

LETTER

FROM THE EDITOR

The timeline of the latter half of 2016 includes major political events like the election of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States, not to mention the “Choi Soon-shil Gate” scandal, massive public protests, and National Assembly vote for the impeachment of Park Geun-hye here in South Korea, where the Journal is based. Apart from events involving highly visible individuals, hotspots across the world continue to be subject to festering tensions coming from multiple countries. Notably, the South China Sea and the islands it houses remain contested between surrounding countries; the threat of North Korea’s nuclear weaponry and recent testing that showcased that capability are keeping neighbors like South Korea, China, and Japan, as well as the US, on edge; also, terrorism, while still concentrated in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia, has spread to other areas, even despite military intervention targeting major terrorist organizations and splinter groups. International relations involve a complex web of individual and collective perception, as well as action – reactions and interactions – within and across physical boundaries. This Fall/Winter 2016 issue of the Yonsei Journal of International Studies (Papers, Essays, and Reviews) features the theme “Interactions Across Borders” and contains seven pieces of writing from a diverse set of scholars, plus an interview and book review.

Starting with “Papers,” Giulia Dondoli challenges the view that LGBTI organizations have been blocked from access to the United Nations through the granting of consultative status by showing how specific country delegates have actually pushed that process forward. Her paper is titled “Searching for an Advocacy Venue: How LGBTI Organizations are Getting Access to the United Nations.” Then, Na Young Lee’s “Post US-DPRK Nuclear Negotiation:

Hidden Cycle of ‘Renegade-Warning-Counter Renegade’” looks at a more obscured portion of the “crisis-negotiation-resolution” process, revealing a not-so-irrational DPRK that reacts only given certain conditions related to US behavior and the tone of the US-DPRK relationship. These claims may have salience for the US in future DPRK denuclearization efforts. Staying on the topic of the DPRK, joint authors Max Nurnus and Maël ‘Alan’ van Beek focus on perceptions of the country in “North Korea in the European Press: An Analysis of Stereotypes in British, French, and German Newspapers,” showing differences in media portrayal and stereotyped imagery, especially in comparison to the US. Closing the section is Rita Hill’s “Mother Tongue or Master Tongue?: An Examination of English as Medium of Instruction Policies in Post-colonial African Universities,” which historically and theoretically contextualizes the problematic nature of English only educational environments and argues for the incorporation of indigenous languages.

Next, the “Essays” include three pieces that discuss both national and transnational issues involving ethnic minorities in China, overlapping claims in the South China Sea, and the growth of Boko Haram’s terrorism. First, Dr. Geeta Kocchar outlines the concept of the “Chinese Nation” and the progression of racial and ethnic communities in and around China in “The Evolution of the ‘Chinese Nation’: Disharmony in the Coexistence of Ethnic Communities,” pointing out how a unity-based rhetoric has joined different ethnicities together, but has also seen the strengthening of ethnic minority dissent. Reflecting upon the outcome of a major case in the South China Sea dispute – the Philippines v. China ruling made in favor of the former earlier this year – Grant Fellows provides evidence of Russian support for China. His essay, titled “Arctic Echoes: Potential Repercussions of Russia’s Response to the Philippines v. China,” likewise forecasts how this stance may disadvantage as well as benefit Russia in the future, given their own assertion of rights over Arctic waters. Lastly, James Olusegun Adeyeri’s “Boko Haram Islamist Insurgency in Nigeria: Transnational Dimensions and Opportunities for Peace and Security” traces a timeline of Boko Haram’s beginnings and eventual expansion beyond the borders of Nigeria, highlighting the necessity for a concerted, collective opposition effort combining both military and non-military tactics.

As always, the issue ends with an interview and book review, which this time both deal with developments in Asia. Our very own Alexandra Stephenson posed questions to Benoit Hardy-Chartrand, currently Senior Research Associate at the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Canada, who further discusses the content in one of his recent publications and delves

into the dynamics of perception among China, Japan, and South Korea. He also gives his opinion on Donald Trump's Asia policy, President Duterte of the Philippines, aftereffects of the US withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and more. And in the review of Chung Min Lee's new publication, *Fault Lines in a Rising Asia*, Cheol Bin (Jason) Shin provides a chapter-by-chapter overview of the book, along with balanced critique, reiterating the core of the book's argument that sees Asia as rising, but mired in security dilemmas that deny it from overpowering the US as a hegemonic power.

In closing, I would like to extend my warmest thanks to every member of the Journal staff who has contributed to making this issue a reality. In addition, we deeply appreciate our contributors and are honored to share their voices and insights. This is the first and last time I will fill the position of Editor in Chief by myself, and I take along with me only good memories as I prepare to leave the academic community here. I remain indebted to the YJIS team and Yonsei GSIS in many ways. Looking forward, we also say goodbye to veteran member Gordon Gatlin, who has handled the design and online presence of the Journal for quite some time; we wish him the best in his post-graduate journey. I have faith that the next Editor in Chief will carry out and further strengthen the YJIS legacy, and am excited for the future of the Journal. We hope all our contributors and readers enjoy this issue and continue to support YJIS in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Angela Lee Sherman". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Angela" being the most prominent.

Angela Lee Sherman
Editor in Chief