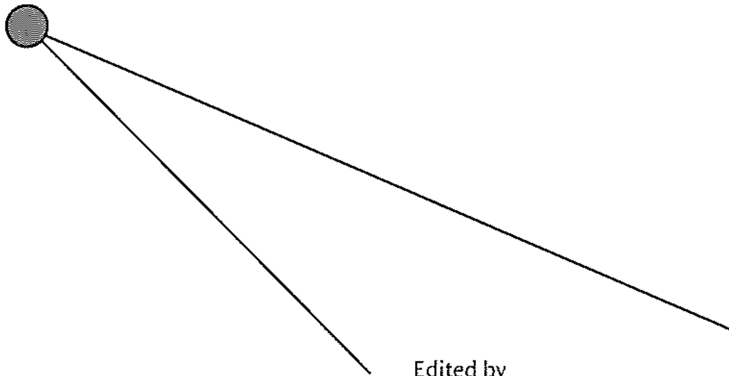
Reassessing the Park Chung Hee Era, 1961–1979

Development, Political Thought, Democracy, & Cultural Influence



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Contents

Preface | vii
List of Illustrations | ix

Introduction HYUNG-A KIM and CLARK W. SORENSEN | 3

PART ONE—Development

1 Heavy and Chemical Industrialization, 1973–1979: South Korea's Homeland Security Measures | 19
HYUNG-A KIM

2 POSCO: Building an Institution | 43
SEOK-MAN YOON

3 The Cold War and the Political Economy of the Park Chung Hee Regime | 66
TADASHI KIMIYA

SPECIAL ESSAY

4 How to Think about the Park Chung Hee Era | 85
NAK-CHUNG PAIK

PART TWO—Political Thought, Democracy, and Labor

5 Park Chung Hee's Governing Ideas: Impact on National Consciousness and Identity | 95
YOUNG JAK KIM

6 Democracy in South Korea: An Optimistic View of ROK Democratic Development | 107
JAMES B. PALAIS

7 Labor Policy and Labor Relations during the Park Chung Hee Era | 122
HAGEN KOO

PART THREE—Cultural Influence and Civil Society
8 Rural Modernization under the Park Regime in the 1960s | 145
CLARK W. SORENSEN

9 Compressed Modernization
and the Formation of a Developmentalist *Mentalité* | 166
MYUNGKOO KANG

10 The Park Chung Hee Era and the Genesis
of Trans-Border Civil Society in East Asia | 187
GAVAN MCCORMACK

Bibliography | 205

Contributors | 220

Index | 222

Preface

This book grew out of the International Korean Studies Conference (IKSC) held at the University of Wollongong, Australia in November 2004 under the theme "The Park Era: A Reassessment After Twenty-Five Years," which examined some of the key questions surrounding the Park era, especially how it affected Korea's development into what it is today. The conference was sponsored by POSCO, BHP, Rio Tinto, and the Australia-Korea Foundation, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia. The IKSC attracted many distinguished participants, including twenty-six prominent figures and scholars from Australia, Korea, Japan, and the Unites States.

As the organizers of the IKSC, we strove to ensure that the presenters would deliver diverse viewpoints with a sharp focus on Korea's modern experience under Park's rule, while including a broader perspective beyond the hitherto prevailing dichotomies of industrialization versus democratization.

Reassessing the Park Chung Hee Era, 1961–1979, is distinctive in the sense that several authors with ideological differences, that is conservatives and progressives, are engaged in a face-to-face discussion on the Park era. In this respect, we are particularly pleased to secure a special chapter from Professor Paik Nak Chung (Paek Nakch'ŏng), a prominent literary critic and editor of the leading quarterly journal, *Ch'angbi* who was also one of the two keynote speakers at the IKSC and has generously revised his original keynote paper for this book.

Paik's chapter, entitled "How to Think About the Park Era," reflects on one of the key questions to which many Koreans try to find answers in the public debate on the Park era. With his understanding of such on-going public interest, whether positively or negatively, Paik examines Park's version

of development which, he argues, was fundamentally unsustainable because it was built on a "militarist ethos" which brought about Korea's environmental destruction. Paik also views Park's version of development as unsustainable because, according to Paik it was rooted in the shallow developmental philosophy of "Let's live well" (*Chal sara pose*) which he dismisses as "beggar philosophy."

This is not to say that Paik denies due acknowledgement to the extraordinary economic achievements of the Park era and to Park's choice of an export-led development model which Paik assesses as "a more realistic appraisal of the possibilities actually offered . . . by the capitalist world-system and Korea's standing within it."

Paik's interpretation is not necessarily shared by all Koreans and thus the topic he raises remains open to further research and questioning.

In the course of preparing this manuscript, which took much longer than initially anticipated, I have received generous support from the Department of Political and Social Change at the Australian National University. Also, the Center for Korea Studies at the University of Washington partly supported my 2006 business visit there.

My sincere thanks go to all of the contributors of chapters to this book as well as to those who participated in the IKSC. From the Korean side, I would like to thank Kang Sam-Soo and Yu Han-Sik, chairman and president of EM Korea Co. Ltd, as well as Messrs Lew Byung-Hyun, Lee Hun-Kwŏn, and Jhee Kyung-Jun, whose joint support for this project was vital in enabling me to complete this long-awaited project.

Lastly, I would like to express my special thanks to Professor James B. Palais, who passed away in August 2006. His analysis of Korea's democracy stimulated much debate and discussion at the IKSC. His original essay, published as chapter six of this book, is therefore one of his last research-based commentaries, which will be treasured by many students of Korean studies for years to come.

Hyung-A Kim
Canberra
June 2011

10

The Park Chung Hee Era and the Genesis of Trans-Border Civil Society in East Asia

GAVAN MCCORMACK

PEOPLE POWER AND THE MAKING OF HISTORY

The rapid maturing of South Korean civil society and democratic institutions following the "democratic revolution" of 1987 and the end of the cold war in 1989 has opened an intense debate on the nature and meaning of the Park Chung Hee (Pak Chŏnghŭi) era. Though the era survived in a modified form under the successor regimes to 1987, it now becomes almost an ancient, hotly contested past. As Zhou Enlai once reportedly observed of the French Revolution, 200 years is too short a time to reach a historical assessment. For the Park era, thirty is too short.

In the 1960s and 1970s, relationships between states in East Asia were primarily determined by their location within the global structures of the cold war, and military governments, giving priority to anti-communism and ruthlessly crushing democratic movements, were installed and maintained under Washington's sponsorship in Indonesia, the Philippines, and South Korea. It is sometimes said that the cold war ended in 1989 with the victory of the "free world" especially the United States. In East Asia it might better be seen to have ended with the defeat of "free world"-supported national security state regimes at the hands of the democratic resistance, or "people power," in the Philippines with the overthrow of the Marcos regime in 1986, in the Republic of Korea with the overthrow of the Chun Doo Hwan (Chŏn Tuhwan) regime in 1987, and in Indonesia with the overthrow of Suharto in 1998. These interventions, which today would run a high risk of being labeled "terrorist," forced drastic change in intra- and inter-state structures and put an end to regimes long sustained by Washington and Tokyo.

This chapter addresses the emergence during the Park era of "people power," not so much the domestic, intra-Korean movements as the trans-border, cross-nation civil society, in other words, the genesis and early stages of global civil society. In the present context of spreading global terror, both state and private, the task of promoting or facilitating spontaneous citizen action to advance a democratic agenda has never been more urgent. The Park regime, especially under the Yusin Constitution of October 1972, combined to a highly unusual degree, economic growth and dynamism with political repression. It was an early model of what was to become known as the "national security state." While South Korea faced legitimate concerns over national security because of the continuing North-South confrontation, its national security state deployed its powers repeatedly and ruthlessly to maintain control and to crush any opposition, whether or not connected to North Korea.

The legal frame for repression was one inherited from pre-war Japanese fascism, the so-called peace preservation system that had originated in Japan in 1925. Under the National Security Law, adopted in South Korea in 1948 and revised several times thereafter, "anti-state" activities, including anything that might be interpreted as offering aid, praise or encouragement, or any effort to confer or correspond with, anti-state groups, defined as those whose intention was to "conduct or direct infiltration of government or to cause national disturbances" were punishable by penalties including death.[1] In practice, "anti-state" meant "North Korea," and in practice, as James B. Palais wrote, police authorities were "allowed to arrest people on trumped-up charges with little legal justification, force confessions through the use of torture, and prosecute them on the charge of treason."[2] The poet Kim Chiha explained the operation of the security system this way: "In South Korea, Lao Tzu, Confucius, Jesus, the Buddha, anybody and everybody concerned with fundamental truth or essential reality would be a communist."[3]

A key role in this state apparatus was played by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), which diplomat and Harvard scholar, Gregory Henderson, speaking to a congressional committee in 1976, described as "a state within the state." It was, he said, a "vast, shadowy world of an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 bureaucrats, intellectuals, agents, and thugs, often the real substance of South Korean rule for which the Korean government ministries and parties are frequently a slightly more respectable façade." The

KCIA played "a key role in virtually all government planning, North Korean affairs, international affairs, labor and its unions, the collection and shake-down of needed funds, many economic and tourist functions, military, academic, and other infiltration, control over overseas Koreans and, above all, surveillance and direction of all Korean political activities."[4] In short, the KCIA under Park ran rampant, imposing widespread violence and terror, beyond and outside the service of legitimate state security. The confrontation with North Korea was no more a justification for this than is the contemporary U.S. confrontation with Al-Qaeda a justification for the atrocities of Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, and Fallujah.

The international movement around Korea was stirred first by government abductions and the state terror tactics of the 1960s. It was a time when students, artists, and professionals were abducted from Europe (1967–9) and Kim Dae Jung (Kim Taejung) from Japan (1973). Some of them then being subjected to judicial execution (Francis Park also known as Pak Nosu, who had been studying at Oxford) and others, such as the musician (later distinguished composer) Yun Yisang, barely escaped with their lives and never fully recovered from the torture they endured.[5] Attempts by Korean activists, whether from South Korea or Japan, to open links between the North and South were crushed and conspiracy trials resulted in severe sentences, occasionally death. The "Korean-in-Japan," Suh Sung (Sŏ Sŭng), returning after vacation at his Japanese home to take up a teaching assistantship at Seoul National University in March 1971, was arrested, indicted as part of a so-called campus spy ring of Korean residents of Japan and incarcerated for nineteen years.[6] The eight defendants in the People's Revolutionary Party case were executed in 1975.[7] Many others fled from the repression, to Germany, Canada, Australia, and the United States.

The case of Kim Dae Jung, opposition politician abducted from Tokyo in 1973 by South Korean security agents, imprisoned in 1976 over the "Declaration of National Salvation," sentenced to death in 1980 for "anti-state activities," in due course released, elected president in 1996, and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000, is well known and is the best example of the use of a national security apparatus for suppression of democratic dissent under Park and his successor regimes. Conventionally, Kim's survival is attributed to the intervention of governments, especially that of the U.S.,[8] but foreign pressure, whether from Tokyo or Washington, cannot be understood outside

the broader context of international civil democracy. The attention of congressional committees slowly shifted in the 1970s toward the terror of South Korea's "state within a state," but the primary concern of official Washington was the maintenance of the anti-communist Seoul regime. Corruption and influence-peddling, the matters that collectively became known as "Koreagate," were of secondary importance.

The international movement had various objectives: to secure the release of prominent political prisoners such as Kim Dae Jung, Kim Chiha, the "Soh brothers," and others, but also, though more vague terms, to seek a resolution of the long-frozen Korean question and to try to prevent cold war, North-South hostility from breaking out into a renewed hot war. So, in this chapter, I want to address several strands of that movement: the London-based, British movement—not especially significant but one that I was directly involved in and can therefore easily speak about—the Tokyo-based, Japanese movement, and the German-based, European movement. I will call them, for simplicity's sake: London, Tokyo, and Berlin. There should, of course, also be a North America section, but there is not for the simple reason that I was not there and do not know it well enough. What follows is not an attempt to write a history of these movements, but to offer a rough sketch of processes neglected by most histories, a sort of prolegomena to the study that one day may be done.

Ultimately, the democratic revolution triumphed in South Korea in 1987. National division continues and the national security state, though mellowed, remains, but political prisoners were released, the truth about the repression practiced by the old regimes slowly began to emerge, and artistic freedom of expression and criticism flourished. The focus shifted from the struggle for democracy to the struggle to consolidate it and liquidate surviving components of the old regimes. The question now facing South Korea, and the international network around it, is how to develop, out of the complex events of this relatively recent past, a sense of history that somehow does justice to, while also transcending the passions and prejudices of the past. In recent years, the people who had struggled for these causes during the cold war, often at great personal cost, entered the mainstream of history. In 2001, the contributions to Korean democratization from people outside the country were formally acknowledged and a special body, the Korea Democracy Foundation, was established by President Kim Dae Jung to that end.

In October 2002, sixty-seven women and men who had contributed to the democratization struggle, thirty-three of them from Japan—including Wada Haruki (discussed in further detail below), novelist Oda Makoto, and others—were invited to Seoul, where they met and were publicly thanked by President Kim Dae Jung and former President Kim Youngsam (Kim Yŏngsam). In September 2003, a second group, which included members of the long-banned Japan-based Korean organization, Hanmindong, together with other Tokyo- and Europe-based activists (discussed below) was invited. In no other "Western" country has the process of democratization advanced, as in South Korea, to the point of national recognition, even celebration, of those who, a generation ago, were hunted, imprisoned, maligned, and exiled, and those who strove to help and express solidarity with them.[9]

PEOPLE AND PEOPLE POWER

London

The Park regime, especially as consolidated following the adoption of the Yusin Constitution, was in the mid-1970s at its peak: the rivalry between North and South Korea was intense, and the cold war hostility between the east and west blocs was acute. Many believed that with the ending of the war in Vietnam the cold war might next erupt as a hot war in Korea. In London, with a small group of colleagues and friends who had been active in opposition to the U.S. war in Vietnam, I was involved in setting up a group, which we called simply "The Korea Committee," designed to publicize and combat those dangers.[10] We conducted a conference in 1976, and in 1977 we produced a small book, published the following year in the United States as *Korea North and South: The Contemporary Crisis*. It was also translated into Japanese and Korean, although the Korean edition was completely unknown to us till many years afterwards.[11]

Thereafter, in one forum or another, as an NGO long before that word existed, we wrote papers, gave talks, participated in international conferences in Tokyo ("Emergency International Conference on Korea," 1976), Bonn, and elsewhere, met with various Korean representatives and activists, including North Korean diplomats, and visited North and South Korea.[12] We insisted on our autonomy and thus remained apart from the burgeoning "sponsored,"

solidarity movement. In one way or another, we continued our involvement in the emerging, international, civil society movement for support of what we described as "democracy and reunification" of Korea. In academic terms, our group was closely related to the London-based Association of Radical East Asian Studies (AREAS) and the U.S.-based Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, which published the *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* from 1968 (*Critical Asian Studies* from 2000). We thought of ourselves as radical scholars, independent Marxists of a New Left affiliation.

Ours was a kind of "committed" scholarship, in the sense that we were avowedly critical of the U.S.-supported Park dictatorship and we studied Korean matters not so much for disinterested scholarly reasons, as in order to elucidate contradictions in the cold war system of U.S. domination and the domestic system of repression and militarism, to expose weaknesses, and to encourage and support those struggling for democratic rights and nationalist objectives. Most Korea scholars at the time avoided contemporary topics and tried hard to maintain close links with Seoul, which meant links with the regime. Our approach so offended "established" scholars that when the inaugural conference of the Association of Korean Studies in Europe was held in London in March 1977, we were explicitly refused admission.[13] The *Guardian* newspaper wrote of the central role played in the convening of that conference by Dr. Choe Suh Myon (Ch'oe Sŏmyŏn), secretary-general of the International Association of Organizations of Korean Studies, a man whose CV included the unusual distinction of a conviction for the murder of an opposition politician in December 1947.[14]

In general, I think this small, London-based group was right to resist cooption within either the Western fellowship of academic friends of Park or the alternative fellowship of friends of P'yŏngyang. But, while we correctly focused on the cold war rootedness of the Korean problem and the importance of the South Korean democratization struggle, called for solidarity with its victims, and looked to unification as the only viable, long-term solution to Korean problems, we suffered four forms of blindness.

First, we were insensitive to the dimension of the national security crisis that undoubtedly confronted the Seoul regime at this time. Second, influenced in general by the then current "dependency theory," and in particular by dependency theory-based studies of the South Korean economy in Japanese,[15] we could not see the potential for sustained, economic growth

and wealth creation in the policies that the Park regime was pursuing, and we tended to exaggerate the role of corruption, concluding, wrongly, that the economic fruits of the export boom were being "appropriated by a tiny elite or remitted abroad."[16]

Third, while we maintained a distance from the blandishments of P'yŏngyang, we were nevertheless taken in by its economic "successes" (as indeed at the time so was the CIA); we were too kind to its nationalist pretensions, too inclined to interpret its discourse in theoretical Marxist terms and to think of the DPRK as "socialist," and too insensitive to its brutality and contempt for human rights. We thought we could perceive a "self-reliant" state, a newly emerging industrial country whose "remarkable" achievements would be remembered "long after the tottering neo-colony in South Korea has finally collapsed."[17] Fourth, we were, partly because of distance from the events but also partly because of our abstract intellectual orientation, remote from the actual movements for which we professed solidarity and did not understand their inner dynamic well. We knew then much less than we know now, and it is hard to think of anyone who got these matters right at the time, but that still does not excuse us for the particular ways in which we got them wrong.

Tokyo

Much more important than London was the Tokyo-based movement. Japanese progressive intellectuals first began to turn their attention seriously to Korea when the 1965 "normalization" treaty that restored relations between Japan and South Korea was signed despite huge demonstrations in Seoul protesting that it failed to address the deep issues of Japanese responsibility.[18] In 1973, however, the abduction of South Korean opposition leader Kim Dae Jung from downtown Tokyo in August 1973 galvanized the movement and the arrests and accelerated repression that followed under the Yusin constitution. A demonstration in protest against these events drew a mere seven people in Tokyo in December 1973, but following the death sentence of the poet Kim Chiha under the National Security Law in July 1974, hunger strikes involving prominent writers (including later Nobel Prize winner, Ōe Kenzaburō) in downtown (Sukiyabashi) Tokyo began to draw widespread attention and support.[19] One key organization was the Japan-Korea Liaison Council for

Solidarity with the Democracy Struggle in South Korea (Nikkan Renren, or Kankoku Minshuka Tōsō Ni Rentai Suru Nihon Renraku Kaigi). In the 1970s, Nikkan Renren mobilized Japan's most famous and respected authors (all of them "million sellers") to write to Prime Minister Tanaka calling for urgent intervention to save the life of Kim Dae Jung.[20] Until the relevant archives are opened, we will not know what precise impact these efforts had, but Nikkan Renren persisted in various activities in support of human rights and democracy and did not wind down till 1987.

Wada Haruki

The central role in this organization was played by Wada Haruki, a "civic scholar" par excellence. (Here, I use the individual principally to symbolize, in encapsulated form, the movement.) Wada, a University of Tokyo historian, born in Osaka in 1938, originally specializing in modern Russian and Soviet history, gradually widened his scope to include Korea through his engagement with Korean struggles. In the 1990s he was director of the Institute of Social Science at the University of Tokyo; he retired in 1998 and then became, in 2000, secretary-general of the National Association for Normalization of Relations between Japan and North Korea. Wada has authored major studies of the Korean War, North Korean state and society, the democracy struggle in South Korea and the relationship with Japan, and the Japan-North Korea relationship.[21]

In the course of his professional career Wada has espoused many unpopular causes. For his opposition to South Korean repression and Japanese collusion at a time when few cared or knew about it, and for his call for normalization of relations with North Korea when others insisted Japan should isolate and overthrow it, he faced and continues to face considerable hostility. Nowadays he is accused of active advocacy and praise for North Korea, denial of its abductions of Japanese citizens, and non-recognition of its responsibility for starting the Korean War in 1950.[22] Mostly these charges are bizarre. He was not a "supporter" of North Korea, rather his research played a key role in clarifying the North's responsibility for launching the Korean War in 1950 and he has been scrupulous in his analysis of the social and political realities of North Korea.

However, his interpretation focuses not on any intrinsic North Korean moral lapse or ideological obscurantism but on the division system imposed

by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, frustrated Korean nationalism, and unresolved Japanese colonialism. His conception of North Korea as an embattled "partisan state" (that will not be liquidated until the long-fraught relationship with Japan is normalized) has been widely adopted internationally. Of the controversial issue of the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea between 1977 and 1982, Wada offended many by his insistence that evidence should be carefully, even forensically, analyzed before concluding that abduction had occurred, and by his adoption of the view that the problem was more likely to be resolved through normalization and subsequent consular and diplomatic channels following the opening of diplomatic relations than by policies designed to bring about the collapse of the North Korean regime. He pointed to the fact that the problem of the children of Japanese parents abandoned in China after 1945 was settled following Sino-Japanese normalization in 1972 and suggested this might be a model for resolving the abduction problem between North Korea and Japan. In the climate of early twenty-first-century Japan, principled moderation in this vein came to be viewed as pro-P'yŏngyang propaganda.

"TK" *alias Chi Myŏnggwan*

The regular dispatches from the mysterious "TK" published in the Japanese monthly journal *Sekai* between 1973 and 1988[23] and in occasional English translations, played a key role in developing a critical international awareness of the Park regime.[24] In 2003, the identity of TK was revealed as a collective of Christians and Christian missionaries, whose reports from Korea were coordinated in Tokyo by Chi Myŏnggwan. Chi, born in what is now North Korea in 1924, had been editor-in-chief of the influential *Sasangye* in the early 1960s. He came to Japan in 1972, was employed as a professor at Tokyo Women's University, returned to Korea in 1993, and became a professor at Hallym University near Seoul.

The same right-wing critics that lambast Wada Haruki also attack Chi. They refer to him as "possibly a North Korean agent," whose reports on political and social events in Korea "may have set back democratization by as much as a decade." They accuse him of focusing exclusively on South Korea when the human rights situation was worse in North Korea, of exaggerating the nature of the events at Kwangju in 1980,[25] and of misunderstanding the

U.S. "free world" cause.[26] They also attack Yasue Ryosuke, former editor at the Iwanami monthly journal *Sekai*, who commissioned the TK series, not only for launching and sustaining, but also for having conducted interviews with Kim Il Sung, for focusing attention on South Korean repression while turning a blind eye to the North, and in general for what critics see as the substitution of North Korean advocacy for journalism.[27]

Of *Sekai* it may indeed be said that attention to democracy and human rights in North Korea was long lacking. Yasue's editorial line attempted the almost impossible tasks of promotion of the democratic cause in South Korea, while seeking to constitute a bridge for communication with North Korea. His interviews with Kim Il Sung were early attempts to engage the North Korean ruler in dialogue when the rest of the world neither knew nor cared. Whether that strategy was the best, or the wisest, is another matter. Ironically, the only article in *Sekai* whose critical analysis of North Korea seemed to meet the standards of the right wing is one I wrote that was published in the special issue of 1993.[28] Chi Myŏnggwan notes in a recent book that his TK letters contained many positive references to North Korea and recognizes that the series was read and appreciated there. He argues that his group had deliberately adopted such a sympathetic tone with the intention to try to encourage dialogue with the North. In March 2003, however, when he made his first visit to North Korea since his childhood, he found that "though visiting 'the North' I could not meet with the people of 'the North,' and could not even venture outside the hotel. . . ."[29] His impressions were dark, and he came away apparently shocked, with a sense of impending crisis.

Chŏng Kyŏng Mo

Two other figures in the civil society movement outside Korea itself are Chŏng Kyŏng Mo (Chŏng Kyŏngmo) and Song Duyŏl (Song Tuyŏl), one in Japan and the other in Germany. Chŏng, born in Seoul in 1924, educated at Keio University (in Tokyo) and Emory College, had been an interpreter for the U.S. forces during the Korean War and a translator of the armistice agreement. After the war, he became a scientific bureaucrat in South Korea in the 1950s and 1960s, responsible inter alia for the early planning of the petrochemical industry, before fleeing as a dissident from Park Chung Hee's South Korea to Tokyo where he arrived in 1970, two years earlier than Chi. In Japan, he

became well known as an independent publicist, author, critic, and thinker on Korean national questions and modern history, and an influential advocate of national reconciliation. In the 1970s, his writings were frequently published in major "progressive" media outlets such as *Sekai* and *Asahi shinbun*. In 1989, he accompanied the renowned Christian pastor, Moon Ikhwan (Mun Ikwhan) (who traveled from Seoul) on a mission to P'yŏngyang. They met with Kim Il Sung (Kim Ilsŏng) and, though obviously lacking any official status, signed a declaration on the principles to be followed in pursuing South-North reconciliation and eventual unification. Moon was later imprisoned in Korea for three years for this breach of the National Security Law, and he died in 1994. Chŏng came to regard their 1989 visit, illegal as it undoubtedly was at the time, as laying the ground for the 2000 South-North summit.

In 2003, Chŏng was included on the Korean government's list of overseas residents who had contributed to the democratic cause and invited to visit his homeland as a distinguished guest. By then seventy-nine years old, he declined, refusing to submit to pressure exerted by the "national security" bureaucrats to confess the criminality of his visit to North Korea and to promise to abide in the future to such a law; submit to that, he insisted, would be to betray his own conscience.[30] Chi and Chŏng are both Christians, who came to Japan from Park Chung Hee's Korea and sought ways to resist its oppression and support the struggle for democracy there. Both published in the same "progressive" Japanese media outlets and both became friends of *Sekai* editor Yasue, yet the two never met and there was no cooperation between them. Chŏng, the apparently lifelong exile without resources and with little backing, has written (and speaks) acerbically of Chi's respectability, his ability to travel freely while supposedly a political refugee in Japan, and the upwards trajectory of his career towards distinction, power, and acclaim following his return to Seoul in the 1990s.[31]

Berlin

The other case, well known in Korea, is that of Song Duyŏl. Song, born in Tokyo in 1944 of Korean (Cheju Island) parents and educated in Korea at Kwangju and later the philosophy department of Seoul National University, went to Germany in 1967 for graduate studies, first at Heidelberg University and then Frankfurt University studying under Jürgen Habermas.[32] After

receiving his doctorate in 1972, Song taught first at Free University of Berlin and later at Muenster University, where to this day he is professor of philosophy. Song concentrated his research on the roots of the division system in Germany and Korea. Resisting cold war generalizations about totalitarianism, he gave priority to empirical, structural analysis and put primacy on first-hand observation. As in the German case of Peter Christian Ludz, who headed the German Democratic Republic (GDR) section at the Institute for Social Science Research at the Free University of Berlin and opened the way to the Ostpolitik of Willy Brandt, Song tried to perform a similar mission for Korea. His "immanent" approach, in Song's own words, meant that: "I try to understand them first by putting myself in their position, not from the head but from reality. [Even now] we know so little about North Korea that studying an obscure African tribe may be easier than doing research on North Korea."[33]

From 1973, intent on gathering first-hand information on the situation, he began a series, of visits, eighteen in all, to North Korea. In 1980, he was closely involved in the movement of overseas Koreans to protest against the massacre of students and citizens at Kwangju in May of that year, culminating in a protest march of 1,500 people, mostly Koreans, through the centre of Berlin. In 1991—like Chŏng Kyŏng Mo in 1989—he met with North Korean leader Kim Il Sung and a photograph of the event was widely publicized. Two years later Song received German citizenship and in 1994, as the solitary South Korean representative, attended Kim Il Sung's funeral in P'yŏngyang. From 1995 he was the key person responsible for organizing a series of "South-North scientific dialogues" held in Beijing (five times) and P'yŏngyang (once, in March–April 2004).

When invited to Seoul as a distinguished guest in September 2003, Song, a German citizen of considerable reputation in Europe,[34] accepted and eventually flew back to Seoul on September 22, 2003, after a thirty-seven-year absence. Although his visit, an official invitation of the Korea Democracy Foundation, carried the implicit backing of the president, with whom he was scheduled to meet, the national security bureaucrats—the "state within a state" that Henderson had described almost thirty years earlier—thought differently. He was detained, interrogated in intensive sessions of ten to fifteen hours daily, denied access to his legal advisers, and in due course indicted on charges inter alia, for playing a leading role in an "anti-state organization" as a high official of the (North) Korean Workers' party and as a proponent of

North Korean ideology. The mainstream national media denounced him as "the biggest North Korean spy in history."[35] The case exposed, as none other, the deep divisions in a society undergoing rapid change. One observer summed it up: "For the newspapers, Song is a criminal, for the television stations, a suspicious character, for the internet generation, a hero."[36] For both Chŏng and Chi, Song's breach of the National Security Law by unauthorized contact with North Korea was the crucial issue.

However, the close attention to the case by German government officials and international movement of support for Song could not be ignored. Amnesty International, prominent individuals including Günter Grass and Jürgen Habermas and a number of prominent Japanese protested at Song's detention and demanded his release. The prosecutors sought a fifteen-year sentence. In March 2004, a seven-year sentence was handed down, but it was reversed on appeal on July 21, a conviction on lesser charges carrying a suspended sentence was allowed to stand, but Song was released and eventually flew back to Berlin on August 5. Song's trial and imprisonment occurred at a time when South Korea was in turmoil over the indictment of the president. That issue was effectively resolved with the victory of the Uri Party in elections in April 2004. The conservatives who launched the attack on the president were also the keenest proponents of the National Security Law and the anti-communist national defense state and the most insistent on Song's punishment. In these April elections they suffered a humiliating defeat. In the wake of Song's departure, a full-scale debate erupted on the question of revision or abrogation of the National Security Law, and in September the majority Uri Party and two smaller parties jointly presented a bill for its abrogation.[37]

CONCLUSION

In South Korea, the final phases of liquidation of the Park national security state are fought out in the courts, the editorial columns, and the parliament. Even as the reality passes into history, the issue of national security remains unresolved. Apologists for the national security state now strive to achieve historical justification, arguing that the national security state, especially in its concentrated, Yusin version, with its oppressive apparatus of rampant police power, spying, torture, and breaches of human rights, was necessary and unavoidable at the time because of the North Korean threat. They likewise

argue that the domestic opposition movement and the international forces that supported it were guilty at best of blindness to the reality of North Korean repression, at worst of submission to P'yŏngyang's orchestration and direction. Just as the Park state tended to daub its democratic opposition as covert supporters of Kim Il Sung, so its contemporary avatars consist of scholars, editors, and others who, then and now, criticize the repression of the Park regime.

They argue that progressive intellectuals from the 1970s one-sidedly attacked human rights abuses in South Korea while simultaneously being blind to, or positively covering up, much greater abuses in North Korea. In Japan, the movement on this front links up with the agenda of historical revisionism, revision of the constitution and of the Fundamental Law on Education, and hostility to North Korea, sharing some leaders, and forming part of the same neo-nationalist project. The *Historikerstreit* that gripped Germany over the question of degrees of cooperation with Nazism, or France over collaboration and colonialism, or the U.S. over the Vietnam War (where the Kerry campaign made it clear that the issue is still fiercely emotional: who are the traitors, who the patriots?) evolves in and around Korea over the division system, the cold war, and attitudes and approaches to North Korea.

Yet the anti-fascist and anti-dictatorship movement in South Korea in the 1970s and 1980s was in the end victorious, and the role of the international solidarity movement with it, vindicated by history as principled and worthy of commemoration. In retrospect, perhaps no single event was of greater importance in releasing this energy and starting the flow of change that resulted in momentous events than a simple poem. Kim Chiha's "Five Bandits" (O-jŏk) was published first in South Korea in 1970, translated into Japanese in 1972, and into English soon afterwards. Many of those who became active in the movements described above speak of the profound influence it exercised on their lives. The poet suffered much for it, but in the end he succeeded in changing history.

The movements described above were instrumental in saving the lives of Kim Dae Jung and Kim Chiha (among others), in communicating to the world the reality of life in South Korea, linking the South Korean democracy struggle with global movements in the same direction, and ultimately in helping to achieve the victory of the South Korean democratic revolution. These movements also exercised some, impossible to quantify, effects on the minds

of those who served the Park regime as officials. One vivid testimony to this was the apology offered by Ch'oe Doksin (Ch'oe Tŏksin), former ambassador of South Korea to West Germany, at a 1978 conference to support the democratic opposition movement: "I would like to add one comment on my own involvement. I was ambassador of [South] Korea to Germany when the kidnapping of our countrymen took place. I stand before you now with my deepest apology, not for what I did but for what I did not do. I did not stop it."[38]

It is true, in retrospect, that the international civil society and democratic movements paid little attention to North Korea. Yet the focus of attention on South Korea had a necessary moral and historical logic. Lacking any connection with North Korea, and seriously deficient in information about it, Japan and the United States, and to a degree Britain and Europe, were intimately involved in supporting the repressive system in South Korea and bore a direct responsibility for it. Some intellectuals and some civil movements in Japan and the West were indeed inclined to believe the best of North Korea, according it a fundamental legitimacy as a state founded on resistance to Japanese colonialism. Swayed by sympathy for what they took to be the dilemmas of a small country seeking independence and justice in a lopsided world, some went beyond that to swallow uncritically crude propaganda about Juche (Chuch'e, self-reliance) and to adopt uncritical, supportive positions towards North Korea. Scholars and others were mobilized world-wide to celebrate North Korea's Juche credo that "man is the master of nature and . . . decides everything," ignoring the contradictory principle that such "mastery" was achieved only to the extent that one submitted absolutely to the will of the leader.[39]

Organizations that functioned more or less as fronts for P'yŏngyang convened conferences around the world on the problem of "the peaceful reunification of Korea" and offered occasional free trips to those who would put their names to platitudes or write poems or pledges of loyalty to Kim Il Sung or his son.[40] The process of grappling intellectually and politically with the reality of the North's dictatorship, and therefore the goal of Korean reunification, was more likely delayed, rather than advanced, by such activities. However, none of the organizations discussed in this chapter fall into this category. Many activists in the democratic opposition movement moved on after the victory of 1987 to extend their frame to North Korea, and to the underlying questions of the U.S. role and the taproot of all Korean problems, division. Those who denounce them are active still in attempting to shore up

the national defense state, force the North Korean regime to collapse, and maximize South Korean cooperation, i.e., subordination to the United States. Overall, this chapter asks that the history of the Park Chung Hee era not neglect the dimension of international civil society links that evolved in and around the struggles of that time. Each generation must build anew the linkages of civil society to oppose war, oppression, and injustice, and in so doing always reflect upon, and learn from, past history.

NOTES

1. For an unofficial English translation of the National Security Law: http://www.kimsoft.com/korea/nsl-en.htm

2. James B. Palais, foreword to *Unbroken Spirits: Nineteen Years in South Korea's Gulag*, by So Sung, viii.

3. Quoted in TK, *Letters from South Korea*, 403.

4. Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives, *Activities of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency in the United States*, part 1, March 17, 1976, 4. On these events in general: Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 91–92.

5. Gavan McCormack and Mark Selden, eds., *Korea North and South*, 190–191.

6. So Sung, *Unbroken Spirits: Nineteen Years in South Korea's Gulag.*

7. Thirty years later, in 2005, the National Intelligence Service concluded that the so-called party had been nothing but a pro-democratic student circle. All eight were cleared of any criminality in January 2007. McCormack, Kamiya, and Yonhap News, "Yokohama and Seoul."

8. Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, 133–38.

9. Oda Makoto, Wada Haruki, and others representative of the Japanese peace movement during the Vietnam War period were also invited to Vietnam as guests.

10. Core members were Malcolm Caldwell, Nigel Disney, Peggy Duff, Walter Easey, John Gittings, Jon Halliday, Aidan Foster-Carter, and myself.

11. Gavan McCormack and Mark Selden, eds., *Korea: North and South*; Chang Ulbyong et al, trans., *Nambukhan ui pikyo yongu.*

12. Apart from conferences, Halliday and McCormack met for talks with North Korean diplomat Chu Chang-Joon in Switzerland in April 1997; Halliday and Caldwell visited P'yŏngyang in July 1977. Caldwell was later mysteriously murdered in Phnom Penh in January 1979. McCormack visited South and North Korea in March and May 1980 respectively.

13. Gavan McCormack, "The Politics of Korean Studies in Europe."

14. Martin Walker, "Korean Studies Starts a Row." For related comments on academia and connections with the Park regime see, Sugwon Kang, "President Park and His Learned Friends."

15. I quoted with approval the view of Sumiya Mikio, *Kankoku no keizai*, that South Korea's was "an overseas branch of the Japanese economy . . . its export boom no more than a 'subsidiary Japanese boom,'" Gavan McCormack and Mark Selden, eds., *Korea North and South*, 179. Other prominent Japanese commentators, such as Nishikawa Jun, took more or less the same view.

16. Gavan McCormack and Mark Selden, eds., *Korea North and South*, 92.

17. Ibid., 134.

18. For a recent study of this period, in the form of a documentary on (Korean) television, KBS "Beru no naka no Kan-Nichi kyōtei bunsho–Kan-Nichi ryokoku wa naze 40-nenkan mo chinmoku suru no ka?" Sunday Special, August 15, 2004. I am grateful to Mr. Yi Yan-su for supplying a copy of this film and his Japanese translation of the script.

19. Wada Haruki, "70–80 nendai ni okeru Nikkan rentai undō no shisō to kōdō," manuscript of talk given by Wada at commemorative meeting in Seoul, December 12, 2000, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the death of the democratic activist and lawyer, Cho Yŏng-Ne. My thanks to Professor Wada for providing a copy of this unpublished paper.

20. Authors included Shiba Ryōtarō, Matsumoto Seichō, and Itsuki Hiroyuki. The message was in Shiba's handwriting.

21. Wada's many works are easily accessible and are therefore not listed here.

22. For one, especially vitriolic attack: Shigemura Toshimitsu, *Saishin Kita Chōsen dētabukku*. See also Wada Haruki's home page where this material and Wada's response, is reproduced: http://www.wadaharuki.com.

23. Brought together as three volumes, *Kankoku kara no tsūshin* and in a one volume compilation in English, *Letters from South Korea*. The Japanese first volume was reissued by Iwanami, without explanation or revision, in 2003.

24. I myself used to read TK [Chi Myonggwan] religiously, quoting from it in lectures, broadcasts, and articles.

25. The TK reports, widely circulated at the time, gave the figure of about 2,000 people killed at Kwangju. Now the figure of 200 seems accepted. In 2003, the then *Sekai* editor put this figure to Chi, who accepted it without demur. Chi Myonggwan and Okamoto Atsushi, "Kokusai purojekuto to shite no 'Kankoku kara no tsūshin,'" 66.

26. Nishioka Tsutomu, "Fukumen o totta 'TK-sei' hajishirazu no ryōshin," 177–91.

27. Inagaki Takeshi, "Sore de mo Kita Chōsen o bengo suru 'korinai menmen,'" 128–39. See also Tanizawa Eiichi, *Akuma no shisō*, 155–70; Nishioka Tsutomu,"Fukumen

o totta," 177, also criticizes Iwanami Publishing Company for re-publishing TK's writings in 2003 without making clear that up to 40 percent of the content might be false, as editor Yasue apparently conceded to the monthly Korean journal *Wŏlgan Chungang* in April 1988. That criticism seems just.

28. "Kita Chōsen wa dō kaisuru ka," 278–86, abridged translation of "Kim Country: Hard Times in North Korea," 21–48. Inagaki Takeshi, "Sore de mo Kita Chōsen," 134. Describing this as an "outstanding essay" (*sugureta ronbunok*) is quite out of keeping with the Korea-related material published by *Sekai* before or since and concludes, wrongly, that someone other than Yasue must have been responsible for editing this issue of *Sekai*.

29. Chi Myŏnggwan, *TK-sei no jidai to ima*, 59–60.

30. "Hongoku dōhō e no kōkaibun," September 29, 2003. http://www.online-ryu.com; also author's conversation with Chŏng Yokohama, November 7, 2004.

31. See various issues of the journal *Ryu*, published privately by Chung.

32. For an outline of Song's career and of the "Song affair," see Kajimura Tai'ichiro, "Song Tuyŏl kyoju jiken,"

33. Soo-min Seo, "'Border Rider.' "

34. A documentary on Song's life was screened at the fifty-third Berlin Film festival in February 2004. He is said to be currently working on a three-part study of the light and darkness of modernity, titled "Return of Modernity." Soo-min Seo, "'Border Rider.'"

35. Quoted in Kajimura Tai'ichiro, "Song Tuyŏl kyoju jiken."

36. A KBS television director, quoted in Kajimura Tai'ichiro, "Song Tuyŏl kyoju jiken."

37. In 2004, the furor over the National Security Law deepened as it was revealed that the country's third largest political party, the Democratic Labor Party, was under investigation for possible breaches because of its opposition to the war in Iraq. "A Suspicious 'Public Security Institute,'" *Hankyoreh*, October 18, 2004.

38. Ch'oe Dŏksin, Emergency International Congress on Korea, Bonn, June 5–6, 1978. (My thanks to Sam Noumoff of McGill University for reminding me of this statement.) Ch'oe defected to North Korea in 1986.

39. See discussion in Gavan McCormack, *Target North Korea*, 72–74.

40. Ibid., 72–73.

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