chinese communist party, it would have been fascinating to know how that story ended.\(^{19}\)

In addition to Todd and Russell, Rhee had other friends and associates who were left-of-center. The socialist Unitarian minister John Haynes Holmes presided at Rhee’s wedding in 1934.\(^{20}\) Sherwood Eddy, a close friend from the YMCA who brought Rhee to the attention of American audiences by including Rhee’s biography in his book *The New Era in Asia*, publically joined the Socialist Party of America in 1931. Robert T. Oliver claims that Norman Thomas, the perennial socialist presidential candidate, was an ardent supporter of the Korean cause and this is supported by Thomas’ letters to the Korean Commission.\(^{21}\) He was one of the few American socialists who publicly supported Rhee and the American intervention in the Korean War.\(^{22}\) Senator William Langer, who spoke out passionately against surrendering Korea to the Soviet Union on the Senate floor in 1945, had been part of the leftist Non-Partisan League in the 1920s.

That Rhee would keep company with left-of-center Americans is hardly surprising given the historical context of race relations in the United States—with the left generally being less exclusionary than the right. However, what drew Rhee to these individuals was not their racial politics, nor their socialism. It was rather that each was willing to assist him in his struggle for Korean independence. Their socialism may or may not have been a point of attraction for Rhee, but it certainly was no barrier to partnership.

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18 “*The Broken Net,*” *Orient*, September 1934. The only extant copy of *Orient* is held by Columbia University.
19 One such fighter was Chang Chi-rak (alias Kim San) who came to prominence thanks to Helen Foster Snow, *Song of Ariran: The Life Story of a Korean Rebel* (New York: The John Day Company, 1941).
20 Fields et al., *The Diary of Syngman Rhee*, 256.
21 Young-ick Lew, ed., *The Syngman Rhee Correspondence in English, 1904-1948*, vol. 6 (Institute for Modern Korean Studies, Yonsei University, 2009), 244; Oliver, *Syngman Rhee and American Involvement in Korea, 1942-1960*, 102.
Rhee’s Writings
Over his lifetime, Rhee produced a prodigious body of writing, much of it correspondence and surprisingly mundane. Rhee’s writing was mainly organizational or administrative. Little of it is either philosophical or political. However, what he did write about politics is revealing.

His most important piece is a short article he wrote in his *Pacific Magazine* called “Communism: Right and Wrong” in March 1923. It will come as a surprise to those familiar with the anti-communism of Rhee’s later life that in this article he spends almost as much time describing what communism got right as what it got wrong. The most favorable aspect of communism to Rhee was its acknowledgment of the equal value of all human beings. Rhee’s frame of reference for this judgment was the rigid caste system of late-Joseon Korea. Rhee lamented how in the Korea of his birth average Koreans, no matter how talented, had to consider “fools and idiots of noble blood as their superiors.” He wondered how much human capital was wasted because of such prejudice. Had Rhee stopped there, this would not be an endorsement of communism. Many ideologies, including capitalism, could make the same critique of rigid caste systems. But Rhee continued that while systems such as the Joseon caste system were disappearing, new forms of slavery were taking their place. Rhee complained that while slavery was nearly universally illegal “in the name of salary and wages people could still be made to live the life of a slave.” It was this desire to make people more equal, both philosophically and materially, that Rhee considered the positive aspects of communism.

Rhee’s critiques of communism focused on the methods communists used to achieve this equality. Rhee believed that the public ownership of all property was impractical and would lead to resources being given to those who had neither the skills nor the desire to use them. He also believed that destroying the capitalist class and the intelligentsia would retard economic and social development. The solution to these class divisions was to remove the barriers to entry into these classes through education. Although the article is too short for Rhee to develop his ideas fully, it is apparent that Rhee could see both the excesses of

23 Syngman Rhee, “공산당의 당부당 (當不當) [Communism: Right and Wrong],” 태평양잡지 [The Pacific Magazine], March 1923. I am indebted to Professor LEW Seok-choon for bringing this article to my attention and for translating it into modern Korean orthography. The translations into English are my own.
communism and unrestrained capitalism. It should be no surprise that Rhee’s views in this article correlate with those of Lyman Abbott and Charles Edward Russell: critical of the status quo, but also of radical alternatives to it.

His final critiques focused on communism’s attacks on two institutions that he had spent his life building up: religion and nationalism. Rhee acknowledged that organized religion had not always been a progressive force in world history but argued that Christianity, particularly Protestantism, was a means of developing “equality and freedom” and that churches were essential to developing human virtue. To Rhee, communism’s animus towards nationalism was incomprehensible. Rhee could not envision Korean society organized around anything other than ethnic nationalism at that historical moment. He wrote that as long as the Japanese were occupying Korea, Korean nationalism was indispensable. The time to discuss the merits of nationalism would come once the Japanese were expelled and not even the “silhouettes” of their warships could be seen from Busan harbor.

In the final paragraph of this article Rhee elucidated his core ideological conviction, one that remained more or less consistent throughout his life: “To us Koreans, the most urgent, the most important, and the biggest issue is liberation activities. If Communism will help this work we should all become communist without delay, but if this work seems to be damaged by communism we can never agree to it.” Rhee’s approach to communism could not be more clearly stated. He approached it not with an ideological lens, but with a pragmatic one.

When asked by a supporter in 1928 about employing revolutionary violence, seeking the support of the Soviet Union, and nationalizing industries as a matter of economic policy, Rhee’s response was similarly pragmatic, except on the question of violence. Rhee claimed there was no room for the word “revolutionary” in the Korean independence movement and that he was opposed to revolutionary violence. However, Rhee made clear that he would contact the Soviet Union if given the chance, but “it is difficult for me, given the fact that I am implementing the Korean independence movement from the United States, to promote communism.” There is a certain ambiguity in Rhee’s statement. Would he have preferred to promote communism had he not been in the United States? Almost certainly not. But Rhee wanted to make clear to his correspondent that he neither categorically embraced nor condemned communism, but rather “it is more important for us to find our
own survival strategy first.”

Rhee was certain this survival strategy would not include revolutionary violence or fomenting class struggle, but he was equally certain that writing off potential allies, such as the Soviet Union, for ideological reasons was foolish. His 1933 visit to Moscow seeking aid for Korea’s independence proves that this was not idle talk.

When Rhee returned to Korea in October 1945 he continued this pragmatism towards communists, at least initially. Only a few days after he arrived in Seoul, he wrote a letter to his wife, Francesca, and supporters expressing surprise that he had been chosen by Korean leftists to head the nascent Korea People’s Republic (KPR). He wrote that in response he had told them that “it is a high honor to be a communist leader, while Moscow condemns me as anti-communist.”

While Rhee was hesitant to actually accept the position offered to him by the KPR he was careful not to alienate any potential supporters, be they communist or not. Rhee understood that communist supporters might prove valuable both in attempts to remove the Soviet Union from the peninsula and also to see off political rivals. In a letter to Rhee later that month Francesca encouraged Rhee that he had little to fear from Jacob K. Dunn and other returning members of the United Korean Committee—a rival Korean exile organization that Rhee believed had hampered his own diplomatic efforts in Washington during World War II—because “as long as you have communist support they can do all the harm but it will be rather difficult [for them] to get hold of the government.”

It would seem then

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24 Sang-Hoon, “Syngman Rhee’s Vision and Reality”; The translation is from Lee Sang-hoon’s article. For the original mixed script letters between Rhee and supporter Yu Chi-yeong see Yu Yeong-ik et al., eds., 이승만 동문 서한집 [The Correspondence of Syngman Rhee in East Asian Languages], vol. 3 (Yonsei University Press, 2009), 129–45; Yu Yeong-ik et al., eds., 이승만 동문 서한집 [The Correspondence of Syngman Rhee in East Asian Languages], vol. 1 (Yonsei University Press, 2009), 92–93.

25 I do not go into any detail about Rhee’s trip to Moscow here because the trip was an utter failure. Rhee was asked to leave by the Soviet government less than twenty-four hours after he arrived in Moscow. See Fields et al., The Diary of Syngman Rhee, 210–23.


27 Francesca Rhee to Syngman Rhee, 6 November 1945, Young-ick Lew, ed., The Syngman Rhee Correspondence in English, 1904-1948, vol. 3 (Institute for
that Rhee and his closest supporters took the possibility of communist support seriously.

Perhaps with the possibility of communist support in mind, Rhee told the *New York Times* in November 1945 there were two types of communists in Korea: those who wanted to establish a communist government and those who believed “that some of the economic principles of communism will be beneficial to our people.” He claimed that he believed in “some communist ideas” and that after a Korean government was established he would “work for the adoption of many of these theories.”

This was not just rhetoric. Letters between Rhee and Francesca reveal that Rhee had spent his time in exile discussing progressive reforms. When Rhee wrote in November 1945 that his popularity after arriving in Seoul was so great that even the communists were supporting him, Francesca responded, “I shall be the first one to join the communist [sic] under your leadership. I think it is wonderful that they choose [sic] you as their leader. I begin to think that you and I have mapped out all the social reforms which would impress the communists more then [sic] anything else. I do believe in the social reforms which enable the working class a decent existence. You remember what dept. you have promised me—This and many other reforms have to be taken place in order to get the votes of the working class.”

Social reforms appear to have been a topic of some conversation in the Rhee household; references to communism as cholera are conspicuously absent.

**Rhee’s Policies**

Even as the relationship between Rhee and Korean communists deteriorated in post-liberation Korea, he continued to champion progressive social reforms. In February 1946 Rhee broadcasted a twenty-seven-point “national program” as chairman of the Representative Democratic Council of South Korea. The program included proposals to nationalize all heavy industries, mines, forests, public utilities, etc.; “to inaugurate state supervision of all commercial and industrial enterprises to insure fair treatment to consumers, traders, and producers alike”; to redistribute “all confiscated agricultural lands to small farmers in accordance with their capacity and ability to work them”; to break up

Modern Korean Studies, Yonsei University, 2009), 421.


“large private estates” and redistribute the land to small farmers; to control interest rates; to make the tax system, including inheritance taxes, more progressive; to implement unemployment and social security insurance; to promulgate minimum wage laws; and to establish “state control of medicine and to provide adequate public health facilities to the benefit of all workers.”

Many of these ideas would pass directly into the first constitution of the Republic of Korea. After reviewing the Korean constitution as it came into effect in July 1948, political scientist Paul Dull wrote that it “ostensibly makes the Korean Republic a socialistic state.” The question for Dull was what type of socialism future legislation would create. The American Military Government’s own chief legal adviser, Czech émigré Charles Pergler, agreed stating that the document leaned “strongly towards state socialism” and seemed to draw inspiration from the Weimar constitution.

Rhee’s first Liberation Day speech as president in 1948 contained similar ideas about social welfare: “The employer must not, and will not be permitted to exploit labor. Labor must not expect, and will not be permitted to destroy capital.” Rhee argued that the goal of his administration was to elevate the living standards of all Koreans, but to do so without pitting one class against another, as the communists did. In the same speech he continued to make distinctions between those who supported the economics of communism and those who supported Soviet communism: “We are not so much against Communism as against the treason of its devotees” he told his audience.

Although progress was halting and Korean living standards would take decades to rise significantly, Rhee would remake Korea’s social

30 A copy of this program was transmitted to the State Department by the chairman of the Korean Commission, Ben C. Limb, in June 1948. Limb explained to the department that, even though it was proclaimed in 1946, Rhee had espoused it ever since. See Limb to Niles W. Bond, June 10, 1948, 895.01/6-1048, [Internal affairs of Korea, 1945-1949], vol. 9 (Seoul: Areum Press, 1995), 488–89.


32 Pergler’s analysis can be found in Joseph E. Jacobs to Secretary Marshall, 26 July 1948, 895.011/7-2648, [Internal affairs of Korea, 1945-1949], vol. 10 (Seoul: Areum Press, 1995), 257–68.

33 A copy of this speech was transmitted to the State Department in Joseph E. Jacobs to the Secretary of State, August 15, 1948, 895.01/8-1548, no. 669, [Internal affairs of Korea, 1945-1949], 9:538–45.
Syngman Rhee: Socialist

fabric through a major land reform program in the 1950s. This land reform is possibly the most significant policy of Rhee’s tenure as president of the Republic of Korea, and yet it is frequently overlooked. This is partially because the land reform took years to execute and was plagued by mismanagement—as nearly every aspect of Rhee’s administration was. Loopholes in the law allowed some land owners to hang on to large swaths of their property by recategorizing it or by incorporating it with an institution whose land was exempt from the reform, such as a school.\textsuperscript{34} Rhee’s land reform was also interrupted by the Korean War, which meant that it was not fully implemented until the late 1950s. Initially this land reform seemed to compare unfavorably with similar land reforms undertaken in North Korea and China because the landlords were compensated; the tenants had to pay for the land in installments over five years; and the process of redistribution took years. Rhee’s land reform was indeed less radical. It was also more complex. Because it was undertaken within a system of private ownership and under the auspices of a democratic government—in 1949 and 1950 Rhee was far from all-powerful—Rhee’s land reform had to go through painstaking legislative and budgetary processes. The fact that many Korean legislators were also large landholders did not make the process any easier. Such assemblymen both attempted to delay the bill and increase the amount of compensation for landlords. Rhee himself also delayed the implementation of the bill by sending it back to the National Assembly for redrafting after the convoluted amendment process had saddled the bill with some contradictory and sloppy language.\textsuperscript{35}

Despite its shortcomings, Rhee’s land reform fundamentally remade Korean society by breaking up large estates, destroying Korea’s landed aristocracy, and giving a modicum of security to millions of Korean farmers and laborers. In 1945, two-thirds of arable land in Korea was owned by just 3 percent of the population and 80 percent of rural Koreans owned no land at all. By 1957, war and land reform had nearly reversed that statistic: 88 percent of rural Koreans owned land.\textsuperscript{36} Some scholars have claimed that Rhee had land reform pushed upon him by


\textsuperscript{35} Young-Cheol Zeon, “The Politics of Land Reform in South Korea.” (Ph.D., University of Missouri - Columbia, 1973), 179.

circumstances or that his land reform accomplished little. The momentum behind land reform in post-liberation Korea was indeed strong, but there is no evidence that Rhee tried to resist it. On the contrary, Rhee was a stalwart of land reform as he understood it was both in the national interest and his own political interest. It forestalled the desire for more radical solutions among South Korea’s agrarian poor and also provided Rhee and his Liberal Party with a base of popular support. This land reform was not a sufficient condition for Korea’s future development, which was still a long way off, but it was a necessary one.

Rhee’s left-of-center economic policies were evident in more than just land reform. For much of his presidency large swaths of the Korean economy would remain in government hands. This did not go unnoticed in the United States. In the mid-1950s Rhee had to fend off an onslaught from certain members of the U.S. Congress, such as Allen Ellender and Paul Shafer who accused Rhee of socialism because the state owned so much of the Korean economy. Shafer proposed legislation twice in 1954 that would have prohibited aid to Korea from being expended in ways that would “continue the present socialized status” of the Korean economy. Rhee could not deny these claims, but rather defended himself by claiming the government wanted to divest itself of most of these properties but was forced to hang on to them to prevent them from being sold at rock bottom prices. Rhee believed he had a responsibility to see that sources of “national strength” did not fall into the hands of the “old ‘ruling class.’” This was hardly reassuring to American free market ideologues. It did not help that one of Rhee’s cabinet-level ministries was known as the “Office of Monopoly” and oversaw government monopolies in tobacco, salt, and ginseng.

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39 Shafer proposed this legislation on 22 March and 20 July 1954 as H. Con. Res. 219 and H. Con. Res. 256. Both were purposed in the 2nd Session of the 83rd Congress.
40 The Rhee administration devoted an entire issue of its *Korean Correspondent* publication to answering this charge, see *Korean Correspondent* 39, 23 October 1955 in the Syngman Rhee Presidential Papers, File 327, Central Library, Yonsei University.
Charges of socialism were not just made by Rhee’s detractors. Robert T. Oliver, Rhee’s longtime friend, adviser, and biographer, explained that while Rhee was certainly anti-communist, he was otherwise politically promiscuous. He wrote that Rhee believed that the alternative to communism was whatever means and methods worked best to safeguard “human rights and dignity,” including representative democracy, aristocracy, “state socialism,” or some “amalgamation” of all of these. One does not have to look too hard to find all three of these in Rhee’s administration.

Conclusion
If Rhee was in fact not an extreme right-winger, where does this idea come from? While it is difficult to pin down precisely when Rhee was first labeled a “right-winger”, the origins seem fairly clear. It appears it was the American military government that first began identifying Rhee as a member of the “extreme-right” in Korea. They did so, however, not because of his social, economic, or political beliefs, but as a way to discredit his anti-Soviet, anti-trusteeship stance during a period when they desperately wanted trusteeship to work—or, at least, to avoid being blamed for its failure. This labeling of Rhee would come back to haunt them when circumstances forced them to cooperate with Rhee and other members of the so-called “extreme-right.” When the State Department instructed the military government in 1946 to find someone not on the extreme-right to cooperate with—someone who would support land and social reforms—an exasperated analyst responded: “Analysis of Korean political situation must be with the realization that programs of all political parties will be quite socialistic and definitely left from United States’ point of view. Generally speaking, Korean political thought is divided on only one basic issue and that is Communism.” The labels “left” and “right” were already causing confusion at the beginning of the American occupation.

The situation did not improve over time. In a classified 1948 report on Korean politics since liberation the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had to explain to its readers—presumably high-level American policymakers—that “as an arbitrary measure coalitions favoring trusteeship have been classified as the Left Wing; all


opposing trusteeship as the Right Wing.” This was hardly an arbitrary measure. The CIA was following the nomenclature already chosen by the American military government. However, the CIA was right to recognize that the terms “left” and “right,” as they were being applied in Korea, would mislead any American policymakers unfamiliar with the Korean situation. The report continued “All South Korean parties seem, moreover, agreed that the future Korean government must nationalize the industries and redistribute the land. This socialistic program is common property of both right and left, for there are apparently no articulate proponents of capitalism among the Koreans.” From the American perspective, they were all leftists.

I have somewhat cheekily titled this essay “Syngman Rhee: Socialist.” The label does not quite fit Rhee, but it is no more ill-fitting than the label of “extreme-rightist.” I hope this provocation will cause a reexamination of Rhee and much of the received wisdom about his politics and policies.

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A Controversial Discovery
In the late 1970s I spent about three weeks roaming in the attic of what is probably the world’s oldest museum of ethnology, the Leiden Museum voor Volkenkunde in the Netherlands (going back to the 1830s), in order to trace the unexpectedly numerous Korean objects owned by the museum, so that after many years in utter darkness in drawers and storage cupboards they could be exhibited once more. Some of the things Korean the museum owned antedated its founding and had been acquired by the Dutch on Dejima, the artificial island in the bay of Nagasaki, which for centuries was the only place where Europeans, mainly Dutchmen but also some foreigners in the service of the Dutch East India Company, could enter Japan. In Nagasaki they sometimes could observe or even meet shipwrecked Koreans who were waiting for repatriation through the good offices of the feudal lord of Tsushima, who served as the diplomatic intermediary between Japan and Korea. Almost as soon as Korea opened its borders in 1876 the museum also commissioned persons who travelled to Korea to collect more items for its displays. Among them was, for instance, the German Friedrich Kraus, who in 1885 went to assist King Kojong with the creation of the Korean Mint.

What I found in these weeks included a variety of pieces of clothing as well as all kinds of furniture and knickknacks, so it was decided to recreate an interior with the mannequin of a seated gentleman, for which we arranged a good number of the objects we had found, mainly the paraphernalia of the scholar, with a low table for the book the man was reading, paper, brushes, a letter rack, and an inkstone, as well as a meter-long pipe, a tobacco pouch (which actually still contained 19th-

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century Korean tobacco) and an ash-tray. In a corner of the room there was a shiny round brass vessel with a lid. After a while, the museum was visited by an official from the Korean Ministry of Culture who, as soon as he saw the last object, indignantly demanded that it would be removed.

What had made the official so angry and was this object really so out of place that his anger was justified? An eloquent answer can be found in an account of the French writer Charles Varat, who travelled Korea in 1888 and 1889, and in 1892 reported about this in Le Tour du Monde, a kind of nineteenth-century French National Geographic Magazine.\(^2\)

A little later, we are joined by a stylish rider that we recognize as a courtier because of his robes and hat of hair from which two small wings project horizontally. He is followed by a servant on foot carrying on his shoulder, in a net bag, a round box of copper, 25 cm in diameter and 12 cm high, which sparkles in the rays of the sun with golden reflections. Struck by the ceremonial aspect of this new form of porterage, I ask my companion if this vase is not a tin of provisions. He laughs.

“Ah! I have it, I said: It’s a great box of sweets.

- You’re nowhere near, he says, this vase, always made of metal, with a lid and no handle, plays a much more important role in Korean life. It is mandatory for all, as each has his own and never leaves it behind, even during visits and especially when traveling. The poor carry it themselves; the rich have a special servant attached thereto who has to keep it at all times in the most sparkling cleanliness, available for the master. Even the Mandarin himself, in all the pomp of his official visits, treating it as almost equal to his own seals, employs it as a counterweight on the horse carrying them.

- But what is its use?

- It is used day and night, in solitude, and in meetings, whenever the need arises. Here’s how: on a sign, the clerk hands it to you and it is gently slipped under the long coat. Its function once performed, carefully putting the lid on,

\(^2\) Charles Varat, “Voyage en Corée,” Le Tour du Monde LXIII, Mai 1892, pp. 289-368. The English translation is by Brother Anthony, who also has made it available online, together with the original:
http://hompi.sogang.ac.kr/anthony/Varat/, Section Two.
removing it from the asylum where it was briefly hidden, it is returned to the attentive servant: he knows what he has to do, while we continue peacefully the conversation as if nothing had happened. In addition, this object serves as a spittoon and replaces if necessary a candle-stick once its owner has disposed the cover to this end: finally, precious container! it is often used as a pillow by the poor of this world. Therefore, given its quintuple use in Korea, added my companion, I advise you, when you speak, to call it the “national vase.”

- No, I said, all civilized peoples use it, but I find that here it is no longer “chamber”, since it moves freely everywhere, or “night” because we meet it in sunlight, so it should be called, given its multiple functions, the “indispensable.”

In other words, Varat concludes that although it is a pot de chambre or a vase de nuit, these appellations do not do justice to the true identity of what in Korean is called the yogang; its position in Korean culture is infinitely more elevated than that of its western equivalents.
Varat was, incidentally, not the only person to mistake the *yogang* for something else. It is reported that an American lady at the end of the nineteenth century bought one of these handsome brass vessels and to the consternation of her Korean guests served soup in it. Equally in the dark was the intrepid German traveler Rudolf Zabel who visited Korea on his honeymoon during the Russo-Japanese War and published a book about it, with a photo of a *yogang*, together with some smaller brassware, spoons and chopsticks, accompanied by the caption: “Brassware, together forming a complete Korean dinner set.”


It should be added that, in spite of Varat’s assertion to the contrary, not all *yogang* were made of metal. An early nineteenth-century

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3 The website of the Museum of Korean Straw and Plants Handicrafts (Myeongnyun 2 ga, Jongno-gu, Seoul) has a similar picture from another, unidentified German book, roughly from the same period, displaying a dining table with “table ware for two” (http://www.zipul.co.kr/coding/sub4/sub5.asp?bseq=9&mode=view&cat=-1&aseq=350&page=16&sk=&sv=; accessed May 15, 2017). The museum also shows a *yogang*, together with two spittoons, which are very similar in form, but much smaller.
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encyclopedic work mentions various other options. These included oiled cow hide and lacquered paulownia wood. They might even be made of lacquered paper, with the advantage, particularly for those who travelled without the assistance of servants, that they were very light (like the yogang made of paulownia wood). Ceramic yogang were also an obvious alternative, but it should surprise no one that brass was a favorite material, first because Koreans already in the Shilla period had achieved a high degree of mastery in metalworking, and second for aesthetic reasons, which also are alluded to in Varat’s account, and are prominent in some of the texts cited below.

Metalworkers (“fondeurs”), one of the illustrations of Varat’s article, by Kisan Kim Chun’gŭn, an artist from Wŏnsan, who made innumerable sketches of Korean life for foreigners visiting Korea in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

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4 Han’guk minjok munhwa tae paekkwasajŏn (Great Encyclopedia of the Culture of the Korean People), lemma: yogang; online: encykorea.aks.ac.kr (accessed May 13, 2017).
A Thing of Beauty
We do not need to take the word of a foreigner like Varat who spent a relatively short time in the country as the last word about the place of the yogang in Korean society, even if he proves to be more trustworthy than Zabel. Nineteenth-century Korean literature, too, suggests that, humble as its function might be, a nice yogang could be an object of pride. The first piece of evidence is a shaman song about Sŏngju, the deity who protects both the house and the master of the house. In this particular song Sŏngju is referred to as Hwangje, the Yellow Emperor, but this is not reflected in his function. The deity appears here as a master builder and the song describes the entire process of the building and furnishing of a luxurious mansion, from the felling near Andong of the trees needed to construct the house to the minutest details of the decorations. The following passage is found near the end of the song.

If you want to have a look at the adornments of the room
[you see that] cushions and blankets have been spread out!
Tiered chests, square étagères
and back-rests from Chinju have been placed there!
Document chests of red sandalwood have been placed there!
Big screens and small screens,
a screen with filial children, a picture with the bliss of Guo Ziyi
and a screen with a hundred playing children have been placed there!
A rack to hold comb-cases, on which a pair of phoenixes is drawn,
is hanging prettily from a decorative knot
made of scarlet silk, in the form of a bee.
A chamber-pot brilliant as the Morning Star,
ash-trays and cuspidors are scattered here and over there.
Hwangje, who provides
wash-basins with a wide rim, wash-basins with a cover,
small basins and big basins, complete sets of then,
please enjoy yourself to your heart’s content!\(^6\)

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\(^5\) A Tang general who following a distinguished career lived with eighty grandchildren under one roof and after his death was worshipped as the god of wealth and happiness.

Cultural notes on the yogang

It is no wonder that in “Hanyangga” a long nineteenth-century poetic description in the kasa form of the capital and its many marvels, the yogang, too, is mentioned as one of the many tempting items on sale at the city’s markets, which offer the best produce from the country and overseas:

[They sell]…
copper-nickel spittoons and jade spittoons,
copper-nickel yogang and silver ashtrays,
Japanese picnic boxes and Chinese picnic boxes,
and large inlaid dining tables…

Korea’s most celebrated traditional love story is undoubtedly that of Ch’unhyang, the daughter of a lowly kisaeng, and Yi Mongnyong, the son of the local magistrate, both just sixteen years old. There, too, the yogang has its place. When Ch’unhyang’s mother has consented to have her daughter joined to the young aristocrat, she has the bedroom prepared for their first night together.

The maid set out the quilt embroidered with mandarin ducks, a pillow stuffed with pine-nuts, a round brass

chamber-pot which shone like the morning sun, and a large bowl of clean water. “Good night, sir. Sleep well.”

Modest as its role is in these lines, soon the yogang will play a more active part, in a passage that reminds me a little of a nouveau roman in which a dinner is described entirely through objects, the food items that are eaten and their progress through the human body.

Ch’unhyang slipped between the sheets. The boy quickly followed her, removed her bodice and threw it on a pile with his own clothes in the corner. They lay clasping each other. How could they sleep like that? As their bones melted in ecstasy, the heavy quilt danced, the brass chamber-pot kept time with ringing sounds, the iron loop of the doorhandle rattled, the flame of the candle flickered delightedly. It was the finest sort of sleep. Could any joy be greater than this?

The yogang, discreetly but unmistakably present on the left, in a sketch by Kim Kich’ang that depicts a spring-autumn couple quite different from the two young lovers in the Ch’unhyang tale.

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8 Translation (with a slight modification) by Richard Rutt, from Virtuous Women: Three masterpieces of traditional Korean fiction (Seoul: Korean National Commission for UNESCO, 1974), p. 273. With “shone like the morning sun” Rutt, who was a superb translator, took the liberty of not translating literally the standard epitheton ornans of the yogang: “brilliant like the Morning Star.”

9 Virtuous Women, p. 274.
The story of Ch’unhyang has been told and retold in many forms and one of the retellings (Ilsŏl Ch’unhyang; serialized in the Donga Ilbo in 1925-1926) is by the man who is credited with writing the first truly modern Korean novel, Yi Kwangsu (1892-1950). Below he describes the preparations for the birthday banquet at the yamen of the evil local governor on the day he intends to kill Ch’unhyang if she does not consent to sleep with him. Again, the passage emphasizes the splendor of what was on view.

Cloud-like awnings white as snow had been raised, high and imposing. The hall of the yamen was full of embroidered screens, screens with peony blossoms, all kinds of screens. They sat on big mats with flower patterns, mats with decorations on the sides, cushions decorated with flowers in full bloom, decorated poufs, blankets of Mongolian felt wrapped around them. Paper lanterns, lanterns made from cow horn, and glass lanterns, were hung in great numbers from the rafters, on cords of fine pearls threaded with red cotton yarn: they intended to revel till deep in the night. Yogang bright as the Morning Star, cuspidors, and candlesticks adorned with sleeping dragons, were placed wherever you looked.

This provides confirmation of Varat’s observation that the yogang were in attendance at banquets, although in this case it seems they were provided by the host rather than brought by the guests.

The yogang also makes an appearance in the p’ansori version of the tale of the two brothers Hŭngbu and Nolbu. After the kind-hearted but poor Hŭngbu has taken care of a swallow’s broken leg, the next spring the swallow brings Hŭngbu some seeds when it returns from wintering in southern China. These grow into gigantic pumpkins. Hŭngbu saws them open and finds to his delight that they contain all kinds of riches and precious objects. From one of them even steps a concubine for him, no one less than Yang Guifei (the favourite of Tang Emperor Xuanzong) famous as one of the greatest beauties in Chinese history. It does not detract from her charms, rather adds to the splendor of her entry into the story, that in her retinue a shiny yogang is carried along (just as in Korea yangban brides when they were taken to their husbands’ homes would
have a yogang with them in their sedan chairs\(^\text{10}^\text{). The gift of the concubine leads to a heated discussion between Hûngbu and his wife, who thinks it cannot be accepted. But it is Hûngbu who wins in the end, with the clinching argument that it would not be fair to Yang Guifei who has come from so far, all the way from China (and, we might add, from a thousand years back) to be sent home. The lazy and black-hearted Nolbu tries to imitate Hûngbu, even if in the absence of a swallow with a broken leg he has to catch one and break its leg intentionally, and eventually grows pumpkins that turn out to contain everything imaginable that is revolting and undesirable, from excrement to tax collectors.

Illustration of the sugi in the Sejong shillok.

The yogang also played a role in royal funeral customs. From the Veritable Records (Chosôn wangjo shillok) of the reign of King Sejong we learn that a yogang (in this case called sugi, literally “piss-pot”, although there was also a specific word for the yogang used only in the palace: chira) was included among the many objects (myŏnggi) that were

\(^{10}\) In deference to female modesty, the yogang would be lined with cotton wool, so that its use would not produce any sound.
buried with a deceased person, in this case someone belonging to the royal family, to serve him or her in the afterlife. These were usually miniaturized and included “wooden slaves.” The Shillok also present a picture of this sugi, noting that it should be made of wood, have a lid (as any yogang would) and should be covered with black lacquer. For many centuries the royal dead will have had this convenience at their disposal, until in the eighteenth century King Yŏngjo gave instructions to curtail the number of myŏnggi and judged that the sugi was “unnecessary.”

**Fond Memories**

From the above it will be clear that the yogang might be a prized possession, an object of pride. It could also be an object of affection, although that may be difficult to understand for those who have not experienced the revolution in life style that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s. As late as the early seventies many people even in Seoul lived in Korean-style houses that had a toilet outside, which meant that on a cold winter night a trip to the outhouse would require some steeliness. Even the “modern” free-standing two-story houses that were the latest thing at the time did not always have an indoor toilet (I lived in a house like that then). The high-rise apartments that have made Korea into an “apartment republic” started to be built in greater numbers only from the mid-seventies, once the problem of increasing water pressure to reach the highest floors had been solved. In those days the yogang was a great comfort, particularly to the elderly, but not just to them, as an author in Korea Journal mentioned in 1981 in a small piece entitled “Only Yesterday.” He himself had fond memories of it, but noted that it was about to be forgotten, and that children did not even know the word or thought that it was the name of a kind of toffee. The celebrated movie director Lee Changdong (born in 1954) may belong to a transitional generation. During a lunch where some reflections on the yogang were prompted by the serving of pokpunja (Korean bramble) liquor, of which the name is said to signify that the fruit of which it is made will make the drinker pee with such force that the yogang will be overturned, he described himself as belonging to the generation that had to empty the yogang of the elders. Even in such a case, the memories attached do not

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11 Sejong shillok 135:1B.
12 Sejong shillok 134:4B.
13 Yŏngjo shillok 89:31B-32A.
have to be negative. In his autobiographical *One Spoon on This Earth*, the Jeju writer Hyun Ki Young talks lovingly of his great-grandfather, of: “his ramie-like beard, the smell of tobacco, and the smell of urine from a chamber pot in the corner of the room. Despite the stench, even now it’s a heart-rending memory for me, as if I still could reach out and touch the warmth of his body.”

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Seoul's Last Moon Village(s)

Jon Dunbar

Following the near total destruction of Seoul in the Korean War, the rest of the 1950s was a period of rebuilding. Former Seoulites who’d fled returned to their homes, sometimes finding nothing left, or finding new occupants or a new building there. The city also attracted war refugees cut off from their homes in the North, as well as many other South Koreans looking to make a living in the big city. The more privileged citizens had the best land, located in flat valleys where flooding wasn’t an issue, leaving the poorer people and those with no land to build wherever they could, often on the edges, often on dangerous terrain.

They built their homes on uneven ground, with growing shanty towns climbing the slopes of the city's mountains, stretching upwards, seemingly toward the moon. That is why they are called 달동네 (daldongnae), or
moon villages. Another name for them is 산동네, or mountain village, as well as 판자촌, or board village to denote the flimsy construction materials. They are prominent and easy to find thanks to their high elevation on the edge of urban areas.

Many of these mountainside communities were unauthorized by the city government, but they grew anyways as the city was bursting at the seams with residents. Homes were jammed close together as tightly as the cells of an organism, with barely any privacy and little space between them for people to move. The mountains were prone to avalanches and mudslides, and residents also faced upward pressures from societal forces that didn't want them there and the nonstop rush of even more desperate Koreans looking for space to live.

The people built their own homes and shaped the spaces between homes, opening businesses, creating urban gardens, probably even paving the more-used paths and alleys. In some places, the pavement looks like a waterfall frozen in place; it is easy to picture the day they were formed, perhaps with someone tipping over a cement mixer uphill and the residents directing its flow and shaping it, trying to form it into a desirable shape before it hardened. Public works projects were scant, as the city preferred to look the other way, at least when it wasn't evicting them. Underground sewage and running water were virtually nonexistent. But the people in these villages persevered struggled on.

They were decent, hardworking people who lived temporarily (albeit often for decades and for the rest of their lives) in these places while they worked to better their lot in life... the same couldn't be said for those thoughtless unwelcome newcomers moving in even further uphill of them (as they may have thought at the time).

Neighbourhoods like these were targets of the authorities, who sought to limit illegal residences and other criminal activities, while steering urban development in the direction of beautification. Some illegal settlements were removed, including one apparently set up in Jeong-dong, scattering the displaced residents to other areas, creating new moon villages and growing the populations of others which continued to climb higher uphill.

At some point, some of these communities began developing as the lives and finances of the residents stabilised. The government began to offer them paths to legitimacy, and gradually illegal homes obtained legal status and were rebuilt. This process, like the formation process of these settlements, started roughly at the bottom and worked its way up the slopes, roughly tracing the spread of prosperity and wealth. Some
neighbourhoods such as Haebangchon joined official society, yet in others such as Geumho the conversion process never fully completed, leaving an upper crust at the highest points of the hill where the poorest people still lived in the most inconvenient locations. Still others received even less help, continuing to exist into the 21st century; now many of them are being claimed by urban renewal projects intent on beautification, social cleansing, even heritage preservation.

Much of their story is evident in visiting these remaining locations, which are falling apart after decades of patchwork repairs intended to hold things together for a short while longer. Unfortunately historic documents are of little use, as these improvised settlements were built without much documentation, and their growth was largely unobserved by urban planners, as it lacked actual planning. The story of these places remains only in the memories of the people who have lived in them, as well as in what the buildings tell us themselves.

**What is a moon village?**

It is necessary to ask what a moon village is exactly, as many neighbourhoods that look like perfect examples are something else entirely, and many actual moon villages have developed to no longer be recognisable as such.

An elderly resident tends to a small garden in Baeksan Village on April 16, 2017, seen from another ridge.
A moon village is a largely residential place, with some local businesses having sprouted up, that was formed or rebuilt illegally or semi-legally in the aftermath of the war or during rapid urbanisation afterward, on a hillside. The manmade infrastructure carved into this terrain creates a complex yet playful layout, bringing residents closer together by visual proximity. Early on in Korea's developmental days, these areas would have been fun for kids to run around and play tag or hide-and-seek. But these days, the remaining modern-day moon villages are mostly inhabited by the elderly, giving an early warning of how an aging population looks.

Not all hillside communities in Seoul are moon villages, as many were official constructions and predate the Korean War. Places like Hyojadong in Seochon, Seongbuk-dong, and Iwha Mural Village superficially resemble moon villages, but these are official, planned communities with long histories. The presence of colonial-era buildings as well as extensive underground sewage infrastructure can be taken as hints these are not moon villages.

Originally, high-elevation land was unpopular, which is how the impoverished were able to claim it and settle there. Likewise, improvements to these areas came from the bottom up as dictated by market principles. But as urban Korea developed, modern roads pave the way up the hills and advanced construction techniques have brought mountain slopes within reach of developers. So, in the last couple decades, we've seen a reversal of this urban structure, with the wealthy suddenly seeking high ground to set up homes where they can enjoy the fine view, unhindered by the terrain due to road access. This inversion has doomed many moon villages already, as they and their populace are replaced by upper-middle-class residences and residents living in tall new buildings.

But once again, as the economy enters an era of low growth and the population ages, affordable rather than high-density housing becomes a priority, and we may see another upswing of moon villages or something resembling them on the back of new social problems for the 21st century.

5 moon villages in Seoul and their 5 fates
Despite a media report every few years bemoaning the imminent disappearance of Seoul's “last” moon village, shanty town, or slum, a handful of moon villages still stand in remote corners all across the city. We will examine five examples of moon villages of Seoul: Guryong Village of Gangnam-gu, Bamgol Village of Dongjak-gu, Gaemi Village of Seodaemun-gu, Baeksa Village in Nowon-gu, and Haebangchon in Yongsan-gu. We will also consider some prominent examples of moon
villages from other parts of the country.

1. Guryong Village
Guryong Village is most commonly mentioned these days, as the struggle between its remaining residents and the city and Gangnam District governments has been tense. It is located on the northern slope of Guryongsan, a 283-meter ridge overlooking the city, and quite a lot of foot traffic and parking is generated by hikers coming to conquer the peak.

![Guryong Village sits under a blanket of snow on Jan. 29, 2017.](image)

Guryong Village is a miserable place, with between 2,500 and 4,000 residents living in extreme primitive conditions. Houses are reinforced, insulated, and waterproofed with improvised materials such as big tarps, one of which came from a Baskin-Robbins, and another ironically from an ad for highrise apartment buildings.

A fire in late 2014 ravaged a large section of the moon village, killing one, and the burned properties have not since been cleaned up or built over. A firetruck is always on standby at the village entrance, and charcoal briquettes remain stacked high at various depositories throughout the settlement. Portable toilets have been installed here and there, some less primitive than others.

From almost any part of the neighbourhood, one can see the
Samsung Tower Palace complex of Dogok-dong, which includes Korea's 2004-2009 tallest building at 73 floors high which offers some of the most expensive housing in all of the city. The disparity between the two is hard to ignore, a common feature of most moon villages due to their high vantage point.

A cat sits on a Guryong Village house. In the background is Samsung Tower Palace, some of the most expensive real estate in Korea.

Many articles claim this village was formed in the aftermath of a beautification project ahead of the 1988 Olympics, but it is unclear what was on this land earlier.

Negotiations with the government reached a low point in February 2015 when workers sent by the Gangnam District government began demolishing a community center there. They were halted by a court order from Seoul Administrative Court. Mayor Park Won-soon and district head Shin Yeon-hee have continued to disagree on the future of the area and its residents. Park has hoped to properly compensate the elderly residents and develop the land for them, while Shin has acted out of spite against the villagers; neither seems fully capable of delivering the results they desire. Meanwhile, residents wait for the courts to decide their future.
2. Bamgol Village
Not too far away, nestled in a crescent-shaped valley connected to a skinny ridge system separating Dongjak-gu from Gwanak-gu, is Bamgol Village, a far more picturesque community containing nicer-looking houses, cuddled together on the arms of the mountain with modern-day hyper-developed Seoul laying just beyond. To get there, one must typically pass through Sangdo Underpass to the north or Sinsangdo Underpass to the south, forcing people entering the village to come up from underground. At the foot of the basin, the alleys are arranged neatly in straight lines, populated by nicer houses including a few giwa-tiled Hanok. From there, the alleys split off into wilder curving paths heading uphill, all too narrow to allow anything larger than a scooter past, which branch off into even narrower dirt paths the higher you go. Accessibility to the whole area was improved by a proper paved city road up on the ridge above, allowing easy access from uphill. Up there are hiking paths as well as a small Buddhist temple.

According to two residents I talked to, the land was owned by Prince Yangnyeong (1394-1462), King Sejong's older brother; a tomb for
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him is just a little south of here through Sinsangdo Underpass. The land has since been owned by Jideoksas, a foundation run by Yangnyeong's descendants. They sold the land to Tae Ryeo Construction which erected a redevelopment office at the foot of the village in early 2013; an official opening ceremony is captured on Daum's street view feature dated March 24, 2013.

My first visit here was during the Lunar New Year weekend in 2008, when I climbed out of an abandoned neighbourhood on the other side of the ridge and followed a charming road down into a lively neighbourhood with a gorgeous city view. Stores were open and people, old and young, were happy. My next visit wasn't until September 2012, when I found the area run down, with many of the homes abandoned and badly damaged. Some homes were clearly still lived in but I don't believe I saw a single resident. The abandonment that was occurring here was not because of forced eviction, though, but by residents just moving out. Where were these elderly residents going? Likely, many moved directly into hospital beds or elderly care facilities.

I visited again during Chuseok 2015, at which point we collected drone footage of the area. This time, I noted murals painted on some of the walls as a beautification project, likely intended to improve the quality of life of residents and justify preservation of the area. The narrow paths between buildings were cracked and in many places the materials underneath were visible, exposing their construction methods. It was quiet for the holidays, but not as quiet as my previous visit. Reaching the top of the ridge, we met a smiling man carrying a white puppy comfortably cradled in a taut green net, likely to its doom.

My next visit was in February 2017, shortly after demolition vehicles started tearing down the homes at the top of the ridge. By then, the homes were almost all abandoned, but in my many subsequent visits as demolition progressed it became clear where evictee holdouts were located. According to the residents I approached, the eviction process was carried out fairly amicably, most likely due to the high vacancy rate, the average old age of the residents, and their poor legal claim to the land. I was told each resident was given a relocation package, and told to be silent about the details, as theirs was more generous than everyone else's, obviously encouraging them to pursue their individual interests rather than community interests.

On my last visit, dated Sunday, April 30, there were four remaining inhabited properties, standing amid the devastation. Each claimed to have legitimate ownership of the land, which was the basis for their claim to proper reimbursement as land owners, rather than decades-
old squatters. All seemed ready and eager to leave, but couldn't move out until proper compensation was provided. At the base of the village was a brick building housing a supermarket on the first floor. The woman working there lived in a residence above. She said her father-in-law first moved here 70 years ago, a number that would place it post-Japanese occupation and pre-Korean War, and probably not too accurate. Sometime in the ’90s, they had enough money to rebuild on the spot, creating the larger building to accommodate their business and upstairs residence. She said she didn't want to leave the neighbourhood where her husband was born and would be the last resident here. Up the hill in a more convenient location to road access were nicer, newer brick villas that were entirely residential. I was told the ground floors of both were still inhabited, and witnessed younger people entering and exiting but made no contact.

The bowl where the village was situated, by this time, was entirely scraped away, exposing the yellowish sandy foundation underneath, leaving it “moonscaped” as I call it. Workers have been covering this exposed surface with tarps to prevent the wind from kicking up dust. Amid that, three structures still stand: two are tiny houses with 수용 (accept) and 미계약 (no contract) spraypainted on the exteriors. We were told the owners had moved out but they still had a pending lawsuit with the redevelopers.

On April 30, 2017, all houses except for a few had been removed, the land had been moonscaped, and workers laid down blue tarps to prevent the wind from picking up dust. The house pictured above is spraypainted with 수용 (accept) and 미계약 (no contract).
The third structure was a home halfway up the far side of the slope, an L-shaped house with one outhouse and enclosed by a wall. It was entirely surrounded by the moonscape, and as I observed, the elderly female resident watched from her madang as an excavator downhill puttered around eating away at the landscape. Seeing such a normal house amid such devastation was quite a surprise.

This phenomenon is described in China as “dingzihu,” or literally “nail house,” as in the one nail that won't get hammered down. The Korean name is 알박기 (pronounced albakgi), which has no such symbolic meaning.

I brought a Korea Times reporter with me, intent to make contact and interview the remaining resident who would stay here while everything else in her former neighbourhood was removed.

We walked straight in, past the workers at the redevelopment shack who didn't stop us, and knocked on her front gate. She was happy to talk with us and gave us a bunch of information, all the while still wearing a kimchi-making glove as we’d interrupted her food preparations. We noted electricity on inside, and a very primitive squatter in a detached outhouse.

On April 30, 2017, one of the final remaining residents of Bamgol Village is seen watching active demolition downhill from her home.
The 80ish-aged woman, who'd lived here for 30 or 40 years, told us she owned the land which had value, but the house itself was too old for compensation. She said she was totally willing to move out, but she met the redevelopers a couple days earlier and they offered her an insufficient relocation package, which would mean she couldn't resettle within the city. She said she wanted to leave as soon as possible but knew that moving away before negotiations were done would surrender her last remaining chance for fair compensation. She said the redevelopers told her if she doesn't act soon the price will drop even further.

The negotiations were made to sound remarkably civil. Though visually the situation looked quite dire and extreme, obviously she was peacefully allowed to remain with her property intact. She said there was no violence or terrorism against them, though sometimes the workers left garbage in front of her home; they would remove it once she requested.

Minutes after we left, my colleague was contacted by the woman's daughter, who insisted we remove any mention or picture of her from the Korea Times article. She said due to the tensions with other evictees, her mother faced adversity from her former neighbours, and she wished not to agitate things. Their story is included here simply for posterity's sake, with the understanding these words won't have the effect they would in a more widely distributed newspaper.

The redevelopment plan for this area is simple: highrises. A street-side billboard in front of the redevelopment office advertises the slick new apartment buildings to be constructed here. Presently it is unclear whether the new residential apartments will cling to the contours of the existing landscape, or if the ridges will just be dug out and the land flattened. Speaking to one resident of the neighbouring “The Sharp” apartment complex, we were told the whole area would be renovated into a park, and that the roadway between Sangdo and Sinsangdo underpasses would be buried, presumably like the section of Yulgongno between Changdeok Palace and Jongmyo. But that contradicts the billboard, which admittedly is now over four years old.

3. Baeksa Village
A different fate is said to be in store for Baeksa Village in Junggye-dong, Nowon-gu. This village is said to house 2,000 on the slope of Buramsan. I visited twice, first in September 2015 and more recently in April 2017, seeing very little difference between visits. The neighbourhood is further removed from the city, with the tops of highrises visible in the distance, but otherwise overwhelmed by the face of the mountain the village sits upon. There are three lobes to the neighbourhood layout, divided by the
terrain and roadways. Of these, the lobes to the left are more painted with murals, while the rightmost lobe seems more lived in. For some reason, many Korean flags are flown here, unrelated to the political ugliness of their presence at pro-Park Geun-hye protests earlier this year.

A truck delivers pesticide along the narrow roads of Baeksa Village on Sept. 5, 2015.

This moon village is widely known to date to the 1960s. Apparently when the central city evicted moon villages there, this land was in 1967 dedicated for their resettlement. The National Forest Association had owned the property, which was designated land parcel 104, which is how it gets its name. Families moving here were allotted 15-square-meter lots, and the city provided 200 cement bricks for groups of four families, presumably to build their houses together. For the time being upon their arrival, they lived in tents provided. Early Baeksa Village had no roads, no water supply, and no sewage. The city provided a public well for the community, as well as a bus route leading to the city center. Gradually waterworks were installed to bring running water to homes, and the housing materials were upgraded. For about 20 years, Baeksa Village remained pretty much the same. Around 1987, some residents were given legal property ownership. Also around that time, highrise apartments began rising up over the mountainside community.

According to articles mostly dated to early October 2015, a part of Baeksa Village will not be redeveloped but “reworked.” A plan by Seung H-sang will protect one-third of the area, preserving the “urban grain.” International architects have been brought in with the mission of
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preserving the “local memory” of Baeksa Village.

The draft of the plan I acquired was to conserve four aspects of the village: the topography and specific sites to offer physical and aesthetic continuance, and the roads and lives of inhabitants to maintain social and economic continuance. The plan calls to avoid heavy redevelopment that is destructive of urban fabric and street patterns. Under this plan, property boundaries would remain unchanged, with extreme limits on the design of new constructions in them.

Although the design team claimed to have met and consulted with Baeksa residents and owners, it is unclear what conclusion they reached, and even if the residents were allowed to truly give their feedback and input, or were just consulted to rubber stamp the plan.

This 2014 rendering shows the plans for the area, which would see one-third preserved or reconstructed and the rest to be apartments. (image taken from internet)

This project calls into question what exactly should be done with these areas. In contrast to the wanton destruction of Bamgol Village, this project seems set to turn the remaining area into an outdoor museum. An early proposal, presented at the Asian Coalition of Architecture and Urbanism (ACAU) 2014 conference in Seoul, presented the idea of installing a chairlift with stations at Hagye Station on Line 7, the top of Baeksa Village, and higher up on Buramsan for easier access to the hiking paths, essentially turning the area into an amusement park and
guaranteeing the residents all the privacy that zoo animals enjoy. Another idea was to hollow out the mountain and rebuild the village over a large parking garage. Fortunately, neither of these showed up in the official plans. More sensible ideas suggested widening the alleys for emergency vehicle access and commercialising the area for tourism or shopping. Fortunately, none of these showed up in the official plans. The Baeksa Village preservation/reconstruction plan was originally championed by the Korea Land & Housing Corporation (LH), but sometime in 2016 the plan fell to the Seoul city equivalent, Seoul Housing & Communities Corporation (SH). Its current status is not known.

4. Gaemi Village
Meanwhile, up in the armpit of Inwangsan in Hongje-dong, Gaemi Village, literally Ant Village, another moon village remains in obscurity, with no development plans on the horizon. It has been designated as “future heritage” which places extreme limits on the amount of work that can be done on any of the buildings here, which are in significantly worse shape than those at Baeksa Village.

In this May 1, 2010, photo, young domestic tourists take in the “future heritage” of Gaemi Village (above) while under the mural paint the structures crumble, such as this abandoned house (below).
Dating back to the late '50s or early '60s, Gaemi Village was originally known as Indian Village, but the residents didn't like the name so it was changed to Gaemi Village, referring to the industriousness of its residents. A second neighbourhood located in Geoyeo 2-dong, Songpa-gu, is also known by the same nickname.

This one in Seodaemun-gu resides in the folds of the mountain, with one central road running straight uphill and the neighbourhood spreading out on either side. According to a 2010 OhMyNews article, it sits on 10,000 square meters of land and houses 400 people. Half are renters and the other half own their land.

At some point years ago, this was a well-known mural village in Seoul, attracting domestic tourists. It is also convenient, being located at the top of Seodaemun village bus 7's route, which provides easy access. On my first visit on May 1, 2010, it was crowded with young domestic tourists eager to take pictures among the many quirky murals. But on my second visit, on June 19, 2016, the murals were fading and not a single tourist was to be seen.

Perhaps this parallels what happened in Iwha Mural Village (itself not a moon village despite the hillside locale), where artists similarly painted murals everywhere, leading to increasing foot traffic.
which has been attributed to staving off redevelopment. But this sort of project fails to take into account the wishes of the residents, who may want a payday to move out, and who also may not enjoy having their neighbourhood turned into a zoo. This became apparent in April 2016, when Iwha residents defaced a popular mural, strongly communicating their displeasure and also leading to accusations of a property crime on the very residents the murals were intended to protect.

The 2010 article made mention of plans to use Gaemi Village as a filming location, which displeased the residents quoted, as it disrupts their lives and any economic benefit to them was unclear. According to the same article quoting one man, apparently also half of residents want to redevelop the area. However, its location is even more inconvenient than any of the other moon villages discussed here.

Gaemi Village may someday be the last moon village in Seoul standing, leaving it and its residents stranded in a state of decay for the time being, without even possessing a reliable address system for all homes.

5. Haebangchon
Now considered a foreign community and a destination for foodies attracted to the latest foreign food fad, Haebangchon (HBC) was once a moon village. Built on the southern slope of Namsan where Japanese imperialists had formerly operated a firing range, it was inhabited by people who had lost their hometowns in the war, either cut off from their lands in the North or by other means.

Decades ago, the buildings here were largely redeveloped, either as a result of the residents' prosperity or by selling off their property and escaping. As a result, the neighbourhood faced small-scale redevelopment. Though the buildings are bigger and the alleys larger, it is likely the general map of the area retains many of its original contours, including streets and green spaces. Without large-scale urban renewal it would be hard to change the course of roads while most surrounding structures are still inhabited. Likely the street grid has been heavily simplified, however. This most likely unfolded this way as larger-scale urban renewal was unfeasible due to financial and technological limitations of the time.

The area has significant economic activity along the main road running through the area, but turning off the main street leads to a more purely residential setting. Many of the alleys, stairways, and spaces between buildings including gardens provide evidence of the area's age and earlier character. This area provides housing, as well as access to amenities for its residents, plus a livelihood for the businesses located
there, as the area has become quite popular with people from other areas.

What exists now is a vibrant neighbourhood culture that has been allowed to develop, which seems about as ideal as one could hope. As a moon village that achieved economic prosperity, likely due to proximity to USAG Yongsan, it redeveloped itself in an “organic” way, both preserving a trace of what had been before and also raising the standard of living. Moon villages tend to disappear as local poverty disappears, either through means of social cleansing or betterment.

**Moon villages outside Seoul**

These communities are far from unique to Seoul, with traces of moon villages evident all across the country.

Easily the most famous is Gamcheon Culture Village, an old hillside shantytown in Busan that has been extensively redecorated by artists, turning it into a popular tourist destination with nicknames such as “Korea's Santorini,” “Machu Picchu of Busan,” and “Lego Village,” each more cringeworthy than the last.

Many other such sites are found across Korea, including Jaman Mural Village in Jeonju and Dongpirang in Tongyeong.

In 2007, both Dongpirang and Gamcheon faced redevelopment, only for artists to come together to transform the areas into cultural districts rife with public artwork, thus injecting additional cultural value and staving off redevelopers. It worked, leaving both areas (and many more like them) suspended in time. I have heard an agreement is worked out that whenever one house in these areas is vacated, artists are given priority to move in, ensuring they don't become too empty. Jaman, in contrast, seems much more commercialised, lined with cafes and numerous other businesses built into the area.

Further up north in Incheon is Sudoguksan, a moon village that previously covered a mountain by the same name. Redevelopment projects have seen most of it removed, making way for a highrise apartment complex and the tunnel entrance for an expressway, not yet complete. More curiously, a good section of the hill itself was transformed into parkland, with the Sudoguksan Museum of Housing and Living erected at the top to memorialise the old community in its own way.
The Sudoguksan Museum of Housing and Living is presented mainly for children and those feeling nostalgic about Korea’s past, such as the Korean game 말뚝박기 presented in this outdoor statue, inviting visitors to pose for a picture.

On a recent visit on April 15, I found the museum well-visited by people of all ages, with elderly people especially bringing their young grandchildren there for a glimpse of the conditions they grew up in.

“I’m scared,” wailed one young boy as he entered the large room where a section of moon village has been reproduced, entirely out of new materials, with only a few old items added on as window dressing.

One old woman passing by voiced her approval, agreeing it was a fair representation of the old community she once knew.

In another section of the museum, the hardships of life in a moon village have been gamified for kids, with hands-on activities giving kids the chance to carry charcoal briquettes on their backs up a small slope to the door of a home, and other menial chores. It is cute and fun to see kids tracing this aspect of their nation's past this way, but otherwise offers little information. More surprisingly, one section of the moon village still seems to stand, off to the side on the way up to the museum. On my way up there, one elderly man was heard to mutter about how he hopes it disappears soon.

**Attitudes toward moon villages**
The topic of moon villages is largely unexplored in Korean society and academia, and while Koreans are finding increasing value in remembering the communities built out of hardship in the nation's darkest times, the consensus seems to be these are places best forgotten.
When I worked at a government-run cultural promotion agency, I was told by one coworker the reason for all apprehension toward moon villages. It wasn't out of a sense of pride that denied all blemishes on Korean modern history: there were strategic implications. Apparently, North Korean reporters, when visiting Seoul years earlier, were eager to get away from the signs of affluence in the capital city and zoom in on the moon villages, bringing back evidence that capitalism had resulted in abject poverty in an inescapably stratified society.

While this very well could be a valid excuse for South Korean insecurities, it is unlikely known among all people who discourage any amount of gazing upon the moon villages. After I lectured on Seoul's urban redevelopment on July 7, 2015, I was told by one attendee that my translation of “daldongnae” as “moon village” was faulty. When I asked for a better translation, I was told it meant “place I don't want to go.” It should be clear that the translation as moon village wasn't at fault, and that she took umbrage at my interest in these communities. I have become used to this sort of reaction among Koreans to my interest in Korean urbanism.

It is worth looking at the small handful of times in which it is acceptable to mention moon villages and they become visible in society.

The longest-running way non-residents had of interacting with moon villages and being reminded of their existence was on the way up to a mountain they wanted to hike, taking them through a moon village built on its slope.

As well as the museum in Incheon, there is the rise of mural villages in turning these areas into destinations for local tourism, though this approach seems to be falling short as the villages fall into disrepair after a few years. The increased tourism trickles out anyway, solving no problems and doing little to increase the quality of life of the remaining residents.

I also frequently see images of moon villages in the business sections of newspapers, where benevolent company executives are pictured delivering charcoal and other necessities to the local residents as part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) drives.

On social media, especially Instagram, a high number of images tagged with relevant keywords seem to come from a moon village movie set around Suncheon, which gives young people a safe, unintrusive place to visit moon villages unspoiled by graffiti and thus appearing more authentic, while also totally flimsy constructions made for whatever earlier productions were filmed here.

It is likely as they continue to disappear, moon villages will be
looked on with more nostalgia, but this is unlikely to change until the places themselves and the people living in them are distant memories.

The legacy of moon villages
Moon villages are fascinating to study, as they present a unique style of urban living different from modern life. They offer many attractive characteristics, such as:

- an intimacy of scale
- communal spaces
- a local community identity
- agricultural space and microfarming
- maximised sunlight
- street culture
- pedestrian-based lifestyle, not car-based
- low density
- housing accessibility not reliant on waiting for the elevator
- exercise in moving around
- a fantastic view of the city or mountains
- access to hiking trails
- continuous development and upgrading if money is available
- something “authentic”

These are some of the reasons we should study this urban phenomenon before it disappears. As the real estate bubble distends and the construction industry slows down, the large-scale model of urban renewal turns obsolete. Korean demographics show an increase in single households, low-income workers, and an aging population, none of whom are served by more identical highrises. As Seoul's population drops, the post-apartment era may present opportunities for lower-density housing projects that serve renters, the elderly, and artists. Basically, the city needs more low-priced rental housing, and the rapidly aging moon villages provide an excellent Petri dish for urban planners to use their imaginations.

Looking at any moon village in the country, it is clear the continued existence of any of them in any authentic form is unsustainable. They either develop in natural ways like HBC (a process whose door seems to have been shut decades ago), or are erased from the face of the Earth like Bamgol, or are tackily preserved as museum showpieces like Baeksa and Gaemi seem to be.
This house in Guryong Village, seen Feb. 10, 2015, is covered with a waterproof tarp taken from an ad for highrise apartment buildings.

It seems natural to desire their closure and their residents' relocation, as quality of life can only improve if they are empowered, not forced, to relocate. After all, moon villages are not much better than refugee camps, only more permanent. The people living in moon villages want the economic power to resettle themselves in a higher quality of life, not be held up as paragons of Korea's urban poverty. So any policy approach toward moon villages should be done on a sociological level first and foremost, with architecture and history taking the backseat.

That said, moon villages must not be totally forgotten, as they present a living document, carved into rock, of the persevering spirit of the Korean people. They showcase the early steps of a nation waking up from incomprehensible despair and having the strength of character to rebuild itself. The people who made these into vibrant communities are forgotten victims of a forgotten war and its aftermath. The buildings and paths they forged into the mountainside showcase their desperate circumstances, as well as their ingenuity, like some kind of East Asian Swiss Family Robinson.

Jon Dunbar, a council member of the RAS, is an urban explorer who has been documenting urban renewal in Seoul and around Korea since 2007. He curates a database of 400 various abandoned and forgotten areas around Korea. He works as an editor for The Korea Times.
Western travel accounts from the late 19th century are informative and often entertaining. They grant us not only a view of Korean society during the late Joseon period but also a glimpse of the traveler’s character and convictions. Most of these travelogues were done by missionaries – whose accounts center around proselytizing and ridiculing the superstitious Koreans; diplomats – who concentrated on trade potentials and military matters; and the occasional traveling writers, such as my favorite, Isabella Bird Bishop, who sought to entertain their readers with accounts of the exotic Far East.

Almost all of these travelogues are readily available on the internet and those that haven’t been digitalized can be found in large libraries. It is rare to find an account that has not been widely published but occasionally they do surface. This year, while doing research at the Yokohama archives I found a series of articles published by Homer Hulbert in a Japanese English-language newspaper from 1891. In these articles – which are clearly directed at Westerners living in Japan – he recounted his journey from Seoul to Pyongyang and offered travel suggestions to his readers.

At first it was unclear in what year Hulbert had traveled to Pyongyang and who his companions were. The pioneer of American missionary travel to the northern part of the country was Henry G. Appenzeller, who made his first trip in April 1887.\(^1\) He subsequently

made yearly visits to Pyongyang and later helped guide some of the newer missionaries such as Samuel A. Moffett in August 1890. I could find no mention of Hulbert in Appenzeller’s or Moffett’s correspondences describing that August trip, but Hulbert – in a much later account – does mention traveling with them. Why they failed to mention his name is unclear.

Unlike his companions, Hulbert’s purpose for the trip was not to minister to the Korean people but to learn more about the topography, customs and history of Korea. In his series of articles to the newspaper he said he wanted to remove the title of terrai incognita not only from the maps but from the thoughts of his fellow Westerners:

“It is with the desire to correct the popular impression of the barrenness and sterility of the interior of Korea that the writer invites the readers of the Japan Mail to accompany him along the great highway which connects the capital, Soul, with the ancient city of Pyeng Yang, one hundred and fifty-three miles to the north.”

He began his series of articles by explaining to his readers that traveling in Korea was much different from traveling in Japan. Passports from the Foreign Office were absolutely necessary. Not only did they grant the bearer permission to travel away from the open ports and a degree of protection but also the following benefits:

The Korean Government goes on the principle that all foreigners are guests, and consequently it is very generous in the terms of passports. The document sent you from the Foreign Office calls upon all officials in the country to treat

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3 Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, June 6, 1891, pp. 662-663.
4 Homer Hulbert, Scranton and Bunker – along with their wives – all applied for and received passports to travel to Pan Yang [Pyongyang?] for the purpose of “hunting travel” in January 1889 but whether they went or not is unclear. Charles Chaille Long to Cho Pyong Sik, No. 102, Korean Foreign Office, January 24, 1889, 고려대학교 compiler, 舊韓國外交文書 Vol. 10 (Seoul, Korea: 아세아문제 연구소, 1965), p. 417.
you with kindness and respect, to provide you with lodgings, to supply you with food and to procure you horses or anything else that you may stand in need of and they are able to supply. It enables you to procure money at any of the large provincial towns by simply giving a note of hand for the amount payable at sight in Soul. This last is a very important item because silver money does not circulate in the country, and Korean cash is so bulky that it would be impossible to carry enough for a long trip. At the same time it is a convenience to the Government rather than otherwise for it saves the transportation of revenue from the country to Soul. Although the passport says nothing about payment for lodgings, food &c., provided by officials in the country and no charges are made, foreigners pay for what they receive by leaving at each place a sum amply sufficient to cover all actual expenses and a small bonus besides.

In addition to receiving a passport, one had to decide the mode of transportation. In Japan, people could travel about on trains and use rickshaws but there were “no railways, either present or prospective” or rickshaws in Korea.\(^5\)

There are three possible ways of travelling here: on foot, in a sedan chair carried by two or four coolies, or, on the back of a hardy little Korean pony. Say what you may, the first of these is the royal way. It is only on foot that the traveler gets the most out of the country through which he wanders, but not everyone can afford to travel on foot. It costs too much – not money, but time and strength. For preparation then – one stout pony under the saddle – a pony whose gait you have tried. He may not be a fast trotter, but he must have a good walking gait and a peculiar kind of slow pace, something between a walk and a pace which will carry him along all day at the rate of four miles an hour. Another pony to carry the pack. He must also have a four mile gait, for you cannot travel faster than your pack… So the speed of a trip in the

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\(^5\) Some 50 rickshaws were brought to Korea in 1883 but were not very popular – the runners ended up dumping their passengers too often – and following the Gapsin Coup in 1884, most of them were destroyed as symbols of Japan.
interior of Korea is measured by the speed of the slowest horse.\textsuperscript{6}

Pack ponies carried the camping equipment and, more importantly, the food. Many Westerners did not find Korean food palatable and thus were forced to carry most of what they would eat – preserves, cheese, breads and canned foods – with them. They supplemented their diets with game they hunted or with rice, chickens, and eggs purchased in local markets and in the large magisterial towns good beef, potatoes, corn, wild game, fish, and honey could sometimes be procured.

In addition to the mounts, one had to choose his servants wisely. Mapu (similar to the Japanese bhettō) were responsible for the horses; the “boy” served as a personal servant and was also responsible for cooking; and the final servant – arguably one of the most important – was the kisu which Hulbert described as “a military servant, escort or body-guard, and is valuable not because you need protection in the country, but because his presence always insures obedience to your orders, and opens the doors of native inns when otherwise they would remain closed.”\textsuperscript{7} He recalled that in the past, when traveling without a kisu, he had “sat for half an hour on my shivering pony before a Korean inn on a January night while [his] servants went to rouse the proprietor; and they were successful only when it became evident that noncompliance on [the innkeeper’s] part would result in the demolition of his front door.”\textsuperscript{8}

The weather also played a key part in traveling. During the rainy season (July-August), the road between Seoul and Pyongyang was nearly impossible to travel because there was only one permanent bridge near Songdo (modern Kaesong) that could withstand the flooding brought on by the rain. Once the rainy season was over, little foot bridges were built across small streams and brooks and, as a rule, “bullocks and horses ford in preference to risking their weight on these frail structures.” None of these little bridges were longer than six or seven meters in length – wider rivers and streams were forded or crossed using small ferry boats.

Once assured that the rainy season had ended, the three men made their final preparations and, on August 29, bade farewell to their friends

\textsuperscript{6} Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, June 6, 1891, pp. 662-663.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
while mounting their little ponies and left through “the West Gate, the gate whose lock the plucky little band of Japanese soldiers and citizens picked in making their retreat from [Seoul] on the eventful night in December of 1884.” Hulbert was, of course, referring to the failed Gapsin Coup when a group of young Korean progressives — supported by Japanese — tried to take control of the government. During this coup attempt, a number of conservative Korean court officials were murdered before the progressives were forced to flee with the Japanese to Chemulpo where they found passage to Japan and safety. Innovations that were associated with Japan, such as the newly-founded Korean postal service and rickshaws were subsequently destroyed.

Emerging from the suburbs of Seoul, Hulbert and his party found themselves at what he described as “the first object of interest” — Yeongeunmun and the nearby Mohwagwan. It was here that “the Chinese embassies and the representatives of the King of Korea” met and it perhaps seemed fitting that the most difficult part of the journey towards China began at what was known as Peking Pass. In the past, the slopes of Donuimen, also known as Seodaemun, which was torn down in 1915 during the Japanese occupation. Recently there has been talk of rebuilding the gate. Yeongeunmun was destroyed after the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) when The Independence Arch was begun in November 1896 and completed a year later. Only the two pillars of Yeongeunmun remain. “Notes and Comments,” *The Korean Repository*, Vol. II, March 1895, pp. 121-122.
the pass (particularly Inwangsan) were covered with thick forests of trees where tigers roamed at will and often preyed upon lone travelers. So severe were these predations that the government built a small military post (known as Yuinmak) where lone travelers could wait until they were joined by other travelers at which time a small detachment of soldiers would be dispatched to guide them safely through the pass. Eventually some commander realized that he could pad his pocket by extorting escort fees from the travelers and thus a popular phrase was born: “The tigers of Yuinmak are more frightening than the tigers of Inwangsan.”

Later, this place became popular for people with fatal diseases to seek shelter in small straw shelters along the road and city walls, or lying in the open, while waiting to die.

But it wasn’t tigers nor fatal sicknesses that made it difficult for Hulbert and his party – it was the condition of the path:

It is an interesting fact that the most difficult point in the road between Soul and Pyeng Yang is within two miles of the west gate and in full view of the city. A sharp range of hills runs along the west side of the city and through this is cut a deep pass. So narrow is it in some places that loaded perpendicular rocks and the path is one confusion of rough loose stones among which the pedestrian must pick his way with care, and on which he cannot ride without being guilty of abuse to his horse. No cart or carriage could well pass through it without being lifted bodily in some places. In addition to its extreme roughness, this pass becomes in summer the bed of a stream which fills the interstices with mud while in winter ice forms among the stones and makes the passage well nigh impassable. A few hundred dollars would render this pass perfectly practicable for both beast and vehicle at any season of the year, and the fact that not a dollar is expended on it is a commentary on the attention that roads receive from the authorities. It is the more remarkable inasmuch as repairing of this one place would make it possible for carts to pass freely between Soul and the important city of Song-do fifty miles distant.

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13 Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail,
Some six years later part of the pass collapsed upon the road burying it but fortunately no one was injured. However, transportation into and out of the city through this pass was blocked for over a week and cost the government some 200 dollars to repair.  

“After stumbling over this execrable spot” and assured that the worst part of the journey was over, Hulbert began to appreciate the beauty around him. “Nothing”, he declared, “can surpass the dazzling clearness of an autumn day in Korea. The air has a peculiarly exhilarating effect that makes the very act of breathing a conscious pleasure.” It wasn’t only the scenery that attracted their attention. Now that the weather was better, the road was “alive with gaily dressed travelers mounted or on foot” making the commencement of their country trip even more pleasurable.

But not everything was beautiful. As they followed the road they came to a hill where a sulphur spring attracted large numbers of invalids who, during the warmer months, bathed in it with hopes of benefiting their poor health and curing what ailed them. “Near it you are pretty sure to find a line of mendicant cripples seated beside the road, some playing on rude flutes and others showing their ugly deformities in order to attract the attention and excite the pity of the passer by.”  

Hulbert doesn’t state whether he or his companions favored the poor with coin or food but, seeing as they were missionaries, it would be reasonable to assume that they did stop and minister to the people for at least a few minutes.

It was here, with his description of the northern mountains of Seoul, that we are provided with an example of Hulbert’s knowledge of Korean history and his ability to write in an engaging manner.

Before us rise the grand rugged peaks of Pook Han, in the depression between whose triple pointed top lies the almost impregnable fortress of the same name designed as a place of refuge for the King in times of disturbance. These craggy peaks remind us of those which one sees in descending the Usui Pass on the Nakasendo in Japan, the difference being that the former are absolutely naked and treeless while the latter are clothed at every possible point with luxuriant vegetation which is so characteristic of Japanese scenery and

June 6, 1891, pp. 662-663.

14 “Local Items”, The Independent, April 21 and 28, 1896.

15 Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, June 6, 1891, pp. 662-663.
which while adding to its picturesqueness, detracts from its grandeur. The peaks of Pook Han stand like grim sturdy sentinels without ornament of any kind. Seen from the north this magnificent pile of mountains looks like a gigantic castle of the middle ages rising straight from the valley for three thousand feet and then breaking into domes and pinnacles which seem to loom the higher the farther we recede. An interesting legend is extant concerning this mountain. It is said that when Ta Jo, the founder of the present dynasty, then capital of the country, he was at a loss to determine a site for the capital of his new dynasty (for in Korea it has always been the habit to change the capital with a change of dynasty). At that time the peaks of Pook Han were not visible from the mountains behind Song Do, but the new king ascending them one morning looked away to the south and lo! In one night one of the peaks of Pook Han had shot up into sight. Could providence have spoken more plainly? He built his capital at the foot of Pook Han, and his descendants are celebrating now the semi-millennium of that founding.

From here they quickly made their way to the magistracy at the town of Goyang. It was their intention to have tiffin [lunch] with the magistrate who residence was relatively easy to find – look for a clump of ancient willow trees for magistracies are almost invariably surrounded by trees. Unfortunately, Hulbert, did not provide a description of the magistrate or his residency but he did provide a scathing description of Goyang and other country villages.

He admitted that Korean villages did not compare with Chinese towns for filth but added that was merely “damning them with faint praise.” The ordinary village consisted of a long street with small rough houses on either side. No attention was paid to keeping the street in good order – it serving as nothing more than a receptacle for “all refuse garbage and abomination” which was dined upon by “small, black, long-snouted swine” that roamed at will – and during the rainy season were worse than the road in the open country. “The street curbs are the public laundries”, he declared and added, “It is a marvel that whole towns are not obliterated by pestilence when once it gets started.”

16 Ibid.
17 “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, July 4, 1891, pp. 20-
A Korean village in the earlier 20th century

After dining at the magistracy, they continued their journey at a sharp trot, leaving their pack ponies and *mapu* to follow at their own pace. It was something that they regretted: “You never think of the pack ponies until you see a deer run across your path and then you curse your luck that your pack and your rifle are a mile behind, and meantime the tantalizing creature jumps leisurely along looking back now and again to watch the movements of the strange intruders.”  

For several hours they passed through dense stands of trees and wide plains of rice fields until they rounded a corner of a rocky hill and were suddenly confronted by “two immense stone figures representing a Korean man and a Korean woman” perched high above them. “Surrounded by and half hidden among beautiful pine trees they form an exceedingly novel and pleasing break in the monotony of the road” and inspired Hulbert to recount a “familiar Korean story” of a man from one of the southern provinces of Korea:

He desired to go up to [Seoul] to attend the great autumn examination, but being poor he was obliged to walk. One day as he was cutting short the road by crossing a ridge of

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21.  
hills, he approached an immense stone image from whose head appeared to be growing a pear tree and on this tree hung a pear of remarkable size. “Now”, said the man, “If I can get that pear I can sell it in [Seoul] as a curiosity, and so cover all the expenses of my trip.” So he started to climb up, but the farther he proceeded the more difficult it became, until he came to the chin which presented an insurmountable obstacle. But by dint of patient work he found himself at last perched on the lip of the image, but here he was again in despair because of the great nose which hung far out above him. But he boldly entered one of the nostrils hoping to find an opening above. As the aperture began to narrow and he was working his way painfully up, the whole immense image began to shake and tremble and a perfect hurricane swept down the hole accompanied by a deafening noise as of whole batteries of guns. The god had sneezed. The next thing the man knew he was lying torn and bruised, but otherwise unharmed at the base of the image, his fall having been broken by some thick bushes. And, to his delight, beside him lay the great pear which had been shaken off by the convulsion of that sneeze. 19

While Hulbert’s tale is amusing, he would have probably enjoyed hearing the legend of these miruks. It has been said that they were constructed during the reign of Seonjong of Goryeo (1083-1094) after the queen, desperate to have a son, had a dream in which two monks appeared and asked her for food and drink. In the morning she told her husband of her dream and he sent men out to find the monks but they discovered only the large granite formation. Seonjong commanded that the formation be carved into the likeness of the monks and shortly afterwards the queen gave birth to a son. Word spread and soon, women who desired to have sons, began to flock to the spot and pray at the base of the miruks in hopes that they too would be blessed. 20

They spent but a short time here before continuing their journey as they were worried they would not get to Imchin village – where they intended to stay for the night – before dark. It is probably best to let Hulbert describe the next leg of their journey for he does it with a sense of

19 Ibid.
20 Allen D. Clark and Donald N. Clark, Seoul Past and Present (Seoul, South Korea: Royal Asiatic Society, 1969), pp. 140-141.
pride and almost vindication – claiming that there were only a few places in Japan (a country famed for its beauty and exoticness to Western eyes) that could compare to this view of Korea.

Forward again is the word, and this time it is the home stretch, for there are no stops now until we reach our night’s resting place. And just as the sun is dropping behind the western mountains we burst forth from a forest of pines upon a high bluff overlooking one of the least known but most magnificent rivers of Korea. We happen to strike it on the outside edge of an immense curve so that from the height at which we stand, we can look for miles both up and down the stream. This is the acme of Korean scenery. I know of no other one view in the country that will compare with this. Before us lies a steep and narrow gorge leading down to the water, and at the foot of this gorge nestles a great stone gate. I say nestles because it seems to be cramped in between the two sides of the gorge, it is so narrow. A stone gate as large as the west gate of Soul, and of the same general style. It blocks the way entirely, and seals the valley from the approach of any power from the other side of the river. But why this costly structure here? It is one of the defences devised in times gone by against the northern hordes which periodically swept down and overran and devastated the country. And the military skill was by no means of a mean order that selected the site for that gate. The high bluff along the curve of the river is cut here only by a valley that would afford passage for an army, and the gate placed near the water’s edge leaves hardly any room for an opposing force to land much less to arrange their ranks for a systematic attack. It was at this point that the Koreans made their first successful stand against the Japanese in the great invasion of two centuries and half ago.

It is a deep, strong, majestic river, and as we enter the shallow ferry boats and push off we are swept far down the stream by its resistless current and wonder as we finally touch the opposite bank how the boat will ever get back. As we look back at the growing rocky palisade behind us and the gate dwarfed into insignificance by the height of the cliff against which it seems to stand, we are unable to determine from which side the view is more beautiful. To all of you
who have formed, to put it mildly, a conservative idea of the beauties of Korean scenery I can say from experience that there is nothing along the Nakasendo that surpasses this spot, excepting perhaps one or two views in the Usui Pass.  

They stayed the night in a country inn at Imjin. Country inns were, declared Hulbert, a “factor of prime importance to the foreign traveler” when a magistracy could not be reached before nightfall. Descriptions of Korean inns grace the pages of most of the popular travelogues so Hulbert’s description is not unique but is rather amusing.

Entering the courtyard via a large double door from the street, there were stables and storehouses on two sides while the innkeeper’s residence and the guest rooms were on the others. The horses were situated so that they faced inwards “towards the court and feed from troughs cut in long logs. They are not separated by partitions or even railings, and when the inn is fairly full the kicking and screaming among the animals is continual.” Korean ponies were notoriously foul-tempered and constantly fought with their handlers, riders and one another.

Once the horses were settled they entered into the inn which was basically a large room that served not only as the dining room but also as a common sleeping room for all the guests.

When a person enters an inn he gives his order for a certain number of tables of food. If he does not specify particularly it is understood that he wants a first class table, and here a curious feature of Korean life comes out. The charges at a Korean inn are only on the food a man eats, no account whatever being taken of the lodging. If a man eats but one meal a day he pays for one, and no charge is made for room whatever. Even when a man has an extra room by himself there is no charge. It is the food that he pays for, and that only.

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22 Homer B. Hulbert, “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, June 6, 1891, pp. 662-663.
When “an evil-minded member” of the party suggested eating Korean food, Hulbert meekly acquiesced, and three tables of food were ordered. Eating in the inn required patience: “They never prepare food beforehand in readiness for guests, but as each man orders they get out the dry rice and go to work to boil it.” Hulbert spent his wait quite profitably by preparing his “foreign foods” that he brought along to supplement his Korean food with. After some forty minutes, the food arrived.

Food is served in Korea much the same as it is in Japan, each person being supplied with a separate table. Of course rice forms the main dish, and everything else is in the nature of condiment or relish. Each table bears, then, an immense bowl of rice heaped up and running over, more, on the whole, than any two men can make away with. But with the rice are mixed small black beans which while detracting from the appearance, add to the flavor of the dish. The dish next in importance is the *kimchi*, a veritable Korean sauerkraut which can be detected from afar and which has the staying qualities of our own garlic. Then there is dried fish picked fine, and a sort of shrimp salad, an abominable dish, especially when eaten in the summer season and not near the sea shore. Some sort of melon partially cooked and cut into thin slices is also a common dish. Almost everything has a coating of cayenne pepper to which is doubtless due the frequent complaints of indigestion on the part of Koreans. They have a great taste for sauces, and these are always strong and pungent. The most noticeable fact in regard to Korean food is the absence of all fatty substances. It is only in the larger towns that meat is commonly eaten and even then all fat is eliminated as much as possible. Almost all Koreans are practically vegetarians, the little dried fish they eat forming but a small fraction of their food. Of course this diet has an effect on the physique of the Koreans, but it cannot be called a bad effect for they are generally as strong and robust as any people that it has been my fortune to meet, while in the matter of walking they can outstrip a foreigner with ease. I have known many who could easily keep up a forty mile gait week in and week out, and be none the worse of it.  

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After dinner it was time to retire for the night. For the most part, the guests were expected to sleep in the large common room “excepting when a traveler of quality arrives, in which case the other guests are relegated to a rear apartment or one of the private rooms of the hosts is given up to his entertainment.” 25 As travelers “of quality”, the three Westerners were apparently granted a room to share and Hulbert offered these tips to his readers:

This matter of arranging your bed for the night is an important one, and how you sleep depends on the manner in which it is done. First the mats must be taken out and shaken and the floor carefully brushed before they are put down again; then after they have been replaced they must be sprinkled with a generous coating of insect powder. If it be winter an armful of dry straw makes a welcome diversion from the hard floor, and also lessens the danger from vermin. In the winter the first thing to do on entering your room is to break out several squares of paper in the door so as to have a little ventilation. All the rooms in Korean inns are likely to have from ten to twenty ill-smelling bean cheeses hanging from the rafters, and these alone render continual ventilation necessary.26

There was another matter that Hulbert instructed his readers upon – ondol, the underfloor heating system. Even in the summer ondol was used. “When foreigners travel in the interior the first thing they do on entering an inn is to order the fire not to be built under their room. In the winter they often fall into an opposite error” by ordering the fire to be built larger. 27 The larger fire runs the risk of igniting the bedding from the intense heat and during the summer, “although [the ondol] makes the room uncomfortably warm, keeps it dry and thus prevents a great deal of disease that would otherwise break out.”28 Hulbert suggested that the best

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
course of action would be to allow the Koreans to regulate the heating themselves.

It was with these final preparations that the men finally turned in for the evening. They had traveled only 35 miles (56 kilometers) but were satisfied with their efforts considering that for the past couple of months they had spent in Seoul “with no more exercise that semi-weekly tennis” and were convinced, despite having to use “Korean pillows made of square blocks of wood or sections of a round log”, that they would have a full night’s sleep and be refreshed in the morning. They were wrong.

If a man is not by habit an early riser there is one feature of his country wanderings in Korea that he is not likely to forget, namely the getting up. The natives have the habit of sleeping as much in the middle of the day as they do at night. They travel until nine or ten at night and sleep until three in the morning, when they are up and off. By nine or ten in the morning half their day’s work is done, and they can lie down and sleep until four in the afternoon and then they are off again. We are quite willing to grant that this is the proper way to travel in summer, but it is desperately bad to get into the way of it. The very mention of four a.m. to the average man is or ought to be actionable, but in Korea you have to put up with it. After four o’clock in the morning there is no comfort in a Korean inn. The horses just outside your door are quarreling over their fodder, the coolies are shouting to each other as they lash on the packs. Cocks are crowing all about, and a man has simply to swallow his rage, get up and move out. There is no rest for the wicked or anybody else in a Korean inn after four.

With little choice, the party was soon on the road. All throughout the morning they traveled across a wide flat plain until in the distance they sighted “a dark, treeless range of jagged mountains” at the end of which lay their destination, Songdo – the ancient capital of Goryeo. Hulbert was convinced that “in Korea the only proper site for a capital city is at the end of a great mountain chain.” Seoul had Pukhan Mountain which was supposed, “by a stretch of imagination”, to be the termination of the

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29 Ibid.
30 “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, July 18, 1891, pp. 71-72.
mountain range stretching from Baekdu Mountain in the far north. It was for this reason that every year a deputation of Korean officials left Hamheung and walked “until they came in sight of the distant dazzling white peak of [Baekdu] mountain, when they lay out their gifts and perform their genuflections towards that mountain, which in the Korean view stands sentinel over the destinies of the ruling house.” 31

Throughout the morning they pushed on until they came to their first intimidation of Songdo’s proximity – a small stone pagoda. Hulbert was not impressed by Korean pagodas – claiming them to be “quite insignificant compared with the pagodas of China or Japan” – but did note this one was of some consequence, the only other one being the pagoda in Seoul where “once stood one of the most powerful and wealthy of the Buddhist monasteries of former times.” 32

A Korean street scene in the earlier 20th century

Continuing on, they neared the suburbs of the city and crossed “a massive but dilapidated stone bridge, beneath which ran a small and sluggish stream choked with sand and weeds, and yet in former times this stream formed a considerable estuary on which floated the largest junks.” Hulbert stated that in the distant past it had been a great port and it was of

31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
“popular belief that the gradual choking up of this stream was the first prophecy of the fall” of the great city.

The city was rich in history but it was also rich in ginseng. Surrounding it were a number of government-owned ginseng farms, for which the region was famous, and, like opium in India, was jealously guarded by the Korean government.

What follows is a shortened account by Hulbert, of their stay in Songdo.

It is only after passing through half a mile of suburbs that we come in sight of the wall of Song-Do. It is about eighteen feet high, or seven feet lower than the wall of Soul, but it is in an equally good state of preservation. The east gate of Song-Do has been removed. The massive stone arch of course remains, but the gate itself was removed by order of the former King of the present dynasty. It is said that this was done because of an act of disrespect toward the Government on the part of some Song-Do official. We put up at a commodious inn just outside the gate, and as it was not yet dark we started out for a walk through the city. Only a comparatively small portion of the space within the wall is now inhabited. The whole of that portion of the city that was occupied by the official class during the palmy days of Song-Do is now under the plough, and a considerable part of the market gardening of the city is done there. Here and there may be seen the remnants of some old stone terrace not yet entirely obliterated. At one point there is still standing an ancient stone Buddha which the people, in spite of the decadence of Buddhism, have kept covered with a substantial roof. It was difficult to imagine that through those deserted and turf grown streets the full tide of the metropolis once flowed. At last we arrived at the site of the ancient palace. Here the massive stone work had defied the encroachments of time more successfully. A fine flight of stone steps, many of which were dislocated from their original position, brought us to a broad, smooth plot of ground where doubtless the great front gate originally stood, and to make this the more certain a little search brought to light the six massive foundation stones on which rested the pillars that supported the three gates. Back of this lay a confused mass of disintegrated masonry and broken terraces.
which was covered with grass and weeds, and from the interstices had sprung up a grove of pines many of which might be a century old. Here and there the rugged root of some aged pine held in its clutch a beautifully chiseled stone once pressed by royal feet. It was a moralist’s paradise…

The only other feature of great interest about that ancient city is the celebrated bridge just outside the North East Gate. The story told of it is as follows. The Prime Minister of the last King of the Koria dynasty, or of the Wang dynasty as it is often called, was a nobleman by the name of Cheung Mong Ju. He was widely celebrated for his learning and his general ability – in fact he was the leading scholar and statesman of his day. The great General Ta Jo had just returned from a series of successful attacks upon the Japanese pirates that infested the southern coasts of the peninsula. He had routed them at every point, and the people consequently almost worshipped him. One leading trait in his character was his thorough loyalty to the King, whom he idolised by the entire army, and it only shows that Cheung Mong Ju was mortal when we notice that he was jealous of the rising fame of the great general.

As the King’s son was returning from the court of the Ming dynasty at Nanking the Prime Minister arranged that the general, Ta Jo, should be sent out with a large escort to meet the prince and bring him to the city with military honours, but he also arranged a series of reprisals upon the intimate friends and adherents of the general. The general’s son got wind of the scheme and sent out post haste to bring his father back, which he accomplished with great difficulty, for the general, strong in his own integrity, could not be induced to believe that such a plot could be made. However, he returned secretly the same night that he set out, and arrived just in time to prevent the trouble. Some of his most intimate adherents urged upon him the necessity of having this Cheung Mong Ju put out of the way as an act of self preservation, but he sternly refused to save himself from annoyance and misrepresentation by means of such a crime. A few of the young men of his party who were more zealous

33 “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, July 18, 1891, pp. 71-72.
than wise decided to remove this stumbling block from the path of their great leader.

A grand feast was prepared and Cheung Mong Ju was invited to attend. The Prime Minister was present and all went smoothly, but as he was returning to his home in the small hours of the morning and was crossing this stone bridge, a body of men rose on all sides and hurled stones at him until he expired, and his blood flowed out upon the stones and to this day it has never been washed off. The storms of winter and the showers of summer have not been able to wash off from that stone, although unsheltered, a single drop of the great man’s blood. The bridge is surrounded with a railing, inside of which no one is supposed to go. If you throw water on the stones what before was a great dull red blotch becomes bright blood red, which seems to all Koreans, who may not be supposed to be deeply versed in the mysteries of geology, to be proof positive that this is the veritable blood of Cheung Mong Ju and that Heaven has ordained this miracle to be a lasting witness that here a great man fell.

On our way back to the inn we purchased some of the large and luscious peaches for which Song-do is deservedly celebrated. As we arrived at our inn a Korean magistrate
with his numerous retinue on his way to his magistracy in the north came along the street and turned into the inn adjoining ours. While we were eating our dinner we heard a great commotion in the street, and looking out we saw a band of [kisu] and coolies beating a poor fellow unmercifully. We were told that he was one of the bearers belonging to the magistrate’s retinue and that he had taken some wine and had gone in to the magistrate’s presence without being summoned, and for this he was dragged out and beaten so severely that at last some of his companions carried him off more dead than alive.  

Hulbert and his companions left the following morning before the magistrate and his party were astir. Hulbert mockingly declared that the magistrate was merely following “the prime law of Korean conduct – never be in a hurry…” The Westerners’ smugness was soon dampened for shortly after they left Songdo it began to pour with rain. It was going to be a long and wet journey.

Robert Neff is a writer and researcher of the late Joseon era. He has written or co-written several books including Letters from Joseon, Korea Through Western Eyes and Westerner’s Life in Korea. He and Brother Anthony recently co-authored Brief Encounters: Early Reports of Korea by Westerners (Seoul Selection, 2016). He also writes regular columns for The Korea Times.

34 “Korea as seen from the Saddle”, The Japan Weekly Mail, July 25, 1891, pp. 103-104.
35 Hulbert’s articles were quite lengthy and filled not only with the accounts of this particular travel but earlier travels as well. I have chosen not to include many of these as well as many of the historical accounts that were later reproduced in The Korea Repository, The Korea Review and “History of Korea” due to space limitation.
Two Accounts of the French Expedition of 1866

Translated and Edited by Brother Anthony of Taizé

2016 marked the 150th anniversary of the French occupation of Ganghwa Island in 1866, in a campaign intended to be a response to the execution early that year by the Korean authorities of nine French missionaries. The French force remained there for several weeks before burning the official administrative buildings and sailing away, taking with them nearly three hundred volumes of the royal Uigwe, records of court rituals and ceremonies which have now been returned to Korea.

In the previous issue of Transactions, we published the article “Henri Zuber’s Day-by-Day Record: An Unpublished Account of the 1866 French Expedition,” which was a translation of an extended letter written by a junior officer engaged in the expedition, incorporating passages from his diary, which has been preserved by his family. This gave a brief though very vivid series of impressions of the main events of the expedition, written in an informal manner. The account was made more vivid by having been written in haste on board ship at various points during the time spent on Ganghwa Island, without any later revision.

In what follows, we have translated two more texts; first, the portion of text relating to the 1866 expedition found in a longer, more formal account of the entire tour of duty undertaken by the French ship le Primauguet. This account, too, has remained almost unknown and completely untranslated. Its author, Elisée-Julien Cheval, was stationed on board the Primauguet as a doctor second-class from 1865 until 1867. He returned to France the year after the Ganghwa expedition of 1866 and submitted the detailed notes he had kept throughout his tour of duty in the Far East as the graduation thesis by which he became a fully qualified medical doctor in 1868. This thesis was duly published in printed form for submission in 1868, making it the first detailed account of the expedition to be published, but its purpose being only to serve as an academic thesis, it had no diffusion and no impact, and remained virtually unnoticed and
Cheval served as doctor second class of the Imperial Navy, before becoming a doctor of Medicine on submitting these notes, taken during the expedition to the Far East, as his graduation thesis; then he continued to serve as a principal doctor of the Navy. Made Chevalier, Légion d’Honneur, June 17, 1876, an award he only received on June 23, 1879 at the hands of the Director of the Naval Health Service, Pierre-Alexandre Gourrier. He married, on June 12, 1869, in Brest, Marie Modeste Sophie Broumische (1846-1914). They had 2 daughters. He died of unknown causes in Hyères on Monday, March 12, 1883, aged 42, still quite a young man.

The preface to the thesis relates that the Primauguet, with Cheval on board as doctor second class, set out from Brest on March 5, 1865, headed for China. As the ship was rounding the Cape of Good Hope it was blown onto the coast where it remained stranded for 48 hours, but was then able to continue its journey. It was in the Far East until August 1867 when it returned to Brest via Cape Horn. Cheval and Zuber were on board the same ship.

The second account translated here is that written by Fr. Félix-Clair Ridel. Born in 1830 at Chantenay-sur-Loire, Bishop Ridel died on June 20, 1884, in Vannes (Morbihan). He was ordained priest on December 19, 1857, served in his home diocese for a time, then joined the Paris Foreign Mission in July 1859. On July 25, 1860 he set off for Korea, which he was able to enter clandestinely on March 31, 1861. After studying the Korean language he spent most of his time in the southern regions. He was able to escape to China when the persecution of 1866 began and inform the French authorities of the death of the nine missionaries. After accompanying Rear-Admiral Roze on his expedition, he waited in China to be able to return to Korea.

On April 27, 1869, he was appointed to be the new bishop (Vicar Apostolic) for Korea. He traveled to Rome for the Vatican Council and was consecrated bishop there on June 5, 1870. Returning to Manchuria, he settled in the mission station of Tcha-keou (known in French as Notre-Dame des Neiges) close to the Korean border. Finally, in September 1877, he was able to re-enter the country, but was arrested in January 1878 and sent back into China a few months later, thanks to diplomatic efforts in Beijing. He composed a grammar and dictionary of Korean which were published in Yokohama in 1880-1. In 1882, during a visit to Japan, he became paralyzed and had to be sent back to France, where he died in Vannes (Morbihan) on June 20, 1884.
The following is an outline chronology of the 1866 expedition, which was undertaken in two parts. First, two small, shallow-draft French ships sailed up the Han River as far as Yanghwa-jin, in order to establish the exact location and disposition of Seoul. Realizing that it could not be easily attacked, they returned to China and a larger fleet with several hundred naval soldiers on board then set sail for Ganghwa Island, seen as a major stronghold of the Korean government, and a suitable target for a punitive expedition.

July 11, 1866. Admiral Pierre-Gustave Roze, after a trip to Beijing, arrives back at Tientsin. News of the killing of nine French Catholic missionaries in Korea reaches him there, together with the report that Fr. Ridel has escaped and arrived in China. A few days later Ridel arrives at Tientsin, still wearing Korean dress.

Admiral Roze prepares to lead a naval expedition to Korea but there is a delay caused by disturbances in Cochinchina which seem to require his presence. He sets out but the matter is settled even before he arrives there, so he returns quickly.

September 18, Admiral Roze sails from Chefoo to make an initial survey of the Korean coast and the river leading to the capital on the Primauguet, accompanied by the Déroulède and Tardif.

October 3, the 3 ships return to Chefoo, the 2 smaller ones having reached a point on the Han River (Yanghwa-jin or Hapjeong-dong) from where the walls surrounding Seoul were visible. The Primauguet, being too large, was unable to proceed upriver and returned to anchor near Ganghwa Island after striking a submerged rock.

October 11, the full expedition sets sail from Chefoo.

October 13, the ships anchor close to Woody Island (l’île Boisée, today known as Jakyak-do), to the South of Ganghwa Island, just off the coast to the south of Incheon.

October 14, Admiral Roze with 5 ships sails up the “Salt River” (the strait separating Ganghwa Island from the mainland) and arrives at Gapgotjin, the village on the island’s coast from where a road leads to Ganghwa city. The French force lands there, and occupies the houses of the village for their lodgings, the inhabitants having fled.

October 16, the French forces enter Ganghwa city after a brief skirmish; the garrison and population flee. The following days are taken up with a search through the government storerooms, where a large quantity of silver is found. The Royal Uigwe books and other precious
Two Accounts of the French Expedition of 1866

objects are chosen to be sent back to France. Then a systematic
destruction of weapons and stocks of gunpowder in the various nearby
forts is undertaken.

October 21, a survey of the northern shore of Ganghwa is made.

October 26, a reconnaissance party lands on the mainland side, close
to the south gate in the wall of the Munsusanseong fortress, which they
thought marked the start of the road leading to Seoul. They are fired on by
soldiers hiding in ambush on the gate and three French sailors are killed. A
brief exchange of fire kills a number of the Koreans, the others flee. The
French open fire with cannon at Korean forces seen emerging from behind
hills a mile or two away. They burn the pavilion topping the gate and the
houses around it.

After this, nothing of note happens for some time.

November 8, there are reports of large numbers of Korean troops
crossing onto Ganghwa at the level of Gwanseong fort. The French have
meanwhile set about destroying all the Korean boats lying along the
shores to prevent such crossings.

November 9, a lightly-armed force of about 120 French set off on
foot to reconnoiter the fortified temple of Cheondeungs-sa. It seems
deserted but as they approach the main gate they come under heavy
musket fire. Many are wounded, though none are killed, and they return to
camp that evening.

November 11, the French withdraw from Ganghwa Island after
burning the palace and official buildings. All the ships are now anchored
near Woody Island (near Incheon).

November 16, Fathers Féron and Calais (the other surviving priests of
the Korean mission) arrive on a French ship from China, having sailed
across to China from Korea in October.

November 18, the planned departure is delayed by a storm.

November 21, the French ships set sail in different directions, some
headed for Japan, others for China.
1. A Doctor’s Account


pages 54-72 The Korean Expedition

Here, in a nutshell, are the causes that drove Admiral Roze to enter Korea. For twenty years, Catholic missionaries had entered the peninsula of Korea, a country which had hitherto remained unexplored and quite unknown to Europeans. The Korean government always showed itself very hostile to the entry of the missionaries, who, they said, disturbed the security of the country and its families and sowed seeds of rebellion. Like all the governments of the East, it wished to stay closed and impenetrable to any European element. Anyway, the missionaries set foot in the country and managed to make many proselytes. In 1846, the news of the conversions effected by missionaries worried the Korean government, which put to death one or two of those bold preachers of the Catholic faith.

It was in order to avenge these killings that the French government sent in 1847 to the coast of Korea, a frigate and a corvette, *la Gloire* and *la Victoire*, both of which were wrecked without being able to enter the country. In 1856, Admiral Guérin was more fortunate: he anchored off the coast of Korea and identified a large bay which he called the Gulf of Prince Jérôme; but he could not contact the Korean government, which refused to deal with him.

From that time, the French missionaries continued to preach the Catholic religion throughout Korea, surrounding themselves, however, with great precautions: they were forced to hide and live incognito. During this period of calm, the number of neophytes increased, and in 1866, when the government began to worry about the success of the missionaries, they counted fifteen to twenty thousand Christians, and they even had supporters at court. A bishop, Mgr. Berneux, even lived in Seoul, the capital of Korea. Nothing presaged the cruel executions that were to take place when, in January 1866, the Russians showed themselves on the northern coast of Korea (we know that the Russians have military facilities in Manchuria, not far from the frontier with Korea).

The suspicious Seoul government was troubled by the presence
of the Russians and sought ways to repel the audacious foreigners. In this difficult matter, it asked Bishop Berneux for ways to repel the Russians. Bishop Berneux saw only an ambush in this invitation to appear at court, and refused for some time to respond to the call of the king. Meanwhile, the Russians went home, and calm was restored to the court of Seoul. The fear of the proximity of foreigners, and perhaps the hesitations of Mgr Berneux, angered the Korean government, which was alarmed at the influence of the missionaries and the growing number of their neophytes. An edict ordered to prosecute the Christians immediately and to kill all the missionaries. This order, emanating from a barbaric government, was carried out in the course of March and April 1866. Only three missionaries escaped the ordeal; one of them, Father Ridel, who told me all these details, managed to leave Korea on a fishing boat manned by seven Koreans converted to Christianity and completely devoted to the cause of the missionaries. Fortunately he landed at Chefoo, from where he went to Beijing to tell our chargé d'affaires about the events. The Admiral received in June the news of the murder of the missionaries, and he resolved to visit the Korean coast to study the matter. A trip to Saigon, where he was summoned by the government, made him delay until the month of September the execution of his projects. It was to this end that we were called in haste to Chefoo.

From September 8 to 17 the Primauguet remained in the harbor, anchored off the island of Tong Kong, where the Chinese government has given us a small grant of land. The time was used in the preparations for the exploration that the Admiral was about to undertake on the western coast of Korea. Father Ridel told us that the capital was built on a river that was said to have its mouth in the Gulf of Prince Jérôme. The Koreans who had accompanied him had often sailed up the river, and they were confident they could guide gunboats up it, if once shown its mouth; on the other hand, at the time when Admiral Guérin was anchored in the Gulf of Prince Jérôme, fishermen from the villages built along the bay assured him that the river that leads to the capital flowed into the Gulf of Prince Jérôme, and by happy chance, a station officer who had been part of the campaign of Admiral Guérin, had a detailed map of the Gulf of Prince Jérôme and the Ferrières Islands, which mark the entrance to the Gulf and are valuable points for landing.

With all this information, Admiral Roze raised his flag aboard the Primauguet and went full of confidence, to undertake the exploration that was to allow us to discover the Seoul river and enable us to contact the government of Korea.

We set off under steam on September 18; thirty-six hours after our
departure from Chefoo we saw the Ferrières Islands and at five in the afternoon we anchored in the Gulf of Prince Jérôme, in front of a small island called Eugénie Island, which is situated at $37^\circ 4$ north latitude and $124^\circ 13$ longitude. This island was taken as the starting point for all the maritime operations. At the sight of the land around the gulf, the Korean pilots recognized without hesitation the mouth of the Salt River.

Before going further, let us take a quick look over the Gulf of Prince Jérôme and the general constitution of the peninsula of Korea. The Gulf of Prince Jérôme is surrounded on the north, west and south by a series of islands forming very tight archipelagoes as one approaches land. This belt of islands is general along the entire western coast of Korea, to the point that some geographers felt able to suggest, on the basis of reports by navigators, that Korea could be a series of archipelagos whose islands are separated by arms of the sea and united at low tide by mud banks. It is not so: this geological structure is unique to the archipelago in the middle of which runs the Salt River, as we shall soon see. The Korean peninsula, bathed to the east by the Sea of Japan, and to the west by the Yellow Sea, is divided into two by a chain of very high mountains that runs down its entire length.

The belt of islands and rocks that surround it on the west form, in some places, an inaccessible barrier to ships. In the midst of this unknown labyrinth, navigation is made difficult by rapid currents and tides of unknown property and heights. Not possessing that information, the Primauguet having moored in the channel of the Salt River, remained stranded at low tide. That day, September 23, the tide fell 10 meters, so that the ship, which had been anchored in water 14 meters deep, found itself stranded on mud in water only 4.5 meters deep. Korea contains very fertile valleys watered by rivers accessible to junks; the mountains are very rich in metal, copper, tin and iron; the missionaries assured me that the metallurgical resources of Korea were considerable.

Let us return to our starting point, Eugénie island. On September 20, the Admiral gave the captain of the Déroulède the order to take on board Fr. Ridel and one of the Koreans, a skilled pilot of the river; he helped avoid many uncertainties and enabled us to head directly for our goal. Ten years ago, Admiral Guérin, following indications of Koreans who had given him to understand that Seoul lay to the east of the Gulf of Prince Jérôme, looked for the river leading to it in the direction of the southeast; Deception Bay, the name given to a cove near the Gulf, proves that he was mistaken in his quest. The entrance to the Salt River, so well named by the Koreans, is only a channel leading to the Seoul river itself; it is located to the north-northwest of the Eugénie island anchorage; we
had to pass between the Prince Imperial Islands to find the way leading to Seoul. The Déroulède advanced boldly in the midst of the archipelago of the Prince Imperial; after losing sight of Eugénie island, we moved into an archipelago more tightly clustered than that we had just left, where the channel became increasingly narrow. Finally, we reached the large island of Ganghwa, which was 40 miles away from the Gulf of Prince Jérôme; the channel forming the Salt River offered very sufficient depths to allow a large vessel to penetrate further into the interior. However, the soundings were made too quickly to show with certainty how far the Primauguet could advance. This lack of precision almost cost us dearly.

The archipelago that forms the bed of the Salt River has a special aspect; each island of the archipelago is formed of one or several small hills crowned with clumps of trees; huge mudflats connect all the islands at low tide. At high tide, the channel is no longer apparent, the ship seems to be sailing in a wide open sea, and all the islands are separated by channels that allow junks to navigate freely. In almost all the small islands exist villages built on mountainsides, sheltered from the NW winds, which are the prevailing winds of winter. These winds, which have passed over the deserts of Mongolia, are very cold and sometimes very violent. The mud banks that connect the islands form true plains; they are watered by small arrayos accessible to boats; it is through these channels that the villages of the archipelago make exchanges and trade. Koreans often increase the territory of their villages by reclaiming the mud plains. The large island of Ganghwa, which will become famous in our military expedition, is the largest of this group of islands; having a circumference of 10 to 15 miles, it is, in its greatest length, traversed by a mountain range with very high peaks. At the foot of these mountains are fertile plains, well watered and cultivated; it is set in the very middle of the Seoul river, which bifurcates just above it: one of the arms flowing south of Ganghwa forms the Salt River, which we explored; the other arm bathes the north side of the island. Ganghwa island can be considered as the bulwark of Korea because it is covered with forts and redoubts.

The sloop the Déroulède came back the day after it had left the Gulf of Prince Jérôme; the captain and the officers had collected a lot of information which was of a great help.

On September 23, the Primauguet, the Déroulède and the gunboat the Tardif went up the Salt River; the two gunboats led the way and gave the result of soundings to ensure the navigation of the corvette. We advanced up to 25 miles from Eugénie island, near a small village that was joined to Ganghwa by a mud bank. At that moment, the Primauguet struck a submerged rocky ledge and remained stranded there for fifteen
minutes. This fortunate stranding was a very welcome warning, valuable because it was later shown that it was impossible to go any further without compromising our vessel; the Admiral ordered the Primauguet to go back; we had lost some of our false keel, but our ship retained all its seaworthiness.

The same evening, we anchored in front of a small village called Siron, located in an island of the same name, which limited to the north the anchorage which had been chosen by the squadron. This anchorage was given the name of the harbor of Woody Island, Ile Boisée, because of the vicinity of an island covered with green trees which formed the southern limit. The Woody Island anchorage is oriented from north to south. It is surrounded by a belt of islands interconnected by mud banks. All these islands, inhabited and well cultivated, can provide very clean water.

The same day as we left Siron (September 24) to come to the middle of the harbor of Woody island, the Admiral went on board the Déroulède to continue the exploration of the river and sail up to Seoul. The Korean pilot was to indicate the route. This investigation lasted eight days; the Déroulède and the gunboat Tardif advanced without resistance, anchoring at night and when the tide no longer allowed them to sail on.

On September 27, the Admiral anchored before Seoul, to the astonishment of the Korean population. The government was alarmed at the presence of these two vessels, and did not feel safe. It sent a message to the admiral, to inquire about the reasons that had brought us to the walls of the capital. This envoy, who received only evasive answers, returned but slightly reassured. Meanwhile, the Admiral, satisfied with the information he had gathered, decided to return to Woody Island, after completing an accurate sketch of the river and the astronomical observations necessary to reach more safely the walls of Seoul in future. The journey down was less peaceful than the journey up had been. The frightened Koreans had established along the river armed positions with rifles and cannons to assault the ships, that did not suffer from their misdirected shots. Our 12- and 4-bore cannons, aimed accurately, promptly drove away the attackers.

The admiral arrived in the harbor of Woody Island on September 30, after completing a very bold and fortunate exploration. The river that leads to Seoul is sinuous and filled with sandbars that are exposed at low tide and make it dangerous to navigate. The tide is felt right up to the capital, that is to say, 36 miles from the island of Ganghwa, the point where the river actually starts. The river water becomes fresh at 10 miles from the capital. The commander of the Primauguet, who accompanied
the admiral and played a most glorious role in this exploration, assured me that it was of very good quality and very clean. Two men in the Déroulède were wounded during this little expedition, with their own weapons: one of them had his leg fractured simply, and the second was burned in the eyes and in the face by a gunpowder explosion; he was treated aboard the Primauguet.

Here are the circumstances in which he received his injury: This man, a first gunner, had just inserted the shot into a 4-bore cannon, when the head gunner responsible for aiming too hastily set fire to the primer and fired the shot. The servant, holding his ramrod, found himself too close to the mouth of the cannon at the time of the unexpected discharge and was violently thrown into the sea by the blast. The flame injured his face and eyes, they were burned over a large surface; gunpowder grains forced themselves under the eyelids and gave the impression at first inspection that the eyeballs were charred. A more careful exploration allowed us to realize that the accident was not serious. The burns to the conjunctiva and cheeks did not exceed the second degree, and the grains of gunpowder that obscured the visual field were simply implanted in the cornea and the whites of the eyes.

The patient was taken aboard the Primauguet, which provided more resources than the Déroulède. In eight days, under the sole influence of cold water, these seemingly serious burns were completely healed.

The crew of the Primauguet enjoyed perfect health during the fortnight that the expedition lasted.

The Primauguet, which remained anchored off Woody Island during the Admiral’s exploration, worried deeply all the Koreans of the surrounding villages. They made frequent visits with their mandarins, who overwhelmed us with questions about our journey and our arrival in their country. But they always left dissatisfied with the information that we gave them.

Koreans belong to the Mongolian race, they are especially close to the Tartar branch; their faces have flattened cheekbones; the eyelids are very slightly oblique, their skin is a little yellow in color, their hair jet black. The men wear their hair bound up on the top of the head, where its forms a kind of topknot similar to that of the inhabitants of Loo-choo (now known as Okinawa). A horsehair headband around the forehead is used to fix their hair. A hat also made of horsehair, with a very narrow crown, rests on the top of the head and serves to wrap the main body of their hair; this hat, with a very fine mesh, is held on by a chin strap. This bizarre headgear is not always used; mostly the Koreans walk about
bareheaded. Their clothing consists of large white or blue robes, according to rank, made of a cotton fabric that they make themselves; wide breeches of the same material are tied at the knees. Their legs are covered with socks of the same color as the other clothes. These white robes, padded with cotton, form the winter clothing. Koreans also make great use of skins and fur that they derive from their mountains and China. Rice-straw shoes complete their clothing.

Koreans are medium sized and strongly built. They are remarkable for their agility: they excel at climbing the high mountains crisscrossed by trails, and that they seem particularly fond of. I think these roads are used for regular communications between villages in the plains; the inhabitants of these villages, instead of walking around their mountains, prefer to follow the ridges to shorten the distance between them. The paths always lead to the summit of the highest peaks, which, as I have said, are crowned with clumps of trees. This feature greatly intrigued me when I arrived in Korea; so I hastened to ask the missionaries about the meaning of these crowns to the mountains. They assured me that these clumps of trees were a religious symbol and represented a refuge reserved to the spirit of the mountain which ensures the safety of each village. Koreans go to the top of the mountains to address their prayers to the genius that presides over their destinies. These are the only temples that Koreans raise to their deity. I was assured that, unlike Chinese and Japanese usage, pagodas there were very few. The one we encountered during our stay in Korea was located in the interior of Ganghwa, and was very modest.

Koreans are of a gentle nature; they lead a pastoral and patriarchal life. The suspicious government keeps them under constant supervision and robs them of all initiative; its main concern is to isolate them in their mountains. The Korean government has relations with China, which each year sends a deputation. Korean houses are narrow and full of smoke, roofed with rice straw. These homes are heated by flues built underground.

The elegance of the houses of the mandarins forms a great contrast to these cottages; they are spacious and well aired. The Koreans make a great use of bronze vessels, whose sound is finer than that of our metal bells. Rice is the staple food for Koreans. As this food is absorbed only boiled, without having undergone fermentation like bread, it constitutes a less complete food than bread. Therefore the Koreans, like all peoples of the East, make a great use of fermented foods that replace the alcoholic essences that fermentation and baking develop in bread. Thus, they make use of dried fish, partially fermented shellfish, and a large number of food plants that have previously been subjected to an initial fermentation. Cabbage, turnip, oilseed rape from which they derive a food oil, account
for a large part of the Korean diet. They harvest on their mountains the famous gen-seng, which they sell on the border with China. The waters are of very good quality throughout Korea. Those we used at the anchorage of Woody Island, however, were inadequate in respect of their chemical qualities: they were a little sweet and contained an excess of calcareous materials. Game, such as pheasants, geese, ducks, etc., is very abundant in Korea. The missionaries assured us that tigers and bears were encountered in the interior. The climate of Korea is mostly temperate and healthy. Autumn and winter, although severe, are the most beautiful seasons of the year. Spring and summer are rainy, especially in May, June and July; September and October are the best months of the year.

Smallpox is very widespread in Korea, which certainly does not enjoy the benefits of vaccination: almost all the Koreans are marked with smallpox scars. If we are to judge the duration of their life from the large number of old people we met, we can deduce that the average life-span is quite long among Koreans. The status of women is the same as everywhere in the East; they lead an interior life and are completely subject to male authority. At our appearance, all the women abandoned their villages and withdrew into the interior.

Here ends our exploration, which was accomplished with rare happiness. On October 1, the Admiral left Korea to return to Chefoo where the whole squadron was to gather. In a week the military expedition was prepared, and on October 11, the entire naval division, composed of seven ships: the Guerrière, frigate; the Primauguet, the Laplace, corvettes, the Tardif, Lebreton, gunboats; the Kienchan and Déroulède, steam sloops, set off for Woody Island.

(. . . .)

On October 13, the squadron anchored at Woody Island and that very day the Admiral decided that we would attempt an attack on the city of Ganghwa, located in the island of the same name. We knew for sure that Ganghwa was one of the strongholds of Korea, where a considerable quantity of war material was accumulated.

Here is the plan of attack projected for the next day:

A 600-man landing force would be posted under the command of a captain. The landing force from the Guerrière, comprising 250 men, would march under the orders of a commander. The landing companies from the Laplace and Primauguet would be commanded by Commander Bochet, and a detachment of marines from Japan and Chefoo would be commanded by a lieutenant. Two campaign cannon were to accompany each of the three columns.
On October 14, all landing parties were embarked in small boats, which were taken in tow by the Kien-Chan and Déroulède; the Tardif led the way with its guns ready to fire on the forts defending the river; the Lebreton protected them as they advanced.

The medical service was very well installed. A central ambulance, headed by the principal doctor of the division, having under him a second-class doctor, followed the headquarters. A large box of medicines and dressing materials was intended to serve the general ambulance; two nurses were attached to the service. A second-class doctor, having under him a nurse, accompanied each column.

I had prepared for my nurse a light and portable combat bag, which contained the items needed for initial dressings. I had adopted the model recommended by Chief Doctor Rochard, in his instruction on the service of doctors in the fleet during campaigns.

Two stretchers entrusted to six men were designed to transport the wounded. The stretchers on the Primauguet were made simply and were very portable. They consisted of two dry, light bamboo, 2m 80 in length, passing through the hems of a strong band of canvas 1m 80 long, and 80cm wide; also two rods of bamboo housed in a slide made on one side of the two large bamboos served to underpin the canvas. This system of stretcher is recommended by its simplicity and lightness.

The boats carrying the landing companies travelled 14 miles up the river in the wake of the sloops: the Koreans, frightened by this military array, did not oppose any resistance. The landing was made unopposed before a large walled gate that rises on the right bank of the Salt River, opposite a similar gate built on the opposing bank. The gates gave access to an enclosure surrounded by very high walls and very well fortified. We took immediate possession of the fortified gate of Ganghwa and the mountains overlooking the river. The people, frightened, fled and spread the alarm in the city of Ganghwa, which we were to attack the next day. The general ambulance was established in a small house on the beach, within reach of the gunboats, anchored before the Ganghwa gate.

The city of Ganghwa is located 3 kilometers from the gate we had occupied, in the midst of a rich and well cultivated plain; broad and high walls surround it completely. Two main gates facing north and south, gave access to the city. The walls were crenellated and lined with small caliber guns in no state to be used.

The city of Ganghwa was attacked on October 16 and fell without us having fired a shot; the inhabitants fled, abandoning everything they owned. The Mandarin himself left his palace, which served as housing for one of the landing columns, which was stationed there until the evacuation
of Ganghwa.

The Admiral went immediately to visit the area and take control of the store-rooms that surrounded the city. These stores contained a large quantity of arms and armor in very poor condition. Barrels of gunpowder in bricks were piled up in the many forts near Ganghwa; there were also considerable quantities of rifles, guns and sabers, piled together amidst heaps of arrows, bows and breastplates; all in a great state of disrepair. At each step we made in the countryside, we discovered a fortress and stocks of weapons that the Admiral ordered to be blown up. The commander-in-chief left some of the troops encamped around the door where the landing had taken place. The Koreans, who were initially surprised by this sudden attack, seeing us establish a foothold in the country, quickly organized a defense. The forts that could not be monitored by our camps were armed, and within days, an army that spies estimated at 20,000 men, was ready to fight.

The Koreans have not always lived in a peace as profound as that in which we surprised them. They must have passed through a long military period: the plentiful supplies we found in Ganghwa are clear proof of that. The Chinese and Japanese histories do indeed mention many wars waged against Korea, and the northern Chinese still remember with terror Korean incursions into their territory. The speed with which the Koreans, caught unawares, organized the defense of their territory, clearly proves the warlike character of these people.

On October 26, we nearly fell victim to an ambush that the Koreans had prepared for us behind the gate on the left bank of the Salt River, which, as I said earlier, was located opposite the Ganghwa gate on the other bank. The Korean army knew by spies that we were planning to make a sortie on the left bank; they lay in ambush behind the gate, and when fifty of our men were about to land, a discharge at point-blank range struck the three small boats carrying the landing party. Three men were killed instantly and two others lightly wounded in the arm and hand. The Koreans were quickly put to flight, and they were soon out of range of our bullets, through the power of their legs and the agility with which they reached the top of their mountains.

The three fatal injuries received by three of our sailors were located in the large splanchnic cavities. A bullet pierced a head from one temple to another, a second entered the chest by the supraclavicular region, the third went into the belly and provoked a hemorrhage of the aorta.

The landing party from the Primauguet took no part in this landing. We would be making a great mistake if we judged the value of Korean weapons by the injuries which were received in the attack, where battle
was joined so close at hand. I would rather say that Korean weapons, being very old, are of very inferior quality.

In fact, the Koreans are armed with matchlock guns, which were used in Europe more than two hundred years ago. The caliber of these weapons ranges from 5 to 8 millimeters; the barrel is polyhedral, finished in the mouth by a beading similar to that of our cannon. The butt, very small and very imperfect, does not allow the gun to be shouldered, and consequently it must be difficult to aim it properly. Therefore the Koreans fight from behind the protection of their walls and they avoid fighting in the open. Their bullets are spherical and made of lead. The gunpowder that is used by the Koreans is doubtless the same as that which we found in such abundance in the stores that fell into our hands: it is in bricks and was made many years before; it has therefore lost much of its explosive power.

The dilapidated state in which we found stores and fortresses proves that the weapons and war provisions used by the Koreans had lost almost all their qualities. The fortresses of the Koreans were armed with rampart guns, in all respects similar to the portable guns. The cannons arming the fortresses are of very small caliber. We have had no opportunity of seeing wounds made by cannonballs. The Koreans did not use the arrows or clubs, that we found in such great quantities in their stores. In sum, the arms of Koreans are of mediocre worth, they have a limited scope, and only do serious injury at very small distances.

The incident I will now describe, in which the landing party from the *Primauguet* took such a large part, will prove what I have just been saying.

On November 9, the Admiral ordered us to reconnoitre the island and explore a fortress that was said to be armed. A column of 150 men, 70 of them from the *Primauguet*, was designated for this. After three hours of walking, the fortress of Chung-Tung-Sa (*Jeondeung-sa*) stood before the little column. This fortress, which seemed unoccupied, had an imposing appearance. Built between two hills forming a very serious natural defense, it was surrounded by high walls spanning the two hills. An arched gate placed between two mountains in a narrow valley, gave access into the fortress. When the sailors arrived in front of the redoubt, the gate was open and a profound silence reigned in the interior of the walls. They advanced without fear along the little sunken road leading to the gate, which they approached to within a distance of 40 meters. At this moment the Koreans, who on this occasion gave proof of great strategic skill, showed themselves on the ramparts of the fortress and sent a hail of
bullets pouring onto our small column. This first discharge put fifteen men out of action; it was followed by a second, as close as the first, which doubled the number of wounded. Meanwhile our sailors went on the defensive and thought only of retreating, the only sensible thing left to do. From the beginning of the engagement, the ambulance was at work; it was located 60 meters away from the scene of the fighting, in the shelter of a small hilllock. The column pulled back, protecting the wounded, who were soon out of reach of the enemy, who remained in the shelter of the fortress. The Koreans did not pursue us, though the occasion was very favorable to them. Indeed, one sixth of the column was out of action, it was necessary that uninjured men took care of transporting the injured. If the enemy had taken advantage of our distress, it is to be feared that it would have caused us great harm.

Let us limit ourselves to our role as a doctor, and coldly study the injuries that were received in that fight: 36 men were hit by the bullets of the enemy, no one was injured fatally, almost all the injuries were minor; among the 36 wounded, there were five officers, all ensigns.

M. Lormier, belonging to the Primauguet, was one; Mr. Lasalle, ensign on the Laplace, was the most seriously affected: he received a point-blank shot that crossed the right arm from side to side and fractured the humerus in the top third. The injury, which seriously compromised the limb of the officer, healed after three months of treatment. Two injuries to knee and wrist, received by two sailors of the Guerrière, presented some gravity. Most of these injuries were to the limbs, especially the lower limbs, which were pierced in a transverse direction. Indeed, the enemy had fired from an elevated point and had made their shots converge towards the bottom of the valley, where our men offered their flank. I have studied in detail the wounds of the men from the Primauguet.

The transport of the wounded was done without difficulty from Tchong-Tung-Sa to the gate of Ganghwa. The Koreans, still not assured, despite their triumph, did not dare trouble our retreat.

On the evening of November 9, the wounded belonging to the Primauguet were installed in the general ambulance, where we proceeded to a serious examination of all the wounds. Several bullets lodged under the skin were removed, then we waited overnight to complete the examination of the injuries that seemed deeper. The day after this incident, the Admiral ordered the evacuation of Ganghwa, and on November 11 the wounded were moved and installed on board the Guerrière, which had been converted into a hospital. It was the only ship that was suited for this use: the lower deck of the Primauguet was not large enough nor sufficiently clear to house the 15 men of our crew who had been injured in
the Tchong-Tung-Sa incident. Of the 15 injured, 7 had to remain on board the Guerrière and the other 8 were able to move to the Primauguet, which possessed enough room to house them.

(...)

This incident ended the expedition to Korea, which was brilliant as a maritime exploration, and whose military feats had very little impact. The division remained in Korea until November 21, in the interests of the wounded, who benefitted greatly from those ten days spent at anchor. On November 22, the ships of the division sailed from the Gulf of Prince Jérôme to the various points of China and Japan that the admiral designated. The Primauguet received orders to return to its post in Shanghai to spend the winter. For the duration of the expedition to Korea, the general health aboard the Primauguet was of the most perfect ....
2. A Priest’s Account

Fr. Ridel, who had avoided execution and was able to find a small ship to take him across the sea to China, was invited to accompany the expedition as an interpreter, together with some of the Korean sailors who had come with him, who knew the waters around Ganghwa and the entry to the Han River. Ridel’s account of the whole expedition, edited by Charles Dallet, comes near the end of Dallet’s great *History of the Korean Church* (published in 1874). It is marked by a certain critical distancing from the “official” French version, which had been designed to present the expedition in the most positive way possible.

From: Charles Dallet. *Histoire de l’église de Corée : Deuxième partie* (Volume 2) page 572ff

We left Fr. Ridel in Tientsin, where he had gone to inform Admiral Roze about the serious events of which Korea had been the theater. The admiral was about to rescue the two French missionaries still exposed to death, when news of a revolt in lower Cochin forced him to take another direction. He promised Fr. Ridel that, on his return from Cochin, he would make a visit to Korea. The missionary returned to Chefoo, where he stayed until mid-August. At that time, the Koreans who had accompanied him asked to return to their country. He let eight go and, with the other three, went to Shanghai to await events. Three weeks later, he received Admiral Roze’s invitation to go to Chefoo to accompany him to Korea. He departed in haste, and on September 10 came aboard the frigate *la Guèrrière*. He himself will tell us, in detail, the story of this expedition.

“It was decided that the corvette *le Primauguet*, the sloop *le Déroulède* and the gunboat *le Tardif*, should go to make an initial survey of the coast of Korea. The Admiral took me as an interpreter for that first trip, with my three Koreans as pilots. Leaving Chefoo on the 18th, we were on the 20th among a group of islands of which the first were the Ferrières and Clifford islands. We anchored in the Gulf of Prince Jérôme, near an island which was named Eugénie. On the 21st, the Admiral sent his aide on the *Déroulède* to explore the way to the capital; I accompanied him. Always guided by a Korean pilot who knew thoroughly all the nooks and crannies of the coast, we went to Woody Island, opposite the small town of Seung-tsiong, and from there by a very sharp turning we entered
the strait that separates the island of Ganghwa from the continent. We anchored near the island, opposite the village of Kak-kot-si. There ended our mission. Some officers went ashore and were amazed at the appearance of the country. A large, very well cultivated plain covered with rice fields, many villages, and, a league to the northwest, mountains where the city of Kanghoa was located. We saw some well positioned forts in the distance, some cannons, but not one soldier. The frightened population had fled at first, but a few brave individuals returned, others followed, and when we weighed anchor, people flocked to the shore to see this unique ship, without sails and without oars, ascending the very rapid current of these parts.

“The next day we joined the Primauguet and Tardif. All were delighted with the observations made during the journey, and especially to have ascertained that the channel was navigable for the fleet. The three ships immediately set out, but the Primauguet after deviating from the line indicated by the pilot, went on to the rocks. Fortunately, it did not suffer any serious damage, and only lost her false keel; it was decided to leave it at Woody Island. The 23rd was a Sunday and I celebrated Mass on board. It was the first time the Holy Sacrifice was offered in freedom in the kingdom of Korea. The two ships then headed for Seoul. At the end of the Strait of Ganghwa is the mouth of the river that passes a mile to the South of the capital. We had to go a distance of six or seven leagues. I was constantly on duty, translating to the Admiral the indications that the pilot gave me. Finally, on the 25th, in the evening, we arrived opposite the capital, to the amazement of an immense crowd that covered the banks of the river and the surrounding hills, to feast their eyes on this unprecedented spectacle: vessels moved by fire.

“The Korean government tried to stop us. Junkas were placed at a fairly narrow passage and they fired a cannon at us; a French shell in response sank two junks, and the others fled. A little further along, one or two batteries opened fire, but a few well-directed shots from our cannon and a shell, which exploded a few steps from the gunners, reduced all to silence. We stayed one day at Seoul, making soundings, measuring heights, drawing plans, plotting various directions, etc. I went on shore, hoping to meet some Christians, and hear about my colleagues and the persecution, but nobody dared to approach us. We left the next day, and on the way down the river, we made new soundings, and many observations. On Sunday, September 30, we reached the Primauguet and we were preparing to return to the Chinese coast, when a boat came toward us. It was my pilot and one of the sailors who had taken me to Chefoo. I learned from them about the destruction of a European ship
wrecked near Pieng-an (*Pyongyang) in August, the renewal of the persecution, the order to kill Christians in the provinces without reference to the capital, and searches directed against the priests. I communicated my concerns to the Admiral, begging him to leave behind at least one of the ships, whose presence would intimidate the Korean government, while the departure of the whole fleet would certainly bring an intensification of the persecution. My requests were of no avail, and on October 3 we were back in the port of Chefoo. They made the final preparations, and we left a week later."

While Fr. Ridel returned to China with the ships, what became of the two missionaries left in Korea? The following letter from Fr. Féron will tell us.

“Towards the end of September, Rear-Admiral Roze sent ships to survey the way to the capital. Fr. Calais had left me to go to the coast, where I had prepared a boat that was to transport him to China. Informed before me of the arrival of the French ships, he wrote to me to ask what he should do. Believing with everyone else that it was a definitive expedition that would give us freedom, I immediately set out to join my colleague. I had to cover twelve leagues; along the way I was recognized, pursued, and only escaped by a miracle. The boat was not yet ready; nevertheless, we threw ourselves into it and left the same day. We were delayed by lack of wind and then by a headwind, and it was not until the next day, in the evening, that we could reach the entrance to the channel, three miles long, that we had to take to reach the French ships. But, at the entrance of the channel was a city whose guards are very strict. The crew were scared; yet we convinced them to sail on. ”Let’s go to our death!” they said, and we arrived before the city. A Korean boat emerges from the strait. ”Are not the barbarian vessels down there?” our sailors ask, ”We will be killed as we pass near them.” ”No, they left two days ago.” We turn tail; but where are we to go? My first thought was to head for China: the weather was fine, the wind favorable, and we would arrive at Chefoo before the departure of the Admiral. But the proposal made everyone shudder; the boat was so small, and the parts that composed it so badly joined! I did not dare to insist, and it was decided that we would go to some Christian neighborhood in search of news. Fr. Calais and I thought that the French had made a simple survey and that now the Admiral would soon come himself. We wanted that all the more, since we considered it our duty to inform him of the Pieng-an disaster, that he might prevent its recurrence.
"When we landed, I had one of our Christians called secretly. He gave us the following news. The officers had just arrived to seize a Christian. As for the survey made by the cruiser, the people were not afraid; they even wanted the coming of the French. What they feared was their own government, were the bands that were going to be organized on the pretext of defending the country. In fact, the terror was great in Seoul. During the few days that the French gunboats were in the river, not one load of rice or of wood had entered the capital; eight days more, and the people would have died of hunger. Everyone had fled; we were assured that seven thousand homes were empty. The Korean government had collected a large number of junks to form a fleet, one cannon-ball from a French gunboat was enough to destroy two of these junks and put the rest to flight. The Korean artillery tried hard to fight back; but their projectiles could not reach halfway. This is all the information we could gather.

"It was already October 11 or 12, our position was becoming more and more critical, we had no alternative but to head for China. That very day, Admiral Roze left Chefoo for Korea. A headwind, which drove us to the north, prevented us from meeting him. For two days and two nights, we skirted the coast to the height of Shantung; but our boat was so frail, it would have been imprudent to head for the open sea, so we were happy to meet some Chinese boats that were engaged in smuggling, and arranged with one of them for us to be taken to Chefoo. I must omit the story of our journey, which was long and difficult, because of alternating flat calms and contrary winds. We arrived at Chefoo on 26 October. We have just learned that the Primauguet is expected from Korea on November 5 to pick up mail. We hope to take advantage of its departure to return to our mission, which is all the dearer to us now we are exiles."

Now back to the expedition, and first we should give the official story that was published by the government. We read in Le Moniteur of 27 December 1866:

"The Minister of the Navy and the Colonies has received from Rear-Admiral Roze, commander of the naval division of the China Seas, dispatches announcing the capture of Ganghwa, a fortified city in the north of the island of that name, at the mouth of the river on whose banks lies Seoul, the capital of Korea. Leaving Chefoo on October 11, with the frigate Guerrière, the propeller-driven corvettes Laplace and Primauguet, the sloops Déroulée and Kien-chan, the gunboats Tardif and Lebrethon, Vice-Admiral Roze anchored on October 13, with his division off Woody
Island, 18 miles from Ganghwa. The next day, the gunboats went up the Salt River (the Kanghoa Straits), towing boats that carried the landing parties from Guerrière and the corvettes, and a detachment of marine-riflemen from Yokohama. On landing, our sailors occupied the heights without meeting any resistance, and set up camp 5 kilometers from Ganghwa. On October 15, a survey was undertaken by a column commanded by frigate captain Count Osery; arriving near a fort that overlooks the city, they were greeted by substantial rifle-fire as well as shots from two small-caliber cannon. After a few minutes’ battle, the fort was occupied, and the Koreans fled, leaving a flag in our hands.

“On the 16th, at eight o’clock in the morning, Vice-Admiral Roze, at the head of all his forces, appeared before the city, that is surrounded a crenellated wall 4 meters high. On coming within a hundred meters from the main gate, our troops were welcomed by a fairly brisk fusillade. But the wall was soon climbed to cries of “Vive l’Empereur!” and the enemy left us masters of the place.

“A large number of guns, more than ten thousand rifles, ammunition of many kinds were found in huge stores, and they demonstrate the importance of the role of Ganghwa, from the standpoint of the defense of the capital of Korea. Vice-Admiral Roze carefully inventoried the stores, of which he took possession on behalf of the State, and which also contained eighteen boxes filled with silver bullion and official archives.

“A proclamation to the inhabitants informed them of the purpose that the admiral had proposed in coming to chastise the Korean government, and assured them of the most complete protection.

“The blockade of the river of Seoul, which was notified to the consuls of the European powers in China, and the occupation of Ganghwa, was sure to produce a deep impression on the Korean Government. Indeed, the city of Ganghwa lies, as we have pointed out, at the mouth of the river leading to Seoul, and controls the main route that trade for the capital is obliged to take, especially its supplies of rice. Thus, already on October 19, Vice-Admiral Roze received a letter from the king, to which he was quick to respond, indicating his demands in the name of the Emperor’s government.

“The telegram containing these details is dated October 22; on this date, Admiral Roze was still in the city of Ganghwa, where he was waiting for the interpreters (Chinese) he had asked our consul in Shanghai to send.”
The *Moniteur* of 7 January 1867 published a news report dated 17 November 1866:

“Vice-Admiral Roze being anxious to ascertain the state of the country, a detachment, commanded by Captain Olivier, came out of Ganghwa and a few kilometers from the city came across many Koreans, holed up in a fortified pagoda; the enemy, who had at first launched an attack, was repulsed and hastened to return to its positions, leaving its dead behind. After a very lively exchange of fire, in which we lost no one, but which unfortunately cost us some wounded, the column returned the same evening to Ganghwa.

“A few days later, Vice-Admiral Roze, seeing that the Korean government did not pursue the opening in which he had been led to believe on receiving a letter from the king, decided to leave Ganghwa; the approach of winter was already being felt, and it was feared that all navigation along the Salt River would soon be discontinued; so he ordered the destruction of all the government institutions, and of the king’s palace, and our sailors returned on board the vessels anchored before Woody Island.

“The cases containing silver bullion, with a value of one hundred ninety-seven thousand francs, with manuscripts and books that can provide some interest for science, were sent back to Chang-hai, from where they will be transported to France.

“Vice-Admiral Roze also announces that the two missionaries who had been left in Korea had come to join him, having managed to reach Chefoo.

“The destruction of Ganghwa, a major fortification in case of war, of its powder magazines and the public institutions that the city contained, was sure to prove to the Korean government that the killing of the French missionaries had not remained unpunished.”

This is the official version of the expedition of Korea. Now comes the much more detailed account of Mr. Ridel. It will inform us about the reality of the final confrontation near the pagoda, which is rather too veiled under the euphemisms of the government paper.

“On Saturday, October 13, the fleet anchored near Woody Island. It was decided that we would first seize Ganghwa; so, on October 14, the two sloops and two gunboats, towing all the boats with the landing parties, sailed up the strait. The frigate and two corvettes, which were too deep in draft, remained at anchor. They landed near the village of Kak-
kot-chi, and the landing was effected without any need to fire a single shot; there were no enemies. With the approach of the French, almost all the inhabitants had fled; some, braver, had remained, but they were content to make great prostrations. We settled in the village. Two days later we entered the city, which attempted some resistance. A few shots that killed three or four Koreans sent the rest fleeing; we broke down the gate with an ax. The town was almost deserted; troops immediately occupied the palace of the Mandarin, and the government stores.

“They found weapons galore, bows and arrows in very large numbers, iron swords that bend without breaking, helmets, breastplates of beautiful workmanship but excessively burdensome, about eighty copper and iron cannon of various calibers, but in poor condition, a considerable amount of matchlock guns of all sizes. The copper cannons are loaded by way of a cavity near the breech, into which an iron cartridge case containing only the powder is introduced: we saw no carriages. Some guns are capable of several shots; they have several firing holes on the gun, so that by firing each one sequentially, starting with that most adjacent to the mouth, it can fire a series of shots, which must be very dangerous. There were huge amounts of powder; some depots exploded, producing tremors similar to those of an earthquake. We also found rolls of cloth, wood of various species, copper vases, scissors, fans, brushes, very well tanned skins of cattle and pigs, beeswax, a vegetable wax which is harvested in the South of Korea, Chinese silk, copper ore, alum, some poor quality porcelain, large supplies of dried fish, and more than one hundred eighty thousand silver francs worth of ingots which have the shape of pancakes.

“The library was very rich. Two or three thousand books printed in Chinese with many drawings, on fine paper, all well labeled, the very large majority bound with copper plates on covers of green or crimson silk. I noticed the ancient history of Korea in sixty volumes. What was more curious was a book made of marble slabs, folding like the panels of a screen on gilded brass hinges, very well polished with gold letters inlaid in the marble and each slab protected by a scarlet silk cushion; all placed in a nice chest of copper, which in turn was enclosed in a wooden box painted in red, with metal fittings of gilded copper. On being opened, these square tablets formed a volume of a dozen pages. They contain, in the words of some, the moral laws of the country, according to others, whose opinion is more likely, the favors granted to Korean kings by the Emperor of China. The Koreans attach to it a very great price. In another chest, we found a marble turtle perfectly sculpted under the pedestal of which was the royal seal, the great seal that simple Koreans can never
touch or even see, and possession of which was enough several times to transfer the royal authority and complete revolutions. The one I saw was new, and seemed never to have served.

“Within the walls of the house of the Mandarin is a royal palace, because it was in the Ganghwa fortress that Korean kings took refuge in time of war. The location is on a small wooded hill overlooking the city, from where you can enjoy a magnificent view of the island, the sea and the mainland. The island of Ganghwa is very fertile. Rice is harvested there, barley, tobacco, sorghum, corn, different species of turnips, Chinese cabbage, chestnuts, khaki, sweet acorns with which poor people make a kind of porridge, etc.

“The French remained in peaceful possession of the city, where no one disturbed them. The mass of the people were too scared to go there, and they could have only very little contact with them. In vain we tried to reassure them; they had no idea of such a way of making war; they imagined that the victors, on seizing a country, necessarily had to put everything to fire and sword. Moreover, they repeated, “Why do not you go to the capital? What is making you stay here? You will end up with nothing. You want revenge for the massacres, and you punish poor people who are in no way the cause, who have not taken any part.” A Christian was able to reach me at night in Kak-kok-chi camp. He told me that a large army had gathered from all the provinces of Korea, which manufactured weapons day and night, collecting all the iron, even the implements of husbandry, to make swords and pikes; several points along the coast, including the city of Tong-tsin, on the mainland opposite Ganghwa, were heavily guarded, and that they had blocked the river by sinking a quantity of boats, a league downstream from Seoul. The Admiral, on hearing these details, resolved to make a survey near Tong-tsin.

“One hundred and twenty men were sent to that effect; they reached the mainland opposite the Seoul Gate. This is the name of a stone arch, of ogival shape, topped by a Chinese pagoda-style roof, which stands at the head of the road to the capital. Around this gate there is a village and a few fortifications. When the sailors tried to land, they unexpectedly came under gunfire, that killed three of their men. They reached land, though, and made themselves masters of the place after killing some Koreans and putting the rest to flight. Then, deeming it imprudent to continue the expedition, they came back on board, and remained on the alert. In the evening, part of the Korean army set about marching at the far end of the plain; but a few shells launched at the right moment, to their surprise, burst near their ranks. Amazed and frightened
by the effect of these unknown weapons, they soon broke ranks and fled to the mountaintops. They then showed themselves on several occasions in a remote gorge two thousand meters away; but the cannon-fire of the gunboats forced them to withdraw. By night they came to light campfires in different parts of the plain, and by day they set up dressed mannequins, to make us unnecessarily waste powder and shot. Often you could hear the sound of their guns; probably they were practicing shooting in their camp, behind the mountains. We were told that they had made the guns on the model of those they had taken from on board the American schooner, burned by them with the crew a few months earlier, on the Pieng-an coast. The gunboats were stationed in different places, to prevent the movement of boats and keep the blockade of the river leading to the capital; a number of junks were burned; but the Koreans were able to pass in small boats by night.

“Meanwhile the persecution raged more than ever in the capital and in the provinces. The king’s father was so furious that he had written on the posts that are at the entrance to the palace, that all those who speak of making peace with the Europeans would be considered rebels and executed immediately. General Ni Kieng-ei sent to the Admiral, on October 19, a long letter in which, after quoting several sentences of the ancient philosophers, he said that those who crossed the boundaries of another kingdom were worthy of death; that the Europeans had come to their land and had hidden, taking the clothes and speaking the language of the country in order to steal their wealth; that therefore it was right to put them to death; if we did not leave, we should fear that Heaven would punish us soon, etc. The admiral said he had come in the name of Napoleon, ruler of the great empire of France; that His Majesty, whose solicitude extended over all his subjects, in whatever places they were, wanted them all to be safe and treated as becomes the citizens of a great empire; having learned that the Korean government had put to death nine Frenchmen, he had to seek redress: therefore they should hand over to him the three ministers who had contributed the most to the death of the Frenchmen, and send at the same time a plenipotentiary to lay the foundations of a treaty. Otherwise, he considered the Korean government responsible for all the evils that war would entail. This letter of the Admiral remained unanswered.

“Koreans continued to gather on every point of the neighborhood. One day a Christian came to tell me that the day before, three hundred Koreans, tiger-hunters and skilled shooters had crossed to the island, and the following night, another five hundred would arrive who would go join the others, and shut themselves up in the Pagoda of Trieun-
tong-sa (*Jeondeung-sa) in the island of Ganghwa, three or four leagues south of the city. I hastened to warn the admiral. That very day, a whaler which was engaged in hydrography was attacked near the place where they had crossed. The admiral resolved to attack this pagoda and detached for that one hundred and sixty men. At his command, I accompanied the expedition both to guide the march and to serve as interpreter. We left at six in the morning. The vanguard went a few steps ahead of us; then came the commander at the head of his party and some luggage and horses which carried our lunch. We had no artillery, although the day before we had spoken of taking some small guns; I do not know why they changed their mind. We were going pretty slowly, resting every hour. Following the main road, which is very attractive, we passed a few hills, and soon caught sight of walls running along the top of the mountains. Along the road almost all the houses were deserted. One resident told us that the day before there had been many soldiers at the pagoda. Indeed we saw some movement in the surroundings, and several men were climbing the mountain, heading towards the fortress; for this pagoda is actually a small stronghold ordinarily inhabited by soldier-monks.

There are several species of Korean monks: the literate monks involved in the composition of books and studying the rites and ceremonies of the country, the mendicant monks, and soldier-monks whose occupation is to prepare and collect arms. It is they who make the powder, cast the guns and build, or at least oversee the construction of the fortress walls. In Korea there was once a large number of Buddhist monasteries. I visited a number, all located at the top of the mountains or halfway up in quiet places, well wooded and difficult of access. It is only natural, given their position among the rocks, to make strongholds of them, so tradition reports that several served some great princesses, or even queens, who hid in them to avoid the calamities of war.]

“We could not see the pagoda itself because it is located in a ravine in the middle of a circle of mountains, whose summits are lined with walls four meters high, built without cement, with large half-dressed stones piled on each other. One could only enter through one easy road; that is the one we followed after turning right to attack from the opposite side to that from which we came. It was half past eleven; some proposed to lunch, but it was thought that it would be easier to settle down in the Pagoda and lunch in the same palace as Buddha. We left the highway to take the path leading to the pagoda. An armed Korean appeared close to us; two or three shots at random failed to reach him: three of our men started out in pursuit, but he had vanished. We were now only three or four hundred meters from the gate and we rested a
moment. We had before us a thick solid wall, which closed the ravine and rose on both sides up the slopes of the mountain. The hewn stone doorway, with a semi-circular arched roof, had no doors, as is often the case. I considered very carefully what was going on inside. When we arrived, I heard some shouts; now all was silent as a desert. The signal was given to advance; a detachment turned to the right to climb the hill; the main body, preceded by the vanguard, headed straight for the gate. We were not a hundred yards away, and the vanguard was much closer, when suddenly firing was heard from the whole length of the wall. The shots mingled, succeeded one another without any interval; and bullets came flying in all directions, at our feet and over our heads. I turned and saw almost all were lying flat: everyone was hiding where he could find shelter and wait out the shooting; I did the same.

“Our soldiers retaliated with heavy fire, while withdrawing to seek a more favorable position, but what could their bullets do against walls, and against these men of whom we could see only the heads? The surprise had confused our company; the commands of the leaders were not executed, and soon everyone found themselves some distance away, but still under fire from the enemy, whose bullets were still reaching us. Then the officers rallied their men and they took up stations behind huts, fragments of rocks, piles of straw, to prevent any charge by the Koreans, while the injured were transported to a hill a little way back. They were thirty-two and the injuries of some seemed quite serious.

“Our position was becoming embarrassing. By subtracting the wounded and those who were caring for them, there remained little more than eighty men capable of fighting. If the enemy tried to cut off our retreat, he might succeed or at least kill many of us. The men had not had lunch, and the horse that was carrying our meal had passed into the hands of the enemy. The doctor bandaged the wounded, stretchers were prepared to carry those who could not walk, and we finally reached the highway. Able-bodied men formed the rearguard to keep the enemy at a respectful distance. Three times the Koreans tried to get out, but with each attempt, they lost many men, and eventually gave up the pursuit. Moreover, they were satisfied, and mounted on the walls, they gave wild cheers and screams, to congratulate themselves on their victory over the barbarians of the West.

“I do not want to pass any judgment on this matter. Perhaps, however, there had been some imprudence in sending one hundred and sixty men without a single cannon against a fortress that was known to contain at least eight hundred of the enemy. The first landing and the taking of Ganghwa had offered so little difficulty, that we had got used to
going to an attack as if it were a picnic. However the resistance that we had met at the Seoul Gate might have provided food for thought. Fortunately we did not have a single man killed; we returned slowly to the camp at Kak-kok-chi, very sad and very tired. All showed admirable attention and love for the wounded, and I was moved to tears on seeing with what motherly affection these rough-hewn sailors cared for their companions. The admiral, who had a presentiment of some misfortune, came to meet us, with some of his staff. He met us at half a league from the camp. He was much affected by this ill success, and addressed a few words of encouragement to each of the injured. It was night when we arrived.

“The next day at eight in the morning, I learned that an immediate evacuation had been decided. The troops in the city of Ganghwa set fire to it and withdrew to the camp near the shore. The city was burnt. Unfortunately, this sudden departure was much like a flight, because it was not in anticipation of a speedy retreat that we had begun fortification works, both in the city and on hills near the camp. We wanted to take from Ganghwa a big bronze bell; it was half way along, it remained there, and the Koreans must have taken it back as a trophy of their victory. The troops embarked at night and in the morning at six o’clock we were off. At the turn of the strait, several forts shot at us, and some balls fell on board, but without hurting anyone. Our gunboats responded vigorously. A little further on we saw again the walls of the pagoda, which is only two kilometers from the shore. Our return was a big surprise for the frigate and corvettes. Many officers said we should have destroyed the pagoda by bombing it from the shore; others maintained that it was impossible. In short, all experienced a painful disappointment, and expressed their bitterness in relatively unmeasured terms.

“The next night, six Christian sailors came on board. They said that the persecution was more violent than ever, and that the regent had solemnly sworn to exterminate all Christians, even women and children. On the 14th day of the ninth moon (the end of October), the catechist John Pak, a nobleman from Hoang-hai province, and the wife and son of François Ni, the companion of Mathieu Ni in the evangelization of the northern provinces, were executed in Seoul, after suffering horrific tortures. Three days later, François Ni himself, betrayed by his brother who was still a pagan, had been killed, along with another Christian they could not tell me the name of. The regent, by unprecedented departure from the practices of the country, chose a new place of execution for the five victims. They had been taken to Iang-hatsin, on the banks of the river at the spot where the two French ships had
anchored, opposite the capital, a month ago. "It is because of the Christians," said the official proclamation, “that the barbarians came this far; it is because of them that the waters of our river have been polluted by ships from the West. Their blood must wash away this stain.” I also learned that at Iang-ha-tsin a camp of five hundred soldiers had been set up, and they had been ordered, if they found a Christian among them, to kill him without a trial.

“I later had details of my two colleagues, Fathers Féron and Calais. During the first expedition, these same sailors had tried to bring them to our ships, but they arrived two days too late, and after wandering a long time among the islands, they had got onto a Chinese boat which had taken them to Chefoo. So there were no more missionaries in this poor land of Korea! I watched the coast, I could not take my eyes off it. When will we come back? And what ruins! What will become of our poor Christians? The regent, exasperated by the French attack, swollen at what he deems a brilliant triumph, will put everything to fire and sword. I spent many sad moments during the few days that we remained at anchor; my heart was embittered. The hope of soon seeing my colleagues encouraged me a little. They came in effect on the Laplace, which had been to Chefoo to collect mail. I cannot describe their grief when they knew the state of things.

“Leaving Korea, the fleet separated. The Guerrière and the Kien-chan went to Japan, the Laplace returned to Chefoo, the other four ships headed for Chang-hai. We ourselves were taken there on the Primauguet, where everyone including the commander and officers showed themselves full of complacency and cordial attention toward us. We brought ten Koreans, three that I had with me on leaving Chefoo, the one who had joined me in Ganghwa, and the six whom I have just mentioned. They are here, dressed in Chinese clothing, waiting for the right moment to return home, either alone, or with someone of us. The unexpected return of the expedition, after such a failure, has surprised everyone and excited the verve of the English newspapers. I will spare you their thoughts about it. They say and repeat that for the safety of the Europeans in the Far East, and to restore the prestige of their arms, it is essential that the French return to Korea next spring with sufficient forces; otherwise, the English and the Americans talk about mounting an expedition themselves. What will happen? Pray, pray much for our unfortunate mission.”
Brother Anthony has lived in Korea since 1980. He is currently the President of the RAS Korea.
2016 Annual Report
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
KOREA BRANCH

President’s Report for 2016

The year 2016 was a good one for the RAS in Korea, insofar as we were able to attract good numbers at our lectures twice each month (except August when there were no lectures) and maintain a regular program of excursions, smaller special study groups and museum visits throughout the year. Membership has slowly increased and our finances were in a sufficiently healthy state to allow us to cover all our expenses with a little left over. What more could a President hope for? The most remarkable event of the year was our Garden Party in the grounds of the British Ambassador’s residence. It was extremely well attended; the food was excellent and the drinks copious. The rain stopped a few minutes before people arrived and noisy protests in front of City Hall did not interfere with our pleasure in being together. We are very grateful to the Ambassador for welcoming us.

I am, as always, very grateful to our Officers and Council members for their steady support. Above all, we are only able to continue to operate because of the dedication of our Office Manager, Hong Yonjoo, to whom we are most grateful. We have received substantial funding from two very generous corporate sponsors, one of which does not wish to be named. Such support is essential if the RAS is to continue to rent an office and pay a manager; we are a non-profit organization established as a service to enable our members and friends to discover more about the history and culture of Korea. That can only happen if there is someone who keeps records, books the room for the lectures and orders buses for excursions when required. Our membership dues have been slightly increased this year but we would need to have significantly more members before the income from annual dues covers all our basic expenses.

Our office is also kept busy responding to orders for books and I would like to express our thanks to Mr. Shim who for many years has
regularly come into the office to help with the packing and mailing of book orders. The sale of books, especially those formerly published by the RAS, is a significant source of income for us.

Our office is also home to our Library. This has slowly grown over the year, mainly thanks to donations of books by members. Thanks are due to Michael Welles for his work in integrating new volumes into the library and regularly updating the catalogue. A few of the books have been part of the RAS library since the 1930s, indicating a remarkable continuity. We are always glad to receive gifts of books about Korea from our members.

We have no other archive from such a distant past, except for the complete range of our Transactions, with Volume 1 dated 1900 and last year’s issue having been Volume 90. Please remember that complete sets can be ordered from the office. The full text is also freely available online and it can be interesting to read the annual reports of RAS activities in times past.

Although this report is dated 2016, it is being written in May 2017. Time never stands still! In recent months the Republic of Korea has been shaken by political turmoil in response to the widely felt inadequacy of the President. This culminated in her impeachment and imprisonment. A few days ago, a new president was elected and it is to be hoped that this will be the start of a happier period for the country. At the end of 2016, when the time came to elect a new RAS President, I was asked once again to continue to serve, until the end of 2018. I sincerely hope that by then we shall have found someone younger and better able to direct our steps in new directions.

During the past year we have begun a series of visits to the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History. We begin with a visit to a special exhibition being held at the museum, guided by a curator, then an RAS member gives an extended lecture. We are grateful for this new activity, which replaces the visits to the National Museum of Korea.

I would like to end by inviting our current members to introduce the RASKB to their friends and colleagues, urging them to become members. The RAS can only survive if new members replace those who leave Korea. We who have been living here for decades know that we are a small minority. It is our joy to share our knowledge and love of Korea with new-comers.

Thank you

Brother Anthony
### 2016 RAS lectures

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<td>February 2</td>
<td>Jacco Zwetsloot: Glimpses of Korea Under American Occupation</td>
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<td>February 16</td>
<td>Emanuel Pastreich: A Tale of Two Cities: The Struggle Between Gangnam and Gangbuk from the founding of Seoul to the Present</td>
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<td>March 8</td>
<td>Peter Bartholomew: Catastrophic Losses of Korean Architectural Heritage</td>
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<td>March 22</td>
<td>Milan Lajciak: Slovakia transformation experience from communism to democracy and market economy - lessons to be learnt for future Korea unification process.</td>
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<td>April 12</td>
<td>Sim Woo-kyung: Korean Garden Cultures: Longing for the Immortal</td>
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<td>April 26</td>
<td>David Mason: Solitary Sage: The Profound Life and Legacy of Korea’s “Go-un” Choi Chi-won</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
<td>John Frankl: Moving beyond Makgeolli: Selected Observations on Traditional Korean Alcohol</td>
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<td>May 24</td>
<td>Jacob Reidhead: Politics in the Trenches: A Field Report from the 20th National Assembly Election</td>
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<td>May 31</td>
<td>Michael Spavor: Exploring the Culture, History, and People of China's “Third Korea” - the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture</td>
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<td>June 7</td>
<td>Andrei Lankov: How did North Korea's rich and powerful live under Kim Il Song, how do they live now?</td>
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<td>June 21</td>
<td>Laura Kendall &amp; Dr Yang: God Pictures: Korean Shaman Paintings</td>
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<td>June 28</td>
<td>Leslie Song: A Conversation With the Iconic K.W. (Kyung Won) Lee: Return of a Prodigal Son to the Land of Everlasting Hahn</td>
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<td>July 12</td>
<td>Judith A Cherry: Building Sandcastles in Seoul: Socio-cultural Barriers to Doing Business in South Korea</td>
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<td>July 19</td>
<td>Norman Thorpe. Pictures from the Past – the charm and revelations of historic Korean postcards</td>
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<td>September 13</td>
<td>Jeong Ho-Seung and Brother Anthony: Meeting a Korean Poet: Jeong Ho-Seung</td>
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<td>September 20</td>
<td>Maija Devine: The Comfort Women of WWII</td>
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<td>October 11</td>
<td>Alastair Gale: South Korea's Lost Decade</td>
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<td>October 25</td>
<td>Pierre-Emmanuel Roux: The Foreign Disturbance of 1866</td>
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<td>November 8</td>
<td>A conversation with Krys Lee, author of “How I Became a North Korean”</td>
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<td>November 22</td>
<td>Andy Tebay and Nikola Medimorec: From the First Tram to Korea’s Modern Day Transport System</td>
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<td>December 13</td>
<td>Byung Joon Jung and Vladimir Hlasny: Paradise lost of two Korean Americans: Alice Hyun and Wellington Chung, crushed by cold war regimes</td>
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### 2016 RAS Excursions

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<td>Saturday January 9</td>
<td>Natural History Museum, Kyung Hee University (Jacob Verville)</td>
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<td>Saturday, January 16</td>
<td>Korean Pottery &amp; Porcelain in Icheon with Pottery-making Experience (Jennifer Flinn)</td>
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<td>Saturday January 30</td>
<td>Sookmyung Women’s University Museums (David Gemeinhardt)</td>
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<td>February 6 – 14</td>
<td>Myanmar (Tom Coyner)</td>
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<td>February 8</td>
<td>Inner Seorak and South Seorak (Sue Bae)</td>
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<td>Saturday, March 12</td>
<td>Gangnam (Old) Style (David Gemeinhardt)</td>
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<td>Saturday, March 19</td>
<td>Jongmyo, Seun Sangga, and Ikseon-dong: A Deep-Seoul Walk (Robert J. Fouser)</td>
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<td>Sunday, March 20</td>
<td>A Walk through Lower Seochon: Tongui-dong to Sakjikdan (Jennifer Flinn)</td>
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<td>Saturday, March 26</td>
<td>Korean Pottery in Icheon Area (Sue Bae)</td>
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<td>Saturday, March 27</td>
<td>Seoul: antiquity meets modernity (Jon Dunbar)</td>
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<td>April 2 - 3</td>
<td>Namhaedo / Jinhae Cherry Blossom (Sue Bae)</td>
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<td>Saturday April 9</td>
<td>Imjin Battleground (Andy Salmon)</td>
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<td>Wednesday April 13</td>
<td>Korea’s Native Faiths (Jun Shin)</td>
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<td>Saturday April 16</td>
<td>Gyeonggido Cherry Blossom (Sue Bae)</td>
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<td>Sunday April 17</td>
<td>Walking through Yeouido (Hank Morris)</td>
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<td>Saturday April 23</td>
<td>Cheollipo Arboretum (Robert Koehler)</td>
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<td>Saturday May 14</td>
<td>Buddha’s Birthday in Seoul (Jeremy Seligson)</td>
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<td>Sunday May 15</td>
<td>Seoul city wall (Robert Fouser)</td>
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<td>May 21 – 22</td>
<td>Jirisan Tea-making (Br Anthony)</td>
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<td>Saturday May 28</td>
<td>Daehangno etc (Robert Fouser)</td>
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### 2016 Annual Report

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<td>Monday June 6</td>
<td>Yeongsan-jae ceremony at Bongwon-sa temple (David Mason)</td>
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<td>Saturday June 11</td>
<td>Garden Party</td>
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<td>June 18 – 19</td>
<td>Gangneung (Peter Bartholomew)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday July 9</td>
<td>Museum of Shamanism and Yongam-sa Temple (Jeremy Seligson)</td>
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<td>Saturday July 30</td>
<td>Walking in Seodaemun (Jeremy Seligson)</td>
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<td>Saturday September 3</td>
<td>Namsangol Hanok Village (Amy Yeo)</td>
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<td>Saturday September 10</td>
<td>Seonunsasa and a traditional Onggi potter’s studio (Br Anthony)</td>
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<td>Monday October 3</td>
<td>Korea's Native Faiths and Gods including the visit to Tangun Shrine (Jun Shin)</td>
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<td>October 8 - 9</td>
<td>A Journey into Korea's Scenic South: Tongyoung, Hallyo Sudo (waterway) and Geoje-do (Sue Bae)</td>
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<td>Saturday October 15</td>
<td>Walking in the Hongdae area (Jon Dunbar)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday October 30</td>
<td>Ganghwa Island exactly 150 years after the French invasion of 1866 (Pierre-Emmanuel Roux / Br Anthony)</td>
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### 2016 RAS Special Groups

**Reading Club**  
*Meets each month in the library of Jongno District Office to talk about a Korean short story read in advance in English translation.*

- January 4: “Bought a Balloon” by Jo Kyung Ran  
- February 1: “Sampung Department Store” by Jeong I-Hyeon  
- March 7: “Library of Instruments” by Kim Junghyeok  
- April 4: “The Forest of Existence” by Jeon Seong-Tae  
- May 2: “That Boy's House” by Park Wan-suh  
- May 30: “The Wayfarer Never Rests on the Road” by Lee Ze-ha  
- July 4: “The Darkroom of the Map” by Yi Sang  
- August 1: “Dangerous Reading” by Kim Kyung-uk  
- September 5: “New York Bakery” by Kim Yeon-su  
- October 10, November 7: “The Young Zelkova” by Kang Sinjae  
- December 5: “How I Became a North Korean” by Krys Lee
**Business & Culture Club**

*The Business & Culture Club meeting is held at midday every 3rd Tuesday of the month for people with little spare time.*

February 16: Seoul City Hall  
March 15: Jeongdong  
April 19: Namsan Park  
May 17: Deoksu Palace  
June 21: Pimatgol  
July 19: Seoul Museum of History  
September 29, Seun Sangga  
October 18: Myeongdong Chinatown  
November 15: Fall scenery from Jeongdong Observatory
2016
RAS-KB Members

The task of maintaining accurate membership records remains a challenging one, despite the ongoing improvements made in recent years. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the following lists (which are meant to cover memberships to the middle of 2017) but we ask for your comprehension if there are omissions or inaccuracies. We would be most grateful if you would send us an email indicating revisions that should be made in our records. This is especially urgent when it comes to overseas members, some of whose email addresses we still do not have.

LIFE MEMBERS (DOMESTIC)
Mr. & Mrs. Edward B. Adams
Son Jae An (Br. Anthony)
Dr. Kyoung-Yul Bae
Mrs. Sue Ja Bae
Mr. Kim Charles Barnett
Mr. Peter Bartholomew
Mr. Seho David Chang
Dr. & Mrs. Otfried Cheong
Prof. Uhn-Kyung Choi
Ms. Jinja Choung
Mr. Chang Jin Chun
Ms. Ock-kyung Chun
Mr. Kyung-chae Chung
Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Clark
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Dallao
Mr. David Dolinger
Mr. Yunsok Han,
Mrs. Suzanne Crowder Han.
Mr. & Mrs. Song-Hyon Jang
Mr. Charles M. Jenkins
Dr. Dal-choong Kim
Ms. Heather Kim
Mr. Kim Jaebum
Dr. & Mrs. Kim Kwang Tae
Ms. Jimyung Kim
Dr. Young-Duk Kim
Mr. Younghoon Kim
Mr. Young-Tae Kim
Ms. Elizabeth Kraft Lee
Mr. Woo-chul Kwock

Ms. Helen Kwon
Mr. Moon-Ki Kwon
Ms. Hyo-Jun Lee
Mr. Jeong Cheol Lee
Mrs. Jung-Ja Lee
Mrs. Jung-Ja Lee
Mr. Jung-Keun O
Ms. Jang-Sun Lee
Dr. & Mrs. Kyung-Won Lee
Mr. & Mrs. Sangjae Lee
Ms. Yeirang Lee
Mr. Hank Morris
Mr. John Nowell
Mr. & Mrs. Jung-keun O
Mr. William Overmoe
Mr. Ki-boum Paik
Prof. Jaesup Park
Mr. & Mrs. Young-Koo Park
Mr. Karl Randall
Mr. Seachang Rhee
Mr. Klaus Schaack
Mr. Daneil Jong Schwekendiek
Dr. & Mrs. Kevin Shepard
Mr. Jun (Y.K.) Shin
Ms. Shin Mihe
Mr. Ki-joong Song
Dr. Ji-Moon Suh
Mr. Joe Sweeney
Ms. Diana Underwood
Mr. Peter Underwood
Mr. Matthew VanVolkenburg
Prof. Michael Welles
Mr. & Mrs. Juergen Woehler  
Drs. Sung Chul Yang  
Ms. Jung Jin Lee  
Prof. Il Sun Yang  
Drs. Songmi Yi & Sung-Joo Han  
Mr. Yongbin Yim  
Ms. Young-nan Yu  
Mr. Seokgu Yun  

LIFE MEMBERS (OVERSEAS)  
Drs. Daniel J. & Carol Chou Adams  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward J. Baker  
Mr. Jaroslav Barinka  
Mr. Ronald Claude Bridges  
Prof. Robert Buswell  
Mrs. Yu-mi Choe  
Prof. Donald Clark  
Mrs. Sophie Crane  
Mr. Daniel B. Currill Jr.  
Mr. Duane C. Davidson  
Prof. Martina Deuchler  
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Dodds  
Mr. Robert J. Fouser  
Ms. Mary Jo Freshley  
Mr. David Gemeinhardt  
Mr. James Goodwin  
Mr. Douglas Gordon  
Prof. James Grayson  
Mr. Samuel Hawley  
Dr. Hyun-Key Hogarth-Kim  
Dr. & Mrs. James Hoyt  
Rev. & Mrs. M. Macdonald Irwin  
Mr. Samuel Kidder  
Mr. James Y. Kim  
Mr. Richard P. Leavitt  
Dr. Gari Ledyard  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Suskin Lee  
Mrs. Sandra A. Lim  
Mr. George Long  
Mr. Alan MacDougall  
Mr. & Mrs. George E. Matthews  
Ms. Sandra Mattielli  
Dr. & Mrs. Samuel H. Moffett  
Mr. & Mrs. Warwick Morris  
Dr. Mark Peterson  

Mr. Ronald Quizon  
Mr. Michael Ralston  
Mr. Gless C. Rasmussen  
Mr. Brent Remmet  
Prof. Edward Shultz  
Rev. Steven L. Shields  
Mr. Gerald Sleph  
Mr. Warren Smith Jr.  
Ms. Alice Snyder  
Dr. David Steinberg  
Dr. William Strauss  
Dr. & Mrs. Frank Tedesco  
Prof. Helen Tieszen  
Dr. & Mrs. Horace Underwood  
Dr. & Mrs. William Stanley Utting  
Mr. Von C. Williams  

MEMBERS IN KOREA  
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Compiled and edited by Brother Anthony of Taizé and Robert Neff.
Seoul Selection  ISBN: 9781624120787
List price: KW 18,000

This anthology is a compilation of Westerners’ accounts of their visits to Korea, originally published in books or newspapers before the country opened its doors in the late nineteenth century.

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Old Korean love stories, 3 short ones translated by James S. Gale and 2 longer ones originally published in French in the 1890s by or in collaboration with Hong Jong-U. The first is the story of Chunhyang, the second a version of the tale of Sim Cheong.

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Poems by an extremely popular poet, a former school-teacher and activist, who is now a member of Korea’s National Assembly. The poems he wrote after the death of his young wife moved many thousands of readers.


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*Challenged Identities: North American Missionaries in Korea* 1884-1934. Elizabeth Underwood, RAS-KB, 2004. Hardbound, 326 pp. ISBN 978-89-954424-0-1. A fascinating look into the lives of the first Protestant missionaries to Korea: the challenges they faced in their lives, from overcoming culture shock and learning the language to raising a family and building a house; and the challenges they faced in the Christian work that they did, challenges that shaped their identities, their policies, and indeed their beliefs in the land of Korea more than a century ago. $33 / KW33,000

*Confucian Gentlemen and Barbarian Envoys: The Opening of Korea, 1875-1885*. Martina Deuchler. RAS-KB and U of Washington p, 1977. Hardbound. 310 pp. ISBN 978-89-93699-05-0. The only thoroughgoing study of the opening of Korea after centuries as the “Hermit Kingdom”: discusses the rivalries among China, Japan, and Russia and the problems of the traditional Confucian scholar-bureaucrats trying to cope with their rapidly changing world. $20 / KW20,000


This detailed guidebook written by two authors who have had long experience living in the city, describes the historical monuments and sites in Seoul, grouped by neighborhoods for easy location. It includes maps, references to the subway system, diagrams and color photographs, with explanations of the history and significance of each site. There is also a Chinese-character glossary and index. $8 / KW8,000


The book consists of six essays on late 19th century Korean history. All of them were originally prepared and presented as conference papers or keynote speeches at major conferences held in Korea and the US. They deal with Korea’s relations with the US and Japan mainly between 1882, when the
Jeoson Kingdom signed its first modern treaty with the United States, and 1905 when the same kingdom called the Daehan (Great Han) Empire from 1987, degenerated into a protectorate of Japan. $25 / KW25,000


This book has chapters describing the origins, faith and practice of the three main 'new' religions of Korea, Cheondo-gyo, Daejong-gyo and Won-Buddhism, written by members of each, as well as general chapters considering them from a sociological viewpoint, and a Christian perspective. The book ends with a transcript of an open exchange between senior members of the religions. $15 / KW15,000


The only Korean musicologist of international repute. Dr. Lee Hye-Ku has struggled over the past few decades to keep Korean traditional music from being swallowed up in the tide of Westernization. Until now, apart from a few translated articles, his work has been accessible only to Korean speakers. A definitive text on Korean traditional music in English. $15 / KW15,000

Hamel’s Journal and a Description of the Kingdom of Korea, 1653-1666. Hendrik Hamel, English translation by Jean-Paul Buys, RAS-KB, 1998. Softbound. 107 pp. ISBN 89-7225-086-4. The first Western account of Korea is the glory of a group of sailors shipwrecked on Cheju-do. Some thirteen years later, after escaping to Japan, Hamel gave the outside world a firsthand description of Korea, an almost unknown country until then. This is the first translation based on the original manuscript. $15 / KW15,000

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Virtuous Women: Three Classic Korean Novels. Translated by Richard Rutt & Kim Chong-un, RAS-KB, 1974. Hardbound. 399 pp. ISBN 89-954424-3-3. The three most significant works of traditional Korean fiction: A Nine Cloud Dream, The True History of Queen Inhyon, and The Song of a Faithful Wife, Ch'unhyang. The major characters are all women and the three novels together give a vivid picture of the Korean ideal of womanhood before it felt the impact of Western culture. $20 / KW20,000


Yogong: Factory Girl. Robert F. Spencer, RAS-KB, 1988. Softbound. 185 pp. ISBN 89-954424-4-1. The author's work is based on a field study done on one of the reasons for Korea's economic miracle, the workers. Here the author focuses on the girls or the young women who work behind the scenes producing the goods that have pushed Korea into another classification. A
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