

# LETTER

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Recent years has witnessed a rise in Asia as a site for socio-political discourse worldwide. The booming economies of South Korea and China have threatened the hegemony of great powers such as the United States in international trade circuits. Furthermore, East Asian countries have been striving to find a niche in the arenas of hard and soft power as a means to assert their roles in the global stage. In order to maintain international attention, Asian countries have acted as host for several major world sports events, the most notable being the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, last year's 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, and the Tokyo Olympics to be held in 2020. China's successful bid for the Beijing Winter Olympic games in 2022 further ensures that East Asia will remain a central topic in international news outlets, keeping attention on the cultural and political significance of the region. Beyond East Asia, Southeast Asian countries have also risen through the proliferation of soft power, such as the dispersal of cuisine from the Philippines abroad, to create more social and political visibility. Thus, the 2019 Spring/Summer issue of Yonsei's Journal of International Studies has paid special attention to literature that addresses the significance of a burgeoning Asian presence in international practices worldwide.

Leading off this discussion in the Papers section of this edition is a piece titled "Towards an Alternative Image of the State: China/US Relations, Economic Institutions, and the State as Unitary Purposive Actor" authored by Richard Wright. Wright argues that economic relations and policy choices between the US and China reveal a need to address an alternative image of the state that augments, rather than replaces, the unitary-actor model popular within IR theory. This alternative image also helps to account for instances within the US and China that reveal cultural motivations as the basis for action over the political. Thus, he concludes, the motivations behind specific decisions made by each respective country in their interactions constitute a state image that is more fallible and pluralistic than the current rational unitary-actor would allow, expanding the theory for more diverse application. Continuing

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the discussion of China and US relations is a piece by author Cody R. Connolly from Seoul National University. In his work titled “Strategic Stability vs. Strategic Primacy: China’s Nuclear Strategy Following the 2018 US Nuclear Posture Review,” Connolly adds to the extensive body of literature on American and Chinese nuclear strategy. Through a comparative analysis of term interpretation used in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, he reveals a distinct difference in perception of the terms “strategic stability” and “strategic primacy” between the US and China and elaborates on how these interpretations effect nuclear strategy. Rounding off the Papers section is Ji Min Lee’s “Participation in the Pyeongchang 2018 Olympic Winter Games: South Korea’s Public Diplomacy or North Korea’s Strategic Determination?” is an exploration of North Korea’s participation in the 2018 Winter Olympic Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea, and its effects on North-South relations. She identifies the role of South Korean public diplomacy efforts, as well as North Korean internal politics, as vital factors in North Korea’s participation in the event. Lee also implies that the “sports politics” aided in the subsequent peace talks between the two countries that have followed since. Additionally, Lee emphasizes the need for future research to address the significance of sports diplomacy as mediating international relations.

Returning to China as a site for exploration as a major actor within international politics, Line Moerch starts the “Essay” section of this edition with her piece titled “When Security Hurts: China – The Master of “Covert” Sanctions.” Moerch explores the concept of economic sanctions in a theoretical context, narrowing in on David R. Baldwin’s construction of what he calls “covert sanctions” as applied to South Korea by China when THAAD was introduced to the peninsula. The use of covert sanctions, she argues, shows an attempt by the Chinese government to influence international politics without fear of military escalation or future conflict. Jemimah Uy supplies the final entry in the “Essay” section of this edition with her piece: “The Presence/Absence of Nostalgia: Generational Differences in Culinary and Gastronomic Encounters of Filipino Migrants with “Authentic” Filipino Food.” Veering away from international relation theory as a framework for her discussion, Uy chooses an anthropological approach to her discussion of food nostalgia in Filipino diasporic communities. Through focusing on two generations of Filipino migrants, she finds that the question of “authenticity” in regard to culinary and gastronomic discourses is highly contested between each generation. For the first generation, a sense of nostalgia exists. For the second generation, however, the mixing of cultures and foods has created a unique relationship with Filipino cuisine. For this year’s interview portion of the journal, our junior editor Danielle French sat down with Liga Tarvide, an officer for education, culture, and public diplomacy at the Embassy of the Republic of Latvia in South Korea. French’s interview sheds light on the nature of embassy work in South Korea and efforts conducted by the Latvian embassy to generate awareness of their culture and practices among Korean students of all ages. Book contributor Alexandra Micu completes the journal with her book review of Hae Yeon Choo’s *Decentering Citizenship: Gender, Labor, and Migrant Rights in South Korea*. Using ethnographic data collected between 2008 to 2014, Choo’s book purviews the lives of Filipino women in the sectors of

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factory work, marriage migrant, and hostess jobs. Micu's review harbors both criticism and praise, calling for more elaboration on Choo's discussion of migrant activism among advocates while still praising the book for its findings and methodology. This semester working on the journal as Editor-in-Chief has not been without its challenges. However, the chance to work together with a dedicated team to overcome those challenges has been not only a rewarding experience, but also highly educational. As such, in the concluding remarks of this letter, I would like to thank my staff editors, Diana Piscarac, Caroline Mahon, Aimee Beatriz Lee, Sue Jeong, Danielle French, and Theophile Begin, for all the work they put into despite the many difficulties we have encountered this semester. Without them, this edition of the journal would not have been possible.

I hope to see many of you again next issue!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kendra Hodapp', written in a cursive style.

Kendra Hodapp  
Editor in Chief