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# PEAR

**YONSEI JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
PAPERS, ESSAYS, AND REVIEWS**

# **EAST ASIA: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE**

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**LETTER**

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**FROM THE EDITORS**

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The world is facing an unprecedented situation, and a clear answer or ending to it is yet to be seen. In times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on the present is a given priority; what we should do *right now* to respond to or even mitigate our circumstances is always at the forefront of our consciousness, and it is natural to focus on what *is*. However, this moment in time is exactly that — a moment in our history, both as individuals and as a global community. There is no intention to diminish the state of the world today; rather, the goal of this letter and, on a larger scale, this journal, is to remind ourselves that who we are today and how the world currently operates is a result of the past as well as a foundation for the future. Thus, it is imperative to analyze our lives as a part of a history that we shape, to reflect on truths from the past, and to envision a future that we will create as a result of our ongoing battle against various adversities.

This is the ultimate goal of this issue: to understand the regional past, present, and future of East Asia. This does not only mean looking at the political or economic aspects of East Asian society but also gaining a better understanding of the *people* — the subcultures, even the *individuals* — that move and shape this region over time. The first paper in this issue is entitled “The US-Japan-ROK Relationship in the Making: A Trilateral Alignment” by Kim Sanghoon, which details the workings of the alignment that constitutes these three countries in the face of the ongoing North Korean nuclear crisis. In this text, Kim delineates the definitions of an “alliance” and an “alignment” to better understand why the former cannot be cleanly achieved by the United States, South Korea, and Japan. The paper assesses the shortcomings of the alignment and underscores that the tensions between the ROK and Japan are what hinder the maturity of the trilateral alignment into a stable alliance. The author makes recommendations to strengthen the US-Japan-ROK relationship to maintain and, perhaps, even develop the security of the East Asian region against the growing threat of a more intense nuclear crisis.

Sigit and Aurelia V.T. Ngambut also look at the relationships the United States has with other countries, this time with Taiwan and China in their paper, “The US-Taiwan-China Relations: Maintaining Peace through the Taiwan Relations Act.” It focuses on the role that the TRA plays in setting the tone of discourse and interaction between these three nations and describes how the controversy of autonomy and sovereignty is what creates further tension within the region. The authors assess the various strings that tie these three nations together, concluding with a policy recommendation that focuses on the revision of the TRA to ensure better relations between these countries.

The final paper by Dr. Yuko Takahashi, entitled “Drifting between Korea and Japan: 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans under Japanese colonial rule,” offers a perspective into how the past and the present coalesce. It offers insight into the life and struggles of 1.5 generation Koreans who lived in Japan during the time the Korean peninsula was under Japanese colonial rule. Not only does it assess the community aspect of this case, but it also looks deeper into the formation of identity and ethnic consciousness through their unique experience. The author defines three classes in which these immigrants were implicitly sorted, and she analyzes the complexity of a situation in which one’s ethnic identity and geopolitical circumstances are in constant conflict and negotiation.



Although they are shorter in length, the essays are more focused in scope and provide the reader with unique insights and perspectives about East Asia. The first essay is written by Sooyun (Clara) Hong, and it examines the dichotomy of the public person and the private self constructed by the K-pop industry and K-pop fan fiction. “What’s in a (Stage) Name? Public Personas, Private Selves, and the Transgression of Authenticity” uses fan fiction websites to discern how affect is transgressed by both the performers and audience, and ultimately explores the contentious negotiations made between the so-called public and private.

The second essay written by Joel Petersson Ivre, titled “Mayling and May Fourth--Understanding the Internationalism of Madame Chiang Kai-shek’s Speech to the US Congress in 1943” is a historical piece that analyzes the writings of one of the most famous Chinese political figures during and after WWII. Beginning with Madame Chiang’s writings from her teenage years and ending with her speech to the United States Congress, this essay traces her “internationalistic” upbringing and later experiences to argue that the motivations behind them were fundamentally nationalist. The author adds to existing scholarship by providing a detailed and insightful historiography of her writings that portray Madame Chiang’s hopeful efforts in championing her own visions for China. As such, Ivre compliments the pieces in this journal by examining the significance and roles played by historical figures in US-China relations.

The book review written by Samuel Gardner on *AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order* (2018) is timely and encompasses issues of the past, present, and future in East Asia. The argument that technological developments, especially artificial intelligence, will bring about great changes to the world, which makes understanding the AI industry, business culture, and technology in China all the more critical. Douglas provides insights on thorough reading of the book and analyses made by Kai Fu Lee, an AI researcher-turned venture capitalist and former president of Google China. He explains the advantages, such as Chinese AI firms with their large banks of data and incentives placed by regulations, and drawbacks, such as potential job losses and domestic income inequality in China, that will play significant roles in China’s technological development. Douglas is left curious from this fascinating book, and is left with questions and thoughts surrounding the sustainability of China’s AI industry and feasibility regarding the suggestions made by Lee.

Finally, this issue closes with timely and relevant discussion between our interviewer and Professor Cho Byung-Jae from the Yonsei GSIS Faculty. Dr. Cho is an expert in international politics within Northeast Asia with special interests in North Korean foreign relations and foreign policy. He gives a detailed analysis and opinion on the COVID-19 situation on the Korean Peninsula and around the world, providing insight into what the short- and long-term impacts of this pandemic might be. He discusses what can be observed from the North Korean responses to COVID-19, and how it can affect the internal balance within the Korean Peninsula, foreign relations, and inter-Korean relations. The interview closes with a morale-boosting commentary on the need for solidarity around the world and the opportunity that such a crisis can propel.

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2020 has been an unsettling year for all with the pandemic impacting lives across the world, strained relations and hegemonic rivalry between states, closing of borders, and violence against human lives. In times like today, it seems more important than ever to stay resilient and to remain cognizant of the fact that all lives matter. We cannot risk isolating ourselves in times of need and adversity, and staying connected seems incumbent. East Asia with its dynamic histories and cultures has conventionally been viewed as different, but this journal through diverse papers, essays, book review, and interview, present that while variances exist, so do similarities in its past, present, and future.

We are extremely grateful to our editors who have dedicated time and contributed to the success of this edition. Without their careful and observant selections, readings, and edits, the completion of this issue would not have been possible, especially during these unimaginable times. Thank you to Danielle French, Theophile Begin, Simone Liew, Grecia Dominique Paniagua Garcia for your tireless work and support. And to our readers, we are grateful for your continued interest in our journal. We wish you safety and good health. Thank you.

Aimee Beatriz Lee and Soo Yeon (Sue) Jeong  
Co-Editors-in-Chief

# **MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS**

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Sanghoon Kim is a master's student in international peace and security at Korea University. He received his bachelor's degree in political science from Korea University in 2015 and served as a Navy officer for three years after his graduation. His interests include international relations, foreign policy, maritime security, the US-ROK alliance, and North Korean nuclear issues. He has been conducting research at the National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) in Washington, DC since March 2020, sponsored by the Korea Foundation (KF).

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# PAPERS

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TRILATERAL ALIGNMENT**

*Kim Sanghoon*

**THE US-TAIWAN-CHINA RELATIONS: MAINTAINING PEACE  
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*Dr. Yuko Takahashi*

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# THE US-JAPAN-ROK RELATIONSHIP IN THE MAKING: A TRILATERAL ALIGNMENT

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*Kim Sanghoon*

Korea University

*North Korea has continued to advance its nuclear weapons capabilities since 2006 while the trilateral relationship between the US, Japan, and South Korea (ROK) has continued to deteriorate following the end of the Cold War. It is becoming clear that North Korea's constant sophistication of nuclear weapons as well as delivery systems is meant to increase the expected costs of US intervention in a Northeast Asian contingency situation and weaken the solidarity between the "Southern Triangle." This article first examines the definitions of alliances and alignments to see why the trilateral relationship could not develop into an alliance. Next, it is argued that the biggest obstacle in constructing an efficient trilateral alliance is the Japan-ROK relationship and that a trilateral alignment should be sought in the face of a North Korean nuclear threat. Finally, areas of security cooperation in order to effectively cope against North Korea are identified.*

**Keywords:** *Alignment, Alliance, Military, North Korea, Nuclear Weapons, Security Cooperation, Trilateral Alignment, Trilateral Relationship.*

## Introduction

The Korean Peninsula is in turmoil. North Korea continues to develop its nuclear capabilities while the US-ROK alliance and the ROK-Japan relationship are waning. During the Cold War, cooperation between the United States, Japan, and South Korea was effective against communist threats, but today, North Korea's nuclear weapons capability is driving a wedge between them. Although the Cold War ended almost 30 years ago, the Korean Peninsula remains intensely competitive, and the two Koreas are de facto still at war. The solidarity among US, Japan, and South Korea remained strong throughout the Cold War under the leadership of the US, but the transformation from a bipolar system to a multipolar system created different perceived interests. The trilateral cooperative relationship is key in deterring North Korean threats as strong ties between the three parties will raise the costs of North Korean provocative measures. Hence, the greatest challenge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to redefine the US-Japan-ROK trilateral relationship and search for areas of common

interest that can reinvigorate the “Southern Triangle.”<sup>1</sup>

### Literature Review: Alliance and Alignment

The two main approaches in modern international relations theory are neorealism and neoliberalism.<sup>2</sup> While both neorealism and neoliberalism concur on the assumption that the international system is anarchic — absence of sovereignty or authority over individual states — the two differ on viewing the viability of cooperation among states.<sup>3</sup> In a neorealist international society, states form alliances in order to achieve ‘balance of power.’ The purpose of balancing is to survive in an anarchic international system where all states are forced to act upon the mandate of ‘self-help.’<sup>4</sup> According to neorealism, the systemic attribute causes states to compete, and uncertainty of the other’s intentions makes cooperation difficult.<sup>5</sup> Neoliberalists, on the other hand, argue that anarchy and the concomitant prevalence of dispute can be overcome by the increasing level of economic interdependence and the establishment of international institutions.<sup>6</sup> There are other theories that challenge the structural analysis of both neorealism and neoliberalism. Constructivism, for instance, disagrees with structural theories’ assumption that a material world exists objectively. Instead, “anarchy is what states make of it,” meaning that ideational factors such as knowledge, culture, and norms shape and construct international politics.<sup>7</sup> However, as Thucydides saw through the essence of inter-state politics, “the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.”<sup>8</sup> Although institutions and international law contribute in alleviating tensions between states, absence of an authority higher than the state sustains uncertainty among states and forces national survival to be their utmost priority. In other words, the unchanging systemic attribute explains states’ behavior of balancing and enables analysis of why the trilateral alignment — a form of external

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1 Noa Ronkin, “Japan and South Korea on the Brink: International Affairs and Trade Relations Experts Elucidate the Conflict between the Two US Allies,” *Stanford Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies*, October 31, 2019, <https://fsi.stanford.edu/news/japan-and-south-korea-brink-international-affairs-and-trade-relations-experts-elucidate>.

2 For theoretical review of neorealism and neoliberalism, see, Joseph S. Nye, Jr., “Neorealism and Neoliberalism,” *World Politics* 40, no. 2 (January 1988), 235-251.

3 David A. Baldwin, “Neoliberalism, Neorealism, and World Politics,” in *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate*, ed. David A. Baldwin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 5.

4 Stephen Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 110, Special Edition: Frontiers of Knowledge (Spring 1998): 31; Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 1979), 118.

5 Baldwin, “Neoliberalism, Neorealism, and World Politics,” 5.

6 *Ibid.*, 8.

7 Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 395.

8 Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides’ Trap?* (New York: Mariner Books, 2017), 38.



balancing against North Korea — is important.

When there is an equilibrium in the distribution of relative power in the system, the adversary will be deterred because the expected benefits of initiating an attack will be less than the expected costs.<sup>9</sup> Since ‘power’ is “estimated by comparing the capabilities of a number of units,” achieving ‘balance of power’ is to increase military and economic strength.<sup>10</sup> This is called ‘internal balancing’ while ‘external balancing’ is to sign formal alliances with other states to combine relative power against an adversary.<sup>11</sup> Internal balancing takes time because increasing military expenditure does not automatically yield equal relative power vis-à-vis the opponent. External balancing, on the contrary, renders enhanced capability instantly. Not only is external balancing advantageous in terms of speed, it is also more cost-efficient. While internal balancing is equally important in the long-term, in face of an immediate threat from North Korea, the importance of external balancing in the form of a trilateral alignment is becoming more significant for South Korea, Japan, and the United States.

### *Alliance*

Glenn Snyder defined alliances as “formal associations of states for the use (or nonuse) of military force, in specified circumstances, against states outside their own membership.”<sup>12</sup> The US-ROK alliance stands as an ‘alliance’ because it is a formal association explicit in a treaty. The Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America was signed in October 1953, clearly stipulating that “the parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of either of them, the political independence or security of either of the parties is threatened by external armed attack.”<sup>13</sup> However, the US-ROK alliance could be characterized as “asymmetric” or “unilateral” because the relative power gap between the US

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9 Now with the invention of nuclear weapons, its destructiveness renders “unacceptable costs” rather than costs which would “deter one’s opponent from initiating a first strike attack.” Richard Shultz, “Coercive Force and Military Strategy: Deterrence Logic and the Cost-Benefit Model of Counterinsurgency Warfare,” *Western Political Quarterly* (1979): 446.

10 Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (Long Grove: Waveland Press, Inc., 1979), 98.

11 *Ibid.*, 118.

12 Glenn Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 4; an earlier work that defines an alliance in a similar manner is made by Robert Osgood as “a formal agreement that pledges states to cooperate in using their military resources against a specific state or states . . . to consider the use of force in specified circumstances.” Robert E. Osgood and John H. Badgley, *Japan and the US in Asia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968), 17.

13 “Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea; October 1, 1953,” *The Avalon Project*, accessed December 19, 2019, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/kor001.asp#1](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/kor001.asp#1).

and ROK was substantially wide.<sup>14</sup> Economically, South Korea's GDP per capita was USD\$66 while the US GDP per capita was USD\$2,449 in 1953, and the gap between the two countries in terms of military capabilities was incomparably wider.<sup>15</sup>

The US-Japan Treaty of Mutual Defense was signed in 1951 and Article V clearly mentions that "an armed attack against either party in the territories under the administration of Japan would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger."<sup>16</sup> Although the specific wordings are slightly different from the US-ROK treaty, the essence of the two treaties is that both sides will come to each other's assistance in case of an attack by a third party. The two formal alliances constitute the so-called "hub-and-spokes" system in Northeast Asia. It is a system "defined as a set of tightly held and exclusive, one-to-one bilateral partnerships with countries in the region."<sup>17</sup> The hub refers to the US while Japan and South Korea are the spokes. Such a system contrasts with the Western European system of collective security institutionalized as NATO. Phillip Saunders explains that "historical animosities and fears of Japanese or Chinese domination" limited the formulation of an Asian regional security organization.<sup>18</sup> Victor Cha argues that the individualistic alliance system was inevitable in Asia to gain control over assertive counterparts. In sum, the current "hub-and-spokes" system that the United States devised in the 1950s serves two purposes: to maintain effective control over South Korea and Japan; and to externally balance against communism in Northeast Asia.<sup>19</sup>

### *Alignment*

On one hand, Snyder clearly differentiates 'alignment' from 'alliance' stating that an alignment is based "solely on common interests" whereas an alliance focuses on military and security purposes.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, Stephen Walt does not differentiate the two and defines alliance as "a formal or informal relationship of

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14 Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 12.

15 Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS), "An Annual Index of National Accounts," *KOSIS* (Mar 5, 2019), accessed December 19, 2019, [http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=301&tblId=DT\\_102Y002&vw\\_cd=MT\\_ZTITLE&list\\_id=301\\_A\\_A05\\_B01&seqNo=&lang\\_mode=ko&language=kor&obj\\_var\\_id=&itm\\_id=&conn\\_path=MT\\_ZTITLE](http://kosis.kr/statHtml/statHtml.do?orgId=301&tblId=DT_102Y002&vw_cd=MT_ZTITLE&list_id=301_A_A05_B01&seqNo=&lang_mode=ko&language=kor&obj_var_id=&itm_id=&conn_path=MT_ZTITLE); "United States (USA) GDP – Gross Domestic Product," *countryeconomy.com*, accessed December 19, 2019, <https://countryeconomy.com/gdp/usa?year=1953>.

16 "Japan-US Security Treaty," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan*, accessed December 20, 2019, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/1.html>.

17 Victor D. Cha, *Powerplay: The Origins of the American Alliance System in Asia* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016), 3.

18 Phillip Saunders, "A Virtual Alliance for Asian Security," *Orbis* (Spring 1999): 247.

19 Cha, *Powerplay*, 3.

20 Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 4.

security cooperation between two or more sovereign states.”<sup>21</sup> Throughout this paper, alignments will be clearly distinguished from alliances not only for taxonomic reasons but also for a more detailed account of the various relationships that falls short of an alliance.

Thomas Wilkins deconstructed alignments into seven sub-categories including: alliances, coalitions, security communities, strategic partnerships, concerts, ententes, and non-aggression pacts.<sup>22</sup> For Wilkins, an alignment is the broadest notion encompassing the seven specific forms of associations. Such classification renders descriptive power in reflecting the diversities in inter-state relationships, but lacks parsimony and complicates the use of analytical concepts. For example, Wilkins puts ‘strategic partnership’ as distinct from ‘alliance’ because the former is “primarily [a] ‘goal-driven’ rather than [a] ‘threat-driven’ arrangement.”<sup>23</sup> However, the difference between the two concepts is unclear as alliances often develop into what is referred to as ‘*strategic alliance*.’<sup>24</sup> Moreover, many alliances incorporate elements of Wilkins’ ‘strategic partnerships’. For example, the ‘Joint Vision’ statement released by the US and ROK declares that both countries “will build a comprehensive *strategic alliance* of bilateral, regional and global scope, based on common values and mutual trust.”<sup>25</sup> This does not mean the US-ROK Alliance had transformed into a ‘strategic partnership,’ but instead endorsed that the ties had been strengthened. In addition, variants of similar concepts need elaboration such as arrangements, groups, institutions, and regimes. Wilkins’ categorization certainly renders descriptive power, but the purpose of this paper is not to account for all types of associations. Rather, by focusing on the dynamics surrounding the Korean Peninsula and its key players, the dichotomy between alliances and alignments is enough.

Thus, this paper focuses on two concepts: alliances and alignments. Snyder’s dichotomy is the best alternative, defining alignments as “expectations of states about whether they will be supported or opposed by other states in future interactions.”<sup>26</sup> While alliances and alignments both expect mutual support in

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21 Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987), 1; Walt mentions that he uses the two “interchangeably” (page 12) throughout the book.

22 Thomas S. Wilkins, “‘Alignment’, not ‘alliance’ – the shifting paradigm of international security cooperation: toward a conceptual taxonomy of alignment,” *Review of International Studies* 38, no. 1 (January 2012): 53-76.

23 Ibid., 68.

24 Scott A. Snyder, “US-ROK Strategic Alliance 2015,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, September 1, 2010, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/us-rok-strategic-alliance-2015>.

25 “Joint Vision for the alliance of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea,” The White House President Barack Obama, June 16, 2009, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/joint-vision-alliance-united-states-america-and-republic-korea>.

26 Glenn Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 6.

contingencies, allied states are bound by formal treaties whereas aligned states are absent of obligations. In brief, positive relationships that fall short of an alliance (formal associations institutionalized by a treaty stipulating specific circumstances for security cooperation) would be alignments. This categorization allows the US-ROK and US-Japan relationship to be defined as alliances, whereas the positive relationship between the three parties are defined as an alignment.

## The Trilateral Alignment

### *ROK-Japan Alignment*

First, there exists no formal military pact between South Korea and Japan, even though both countries face a common adversary: North Korea. In theory, mutual expectations of support arise when “threatened by the same adversary.”<sup>27</sup> This shared understanding between South Korea and Japan creates a positive relationship but falls short of being defined as an alliance due to the absence of a formal military pact. When examining the history of North Korean provocations against South Korea and Japan, there were 424,122 cases of armistice violations since 1997 and the number continues to increase with North Korea’s improvements in the nuclear weapons program. Both South Korea and Japan have experienced numerous acts of aggression since the armistice in 1953: several underground tunnels were found intended for clandestine infiltration into the ROK, an attempt to assassinate the Korean president failed but killed a number of high officials in Myanmar, and in 1987, a civilian aircraft heading to Seoul exploded in midair due to a planted bomb by North Korean terrorists.<sup>28</sup> The Japanese government claims that 17 of its citizens were kidnapped by North Korea and many more found missing over the course of history.<sup>29</sup> Considering threats come from a common adversary, South Korea and Japan had to cooperate, “enmeshing them in the Cold War defense network of their common ally (the United States).”<sup>30</sup>

The reason why Japan and South Korea could not form an alliance in the first place is because of historical and territorial disputes.<sup>31</sup> It was the imminent

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27 Ibid.

28 Hannah Fischer, “North Korean Provocative Actions, 1950-2007,” *CRS Report for Congress*, April 20, 2007.

29 Adam Edelman, “Japanese citizens simply vanished. North Korea had abducted them. But why?” *NBC News*, June 12, 2018, accessed December 22, 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/japanese-citizens-simply-vanished-north-korea-had-abducted-them-why-n881546>.

30 Victor Cha, “Bridging the Gap: The Strategic Context of the 1965 Korea-Japan Normalization Treaty,” *Korean Studies* 20, no. 1 (1996): 124.

31 Hahnkyu Park, “Between Caution and Cooperation: The ROK-Japan Security Relationship in the Post-Cold War Period,” *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 10, no. 1 (1998): 95.

security threat coming from the communist bloc that had kept ties relatively stable throughout the Cold War. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, South Korea restored diplomatic relations with China and Russia in the early 1990s and as the threats of communism diminished, various agendas separate to national security emerged.<sup>32</sup> Historical and territorial issues were one of them. South Korea demanded that the Japanese government take more responsibility and sincerely apologize for the atrocities committed during the colonial era on issues such as forced labor and comfort women.<sup>33</sup> That said, Japan referred to the 1965 Basic Relations Treaty and argued that it had settled all liabilities regarding the past. More recently, the South Korean Supreme Court ruled that the Japanese company Mitsubishi Heavy Industries had to compensate South Korean victims of forced labor.<sup>34</sup> In retaliation, Japan then excluded South Korea from its 'white list' of favored trading partners and South Korea announced that it would not renew the military information sharing agreement (GSOMIA).<sup>35</sup> Conflicts between the two nations have always sustained with ad hoc cover ups such as the 2015 agreement to resolve the comfort women issue with finality and irreversibility.<sup>36</sup> The Korean public condemned the government for its early and insufficient compromise with the Japanese side. In a recent poll conducted by the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, the Korean public's favorability towards Japan marked lower than China and even North Korea by a large margin.<sup>37</sup>

Second, under the US "hub-and-spokes" system, South Korea and Japan were able to focus more of their attention on economic development, which helped pave the way for future economic cooperation. In 1965, the Basic Relations treaty was signed, normalizing their stalled diplomatic relationship. Article V of the treaty

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32 Choong Nam Kim, "Changing Korean Perceptions of the Post-Cold War Era and the US-ROK Alliance," *East-West Center*, no. 67, April, 2003, <https://www.eastwestcenter.org/system/tdf/private/api067.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=31914>.

33 Simon Denyer, "New South Korean court ruling angers Japan, deepening crisis between America's closest Pacific allies," *The Washington Post*, November 29, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/s-korea-court-orders-japans-mitsubishi-to-pay-compensation-for-wartime-forced-labor/2018/11/28/4f0a6616-f37e-11e8-9240-e8028a62c722\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/s-korea-court-orders-japans-mitsubishi-to-pay-compensation-for-wartime-forced-labor/2018/11/28/4f0a6616-f37e-11e8-9240-e8028a62c722_story.html).

34 Ibid.

35 Frank Jannuzi, "Out of Tune: Japan-ROK Tension and US Interests in Northeast Asia," *The National Bureau of Asian Research*, October 9, 2019, <https://www.nbr.org/publication/out-of-tune-japan-rok-tension-and-u-s-interests-in-northeast-asia/>.

36 Ankit Panda, "The 'Final and Irreversible' 2015 Japan-South Korea Comfort Women Deal Unravels," *The Diplomat*, January 9, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/01/the-final-and-irreversible-2015-japan-south-korea-comfort-women-deal-unravels/>.

37 On a scale of 0 to 10, Japan scored 2.30 while China and North Korea scored 3.63 and 3.44 each. US scored 5.45; J. James Kim, "South Korean Attitudes about ROK-Japan Relations on the Rocks," *The Asan Institute for Policy Studies*, October 14, 2019, <http://en.asaninst.org/contents/south-korean-attitudes-about-rok-japan-relations-on-the-rocks/>.

pledged to place “commercial relations on a stable and friendly basis”<sup>38</sup> and it was evident that their motivation came from “pressing South Korea’s need for economic assistance and Japanese interest in the Korean economy.”<sup>39</sup> Following the ratification of the treaty, Japan agreed to provide “grants of US\$300 million in goods and services, long-term, low-interest loans of US\$200 million repayable over 20 years at 3.5 percent per annum after a seven-year grace period, and private credits amounting to at least US\$300 million.”<sup>40</sup> Today, the level of economic interdependence between the two countries remain substantially high.<sup>41</sup> For the United States, cooperation between South Korea and Japan was imperative in effectively countering against communist threats. US pressure to normalize the relationship contributed to the signing of the Basic Relations treaty, implicitly holding economic aid and security guarantee as a leverage.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Japan and South Korea are committed to common values such as democracy, freedom of expression, and human rights. Snyder mentioned that “expectations of support may also stem from common ideologies.”<sup>43</sup> This means that openness in both societies can enhance mutual understandings in various sectors through increased communication and travel despite negative national sentiment over territorial and historical disputes. Recently, Jung Pak and Ethan Jewell provided two potential areas which could reinvigorate ROK-Japan cooperation: interest in the status of women and the aging problem. First, women’s under-representation in government bodies and the gender pay gap are issues that both parties can mutually agree on to create joint initiatives in overcoming common societal agendas. Second, the overall trend in population where the elderly population are predicted to surpass the younger generation could cause numerous social problems such as economic burdens and a reduced work force. Pak and Jewell recommends that forming a cooperative body could have positive diffusive effects on the two countries’

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38 “Treaty on Basic Relations Between Japan and the Republic of Korea,” The United Nations, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20583/volume-583-I-8471-English>.

39 Michael J. Green, “Japan-ROK Security Relations: An American Perspective,” *Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research*, March 1999, 9.

40 CIA, “The Future of Korean-Japanese Relations,” *CIA Special Report*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79-00927A005200060002-9>.

41 Japan’s share in South Korea’s commercial services exports is 8.5% in 2018 and South Korea’s share in Japan’s merchandise exports is 7.1% in 2018. See World Trade Organization’s member profiles for details: WTO, Member Information – Japan and the Republic of Korea, access through: [https://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/tif\\_e/org6\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/org6_e.htm); Nippon.com, “South Korea: Japan’s Third-Largest Trading Partner,” *Nippon.com* (August 20, 2019): <https://www.nippon.com/en/japan-data/h00516/south-korea-japan%E2%80%99s-third-largest-trading-partner.html>.

42 Tim Shorrock, “In a Major Shift, South Korea Defies Its Alliance With Japan,” *The Nation*, August 27, 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/south-korea-japan-cold-war/>.

43 Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 7.

relationship as a whole.<sup>44</sup> Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye asserted that though there are contradictions between Seoul, Washington, and Tokyo, they are “united by common values and shared economic and security interests.”<sup>45</sup>

In sum, the lines connecting the US-ROK and US-Japan are defined as an ‘alliance’, while the ROK-Japan relationship remains an ‘alignment’ for the reasons presented above. Michael Green also mentioned that “Japan and the Republic of Korea have been aligned but not allied since the beginning of the Cold War.”<sup>46</sup> Recalling the definitions bisecting the two concepts, what makes the ROK-Japan relationship an alignment instead of an alliance is the absence of a military agreement despite having a positive relationship in terms of shared threats, economic interdependence, and shared values such as democracy and openness in society.

### *The US-ROK Alliance*

Signs of weakening US-ROK relations have appeared as well. Since 1991, the Special Measures Agreement (SMA) negotiations took place every five years, but the tenth SMA, that was signed on February 2019, was valid for only one year and was set to expire on December 31, 2019.<sup>47</sup> It is reported that in the eleventh SMA, the US is asking for a fivefold increase in payment to approximately \$5 billion.<sup>48</sup> As a result, the deadline for the recent SMA negotiations had passed and almost half of the South Korean nationals working for the US Forces Korea had to be furloughed.<sup>49</sup> Considering that “defense cost-sharing has an important influence factor in the continuation of [the] bilateral alliance,” turbulence in the negotiations process is becoming a concern for the stability of the alliance.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, Trump had been calling the annual military drills “very, very expensive”<sup>51</sup> and as a result, scaled down the combined exercises to ‘Dongmaeng’

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44 Jung H. Pak and Ethan Jewell, “South Korea and Japan have more in common than they think,” *Brookings*, September 5, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/09/05/south-korea-and-japan-have-more-in-common-than-they-think/>.

45 Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, “The US-Japan Alliance: Getting Asia Right Through 2020,” *CSIS*, February 2007, 8.

46 Green, “Japan-ROK Security Relations,” 5.

47 “ROK and US Reach Agreement on 10<sup>th</sup> Special Measures Agreement,” Ministry on Foreign Affairs, [http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m\\_5676/view.do?seq=320383](http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_5676/view.do?seq=320383).

48 Sarah Kim, “Seoul stresses sticking to framework of current SMA,” *Korea Joong-gang Daily*, December 20, 2019, <http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=3071724&cloc=joongangdaily%7Cchome%7Cnewslst1>.

49 “USFK CDR Addresses Furloughed Korean National Employees,” *USFK*, March 31, 2020, <https://www.usfk.mil/Media/News/Article/2132718/usfk-cdr-addresses-furloughed-korean-national-employees/>.

50 Park Won-gon, “A Challenge for the ROK-US Alliance: Defense Cost-Sharing,” *EAI*, Security Initiative Working Paper, July 2013.

51 Hyung-jin Kim, “Trump’s cost complaint casts doubt on SKorea military drills,” *AP News*, March 1, 2019, <https://apnews.com/e828d1bdcd4e4f01894eb74a109fbe9c>.

from what used to be ‘Key Resolve (KR),’ ‘Foal Eagle (FE)’ and ‘Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UFG).’<sup>52</sup> KR, FE, and UFG were massive annual combined exercises, involving thousands of military personnel from both sides. In particular, FE and UFG were combined maneuver exercises in which US strategic assets such as Carrier Groups would participate to increase interoperability between the two militaries and effectively showed force against North Korea. In contrast, ‘Dongmaeng’ does not involve outside training and is “conducted at regular intervals.”<sup>53</sup> This means that the field-based exercises have been called off, and actual deployment of costly military assets are no longer needed annually for exercise. Thomas Spoehr argues that ending the combined exercises is a mistake, as the exercises had guaranteed US readiness with South Korea against North Korea.<sup>54</sup>

In sum, along with the transformation of a bipolar system to a multipolar system, national interests are no longer dominated by security but by diverging interests. The territorial and historical dispute came to surface between Japan and South Korea, negatively affecting joint security ties against North Korea. Randall Schweller called this “alliance handicaps,” the existence of various impediments rooted in national hatreds and ongoing territorial disputes that hamper the formation of alignments sharing short-run strategic interests.<sup>55</sup> The US-ROK alliance is no longer an asymmetrical relationship and the increased relative power of South Korea has led to US demanding more burden sharing from South Korea and the down scaling of combined exercises.

### Transformations and the Future of the Trilateral Alignment

Despite the faltering trilateral alignment, maintenance and development in military cooperation remains vital in deterring North Korean nuclear threats.<sup>56</sup> Alignments are innately weaker than alliances because they are informal and are malleable with “changing patterns of power, interests, and issue priorities.”<sup>57</sup> The bipolar international structure during the Cold War was characterized as an ideological competition between the two superpowers (the US and the Soviet Union) and the priority of members on each side was to contain the influence of the other. The rigid

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52 Jo He-rim, “South Korea-US Kick Off Combined Exercise Dong Maeng,” *The Korea Herald*, March 5, 2019, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20190304000744>.

53 Ibid.

54 Thomas Spoehr, “Why Ending US-South Korea Joint Exercises Was the Wrong Move,” *The Daily Signal*, March 3, 2019, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2019/03/03/why-ending-us-south-korea-joint-exercises-was-the-wrong-move/>.

55 Randall L. Schweller, “China’s Aspirations and the Clash of Nationalisms in East Asia: A Neoclassical Realist Examination,” *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* 23, no. 2 (2014): 31.

56 Ralph A. Cossa, “US-ROK-Japan: Why a “Virtual Alliance” Makes Sense,” *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 12, no. 1 (Summer 2000): 68.

57 Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 7.



bipolar system “kept [diverging interests among members] under control because there was a fundamental consensus on anticommunism.”<sup>58</sup>

However, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 created “different long-term strategic concerns for the United States and South Korea.”<sup>59</sup> For Washington, the main strategic priority was to retain its leadership as the sole superpower while for South Korea, it was “national reconciliation.”<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, the bilateral relationship between the two countries destabilized because of the rise of anti-American sentiments in the ROK, especially after South Korea’s democratization in 1987. Examples of that include nation-wide protests after the ‘Hyosun-Misun Incident’ on June 2002 and the controversy over US imported beef in 2008. Scott Snyder noted that “the alliance appears demonstrably less important to both Americans and South Koreans than it was during the Cold War.”<sup>61</sup>

Due to changes in the international system, the “hub-and-spokes” model led by the US is now under pressure. The “blood alliance” that tied South Korea and the United States as a result of having fought side-by-side during the Korean War transformed into a “transitional alliance” after the end of the Cold War with the weakening of the adversary’s relative power<sup>62</sup>; Japanese conservatives are seeking to revise its peace constitution to further their role in line with its increased relative power in the region; and the ROK-Japan relationship is caught up with historical and territorial disputes. At the same time, North Korea’s nuclear weapons program and delivery capabilities are becoming more and more sophisticated. Indeed, North Korea conducted six nuclear tests since 2006 and approximately 80 ballistic missile tests since Kim Jong-un came to power in 2011.<sup>63</sup>

### *Blueprints for a Trilateral Military Alignment*

Considering the security environment in Northeast Asia, the US-led “hub-and-spokes” system that kept South Korea, Japan, and the United States intact during the

58 Byung-Kook Kim, “Democratization and Alliance Crisis in South Korea,” in *Asia-Pacific Alliances in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, eds. In-Taek Hyun, Kyudok Hong, & Sung-han Kim (Seoul: Oreum Publishing House, 2007), 288.

59 David C. Kang, “The Cause of Strife in the US-ROK Alliance,” *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 30, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 24.

60 *Ibid.*, 24; Scott Snyder put it similarly as “the gap between the US interest in stability and the aspiration for Korean reunification.” Scott Snyder, “US Views of Korean Reunification: Evolution and Prospects,” *Korea Review* 1, no. 1 (August 2011): 88.

61 Scott Snyder, “The Beginning of the End of the US-ROK Alliance?” *PacNET* 36, Pacific Forum-CSIS, August 26, 2004, <https://www.pacforum.org/sites/default/files/tmp/pac0436>.

62 Kim, “From Blood Alliance to Strategic Alliance,” 275.

63 Emma Chanlett-Avery, Mark E. Manyin, Mary Beth D. Nikitin, Caitlin Elizabeth Campbell, and Will Mackey, “North Korea: US Relations, Nuclear Diplomacy, and Internal Situation,” *Congressional Research Service*, July 27, 2018, 20.

Cold War must be redefined and reconstructed in order to effectively deter against North Korean threats. This paper argues that while acknowledging the reality that a trilateral alliance is “neither advisable nor achievable”<sup>64</sup> due to insurmountable historical and territorial disputes between South Korea and Japan, various practical measures should be implemented to precipitate a trilateral alignment. To reiterate, an alignment takes an intangible form whereas an alliance is apparent by a military pact. Although, the degree of credibility is greater in an alliance, an alignment can strengthen its ties by adapting measures that boost cooperation. If signing a trilateral military alliance is realistically impossible considering the Japan-ROK relationship, implementing practical measures that shore up mutual expectations of support becomes an essential task. This requires efforts from all parties within the alignment “to find new areas of cooperation,” adjusting to the new international system.<sup>65</sup>

Two avenues can be taken to strengthen the trilateral alignment. First, South Korea and Japan can enhance their ties with the US and second, South Korea and Japan can separate security matters from historical and territorial issues.<sup>66</sup> The former Korean ambassador to Japan noted that “the souring Japan-Korea relationship is a big blow to the maintenance of the Southern triangle and its ability to cope with the volatile security environment in Northeast Asia.”<sup>67</sup> Overlapping security interests in the face of an increasing North Korean nuclear threat remain even after the end of the Cold War, and therefore, the security domain should be once again prioritized over other issues — especially territorial and historic ones — that are hard to come to an agreement with in the foreseeable future. This means that while sustaining the US “hub-and-spokes” alliance system, South Korea and Japan should commit to trilateral security cooperation measures regardless of the ongoing disputes in other domains. After all, South Korea and Japan must realize the need for an alignment “whether they like each other” because joining forces will enhance deterrence against North Korea.<sup>68</sup> While maintaining a robust military alliance with the United States, South Korea and Japan should devise practical mechanisms that can foster military cooperation without an overt pact. GSOMIA, signed in 2015, is a good example of such a mechanism. Since there is no formal military alliance treaty between the two, GSOMIA has provided a good alternative for institutionalizing cooperation on security

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64 Cossa, “US-ROK-Japan,” 72.

65 Victor D. Cha, “The Unintended Consequences of Success,” *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 31, no. 2 (2019): 172.

66 Randall Schriver, the US assistant secretary of defense spoke at a CSIS event: “historical disputes, animosities and political disagreements should be kept separate from shared vital military and security cooperation. We hope to see our security relationship insulated from political disputes and disagreement.” / CSIS, “The Importance of US-Japan-Korea Trilateral Defense Cooperation,” August 28, 2019.

67 Ronkin, “Japan and South Korea on the Brink.”

68 Scott A. Snyder, “Why the Japan-South Korea Dispute Just Got Worse,” *Council on Foreign Relations* (August 27, 2019): <https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/why-japan-south-korea-dispute-just-got-worse>.

matters. Article 20 of the agreement mentions that the parties will have to engage in consultation for its application or interpretation.<sup>69</sup> The US Senate reaffirmed the importance of the agreement between Korea and Japan which it considered to be “foundational to Indo-Pacific security and defense, and specifically to countering nuclear and missile threats from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.”<sup>70</sup> In fact, the US has to take a leading role in “emphasizing the shared interests of the three countries as a foundation for enhancing trilateral cooperation, a core pillar of US strategy in the region.”<sup>71</sup> On October 2019, the US arranged a meeting involving the three states’ chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) in Washington amid troubles over GSOMIA.<sup>72</sup> Consultation led by the US paid off when South Korea eventually decided to suspend the withdrawal decision. In addition, in 2014, when the tension between South Korea and Japan was high over historical and territorial disputes, US President Barack Obama took the lead in gathering the three parties quietly on the sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit to mediate cooperation between South Korean president Park Geun-hye and Japanese prime minister Abe Shinzo. The talks led to augmenting coordination against North Korean nuclear threats.<sup>73</sup> These events summarize the US role in managing close coordination between the three parties. Additional measures could include collaboration in inspecting North Korean illegal activities at sea; jointly responding against North Korean provocations; and finally, creating consultation mechanisms between the three parties.

Incorporating North Korea into the international community failed; the 1994 Geneva Framework and a series of six-party talks broke down due to North Korea’s deceptive behavior. It became clear that the regime’s intention is to stick with nuclear weapons regardless of peaceful incentives such as economic assistance and regime guarantee. Moreover, the intention behind Kim Jong-un’s recent commitment to the peace talks was to buy “much needed time and reduce the chances of possible kinetic action against the North.”<sup>74</sup> James Schoff’s recommendation to consider “publicizing certain existing trilateral cooperation initiatives more actively” can

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69 GSOMIA treaty article 20 clause 1.

70 United States Senate, S/RES/435, November 21, 2019.

71 Nicholas Szechenyi, “Mounting Tensions: A Timeline of Japan-South Korea Relations,” CSIS, October 22, 2019, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/mounting-tensions-timeline-japan-south-korea-relations>.

72 Lee Haye-ah, “Military chiefs of S. Korea, US, Japan meet amid tensions,” *Yonhap News Agency*, October 2, 2019, <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20191002000251325>.

73 Thomas Escriitt, Steve Holland, “Obama brings US allies South Korea and Japan together for talks,” *Reuters*, March 25, 2014, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-korea-trilateral/obama-brings-u-s-allies-south-korea-and-japan-together-for-talks-idUSBREA2010T20140325>.

74 Sue Mi Terry, “US-ROK Alliance,” *The Asan Forum*, February 27, 2018, <http://www.theasanforum.org/us-rok-alliance/>.

minimize uncertainty and ameliorate the security dilemma in Northeast Asia.<sup>75</sup>

The North Korean threat has become a major concern for both Japan and South Korea. It is also in the US' best interests to contain the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Ralph Cossa mentioned that the trilateral cooperation had "already paid rich dividends in pressuring North Korea" and that the "challenge is to bring the three sides even closer together in the future."<sup>76</sup>

*Participation in Multilateral Inspections Against North Korean Illegal Activities at Sea*

Preventive strikes on North Korean key military facilities is impossible due to potential spiral effects and insufficient knowledge about North Korean nuclear sites. Economic sanctions thus appear to be the most suitable means in changing North Korea's behavior. There are controversies over the effectiveness of economic sanctions in general, but in the case of North Korea, it is becoming evident that the regime is suffering substantially from international sanctions. In 2016 and 2017, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) imposed two economic sanctions that prohibited North Korea's export of coal<sup>77</sup> and capped import of crude oil to 4 million barrels and refined petroleum to 500,000 barrels annually.<sup>78</sup> As a result, North Korea's total trade volume fell from US\$6.53 billion in 2016 to US\$5.55 billion in 2017 and further down to US\$2.84 billion in 2018.<sup>79</sup> Consequently, Kim Jong-un strongly demanded the lifting of economic sanctions at the 2019 Hanoi Summit, which he was willing to trade for the closing of the Yongbyon nuclear complex.<sup>80</sup>

Even though economic sanctions are generally successful in slowing down North Korea's economy, the country can still evade sanctions to a certain level. According to the recent report published by the UN Panel of Experts established pursuant to UNSC Resolution 1874, North Korea has conducted acts of illegal ship-

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75 James L. Schoff, "Strengthening US Alliances in Northeast Asia," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, July 15, 2015, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2015/07/16/strengthening-US-alliances-in-northeast-asia-pub-60750>, 11.

76 Cossa, "US-ROK-Japan," 85.

77 United Nations Security Council Resolution 2371, S/RES/2371, August 5, 2017.

78 United Nations Security Council Resolution 2397, S/RES/2397, December 22, 2017.

79 Sanghoon Kim, "An Analysis on the Conditions for Successful Economic Sanctions on North Korea: Focusing on the Maritime Aspects of Economic Sanctions," *Strategy* 21 23, no. 1, 245.

80 Daniel Wertz, "US-DPRK Negotiations After Hanoi: Reconcilable Differences?" *38 North*, March 4, 2019, <https://www.38north.org/2019/03/dwertz030419/>; Adam Taylor, "Nukes and Sanctions: What Actually Went Wrong for Trump and Kim Jong Un," *Washington Post*, March 2, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/03/01/nukes-sanctions-what-actually-went-wrong-trump-kim-jong-un/>.

to-ship transfers in an attempt to evade UNSC Resolutions.<sup>81</sup> The report dedicates more than a hundred pages revealing North Korea's sophisticated methods in evading sanction measures such as use of false automatic identification system (AIS) broadcasting, physical disguise and false documentation, false certificate of registry, false flagging, etc.<sup>82</sup>

As a result, multilateral efforts took place in the suspected seas to interdict North Korean illegal trans-shipment acts. United States Coast Guard Cutter (USCGC) Bertholf and Stratton conducted surveillance operations near the East/South China Sea along with allied countries including France, U.K., Australia, New Zealand, and Japan.<sup>83</sup> Joint efforts at seas provide a good opportunity for allies to boost military cooperation and enhance interoperability in contingent situations. There are concerns from China that the multilateral efforts are actually part of US "freedom of navigation" operations and that the purpose is to pressure China.<sup>84</sup> However, interdiction of North Korean illicit activities at seas are legitimized by UNSC resolutions and allies should request for China to take part in the joint efforts. This way, China will be less suspicious of the nature of the joint operations while at the same time elevating its prestige through abiding by the international norm. Surveillance operations would halt only after North Korean illegal ship-to-ship transfers are completely eradicated.

South Korea should proactively take part in the joint operations as well, especially as there are suspicions over South Korea overlooking sanctions against North Korea after a US report mentioned that a South Korean ship named 'Lunis' engaged in ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean tankers.<sup>85</sup>

Jonathan Pollack emphasized that "unless the ROK upholds larger goals endorsed unanimously by the UN Security Council, the collective effort to inhibit and reverse Pyongyang's pursuit of nuclear weapons could appreciably weaken."<sup>86</sup>

81 United Nations Security Council, Panel of Experts Report, S/2019/171, March 5, 2019.

82 Ibid.

83 Kim, "An Analysis on the Conditions for Successful Economic Sanctions on North Korea," 263.

84 John Power, "US freedom of navigation patrols in South China Sea hit record high in 2019," *South China Morning Post*, February 5, 2020, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3048967/us-freedom-navigation-patrols-south-china-sea-hit-record-high>.

85 "S. Korean shipper suspected of N.K. sanctions violations stresses innocence," *Yonhap News Agency*, March 22, 2019, <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20190322012700320>.

86 Jonathan D. Pollack, "Economic Cooperation with North Korea: Implications for the Sanctions Regime and Denuclearization," *7th Korea Research Institute for National Strategy-Brookings Institution Joint Conference, Seoul, Korea*, January 16-17, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/KRINS-Brookings-2019-Economic-Cooperation-with-North-Korea-Jonathan-Pollack>.

*Joint Response Against North Korean Provocations*

An important aspect in deterring North Korean threats is to maintain superior relative strength over North Korea. One way is by levying heavy economic costs on the North Korean regime through international sanctions, and the other is to discourage North Korea from engaging in conventional provocations by imposing heavy retaliatory measures. As mentioned above, economic sanctions proved to be effective, therefore preventing North Korea's evasion efforts at sea, and joint interdiction operations could weaken North Korea's economic foundations. In any case, South Korea, Japan, and the United States should coordinate plans for combined countermeasures against prospective North Korean provocations. The purpose is not limited to enhancing interoperability and maintaining military readiness against future North Korean aggression, but also to show North Korea that military superiority lies in the trilateral alignment. When North Korea understands that they are unable to coerce the trilateral alignment using nuclear threats, the expected advantages of nuclear weapons will be reduced.

North Korea finds nuclear weapons to be effective in deterring retaliation, following the failure of engagement using conventional provocations, as seen in the 2010 Cheonan and Yeonpyeong incidents.<sup>87</sup> Moreover, the United States took the lead in restraining South Korea from further escalation of the situation. As Robert Gates, the Secretary of Defense during the Obama administration, mentioned in his memoir, "We were worried the exchanges could escalate dangerously. The president, Clinton, Mullen, and I were all on the phone often with our South Korean counterparts over a period of days."<sup>88</sup> North Korea understood that their nuclear weapons were effective in keeping the US estranged in conventional crises in the Korean Peninsula, and could impose heavy costs on South Korea with impunity.<sup>89</sup> Also, when North Korea's ballistic missiles landed in the Japanese exclusive economic zone (EEZ), the US-Japan alliance was unable to effectively respond even though the action was a clear violation of Japan's sovereignty and a violation of international law.<sup>90</sup> Inaction upon North Korea's provocative measures only encourages their resolve and displays weakness in the US alliance system. Therefore, it is imperative that the trilateral alignment jointly respond against further provocations and make clear that North Korea will suffer heavy costs upon provocative actions.

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87 Mike Mullen, Sam Nunn, and Adam Mount, "A Sharper Choice on North Korea: Engaging China for a Stable Northeast Asia," *Council on Foreign Relations*, Independent Task Force Report No. 74, 2016, 25.

88 Robert M. Gates, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 497.

89 Jung H. Pak, "What Kim Wants: The Hopes and Fears of North Korea's Dictator," *Foreign Affairs* 99, no. 3 (May/June 2020): 96-106.

90 Motoko Rich, "North Korean Missile Delivers a Message: There's Little Japan Can Do," *The New York Times*, October 3, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/02/world/asia/japan-north-korea-missile.html>.

*Institutionalizing Trilateral Security Consultation Mechanisms*

Finally, institutionalizing consultation mechanisms are important in deterring North Korea. As noted above, preventing North Korea's misperception on the utility of nuclear weapons is paramount. Proportional retaliation against conventional provocations will alter North Korea's calculations that benefits no longer exceed the costs. Another option for the trilateral alignment is to institutionalize regular consultation meetings. The institution will not only enhance cohesion within the trilateral alignment, but also increase the trilateral alignment's credibility of retaliation against North Korean provocations.

Currently, consultation mechanisms exist bilaterally between the US-ROK and US-Japan. In 2010, the United States and South Korea established the Extended Deterrence Policy Committee (EDPC) during the forty third US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting to enhance credibility of US extended deterrence to South Korea.<sup>91</sup> In addition, in 2016, an additional mechanism was created, the Extended Deterrence Strategy and Consultation Group (EDSCG).<sup>92</sup> Similarly, in 2010, the US-Japan alliance established a mechanism, called the Extended Deterrence Dialogue (EDD).<sup>93</sup> These mechanisms are found to be effective in strengthening internal alliance cohesion between the two parties. As how the bilateral-based US extended deterrence consultation mechanisms contributed significantly in sustaining credibility of the alliances against North Korean threats, the trilateral alignment needs to form an institution that can coordinate relevant policies more efficiently against North Korea and promote ties between the three parties.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to examine the trilateral relationship and emphasize that strengthening the trilateral alignment is vital for the security of the three parties. First, some key concepts were defined: alignments were differentiated from alliances in terms of formality – the (non)existence of a formal military agreement which stipulates specific conditions for mutual assistance. Alignments are vague as they arise from “mutual *expectations* of support.” While alliances are visible by formal treaties or organizations, alignments are invisible because they rely on psychological attributes. Second, the definitions were applied to the trilateral relationship, rendering a combination of alliances and an alignment. The two pillars were the US-ROK

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91 Robert A. Manning, “Reassuring Korea: The US-ROK Alliance,” in *The Future of US Extended Deterrence in Asia to 2025*, *Atlantic Council* (2014): 14.

92 “Joint Statement on the Inaugural Meeting of the Extended Deterrence Strategy and Consultation Group (EDSCG),” US Department of State, December 20, 2016, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/12/265886.htm>.

93 “United States and Japan to Hold Session of Extended Deterrence Dialogue,” US Department of State, December 9, 2019, <https://www.state.gov/united-states-and-japan-to-hold-session-of-extended-deterrence-dialogue/>.

and US-Japan alliance, whereas the ROK-Japan relationship was characterized as an alignment. They were integrated into a “hub-and-spokes” system under the leadership of the US Third. The faltering trilateral relationship was examined within a transforming international system and laid out a blueprint for strengthened trilateral alignment. Finally, the paper identified three areas of cooperation—participating in multilateral inspections against North Korean illegal activities, jointly responding against North Korean provocations, and creating trilateral consultation mechanisms—which could enhance deterrence capabilities, and at the same time, strengthen ties between South Korea, Japan, and the United States.

In the early 1990s, experts and policy makers anticipated that the North Korean regime was coming to an end along with the demise of the communist bloc.<sup>94</sup> However, North Korea managed to muddle through its disadvantageous position in the international system by developing nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, cohesion between South Korea, Japan, and the United States is weakening with divergent interests becoming more apparent. Policies that enhance military readiness need to be implemented to effectively deter North Korea. A trilateral alignment will shore up practical military readiness posture and military coordination to effectively cope against North Korea.

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94 Nicholas Eberstadt, *The End of North Korea* (Washington, D.C.: The AEI Press, 1999).



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# THE US-TAIWAN-CHINA RELATIONS: MAINTAINING PEACE THROUGH TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

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*The purpose of this paper is to analyse the relationship between US-Taiwan-China relations through the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) using a historical approach and secondary data to analyse the topic. The clarity of Taiwan's status as an independent country or a province of China is a controversial matter which has been frequently debated by both China and Taiwan until today. Although Taiwan has been returned to China after Japan's defeat in World War II and has been legally recognized as one of China's provinces through the San Francisco Agreement, Taiwanese Nationalists who are influenced by liberalism still demand the establishment of Taiwan as an independent state. As a sovereign state, China has the power to achieve the "One-China Principle" through methods ranging from soft power to hard intervention. The United States, who have openly supported China, simultaneously continue to establish close relations with Taiwan, beginning with the TRA in 1979. The TRA has become an important factor in complicating matters between China and Taiwan providing both security, and opportunities for Taiwan to conduct arms trade with the US. This paper contends that as long as the US lends its support to Taiwan as a strategy to curb the spread of the Chinese communism and maintain US influence in the Asia-Pacific, integration of China and Taiwan will be difficult to realize.*

**Keywords:** *Taiwan, China, US, Taiwan Relations Act, and Arms Sales.*

## Introduction

Taiwan's status as an independent country rather than as one of the provinces in China is a controversial matter. Although Taiwan has been recognized as part of China by the United Nations (UN), Taiwan, which adheres to democratic ideology, claims to be an independent country that is different from China and its communist

ideology.<sup>1</sup> The United States, is a country that embraces liberalism with the aim of internationalizing democracy and freedom for all people. The US has established non-diplomatic and informal relations with Taiwan, supported by the existence of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) since 1979, which regulates the continuation of US-Taiwan relations after the normalization of diplomatic relations between the US and the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Through the TRA, the US provides Taiwan with protection under the US security umbrella. The US seems to declare that those who threaten Taiwan must face the United States. This threat extends to China, which encourages the integration of Taiwan into itself and challenges its existence as an autonomous territory. If Taiwan is part of China, the TRA can threaten the mainland's sovereignty as an independent country that has full rights over Taiwan. Therefore, this paper seeks to explore the impact of the TRA on the US-Taiwan-China relations by posing the following question: does the TRA assure security for Taiwan?

In the first part of this paper, a brief history of the TRA will be explained. The next section will explain current US-Taiwan-China relations. Finally, an analysis of the implications of TRA on future relations between US-Taiwan-China will be explored. This paper argues that the US' support of Taiwan through the TRA can be viewed as a pragmatic policy which concerns the American strategy to curb the spread of Chinese communism to maintain its influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, the paper contends that the US's role obstructs the integration of China and Taiwan.

### Conceptual Framework

To understand the reasoning behind America's involvement in China and Taiwan, this paper uses Henri Kissinger's concept of *triangular diplomacy*, which he developed during the Vietnam War in 1955-1975. It refers to the American foreign policy that exploited the ongoing rivalry between the Soviet Union and China to strengthen US hegemony and diplomatic interest.<sup>2</sup> After the defeat of Japan in World War II, the Soviet Union, and China, two communist countries, became the object of "US containment." This term, originally coined by George Kennan, refers to the halting of the Soviet Union's power expansion wherever it seemed likely to spread.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, Soviet Union policy in the Asia-Pacific during the Cold War Era during 1947-1991 was designed not only to counter the US policy of containment, but also to compete for influence with China.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Lindsay Maizland and Samuel Parmer, China-Taiwan Relations, Council on Foreign Relation, last modified January 22, 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-taiwan-relations>.

2 Michael Yahuda, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004): 42-45.

3 *Ibid.*, 34.

4 *Ibid.*, 115.

Through triangular diplomacy the US avoids taking sides and maintains good relations with both the Soviet Union and China to promote their vision of an international order. Within this international order, all major powers agree to act with restraint and continue the status quo by not resorting to violence either directly or indirectly. This is referred to by Kissinger as *global equilibrium*.<sup>5</sup> Kissinger's idea of *global equilibrium* equates to neorealists' concept of *balance of power*, which refers to the general concept of one or more states' power being used to balance other states. Alternatively, it can refer to the process by which counter balancing coalitions have repeatedly formed in history to prevent one state from conquering an entire region.<sup>6</sup>

## Brief History

### *China vs Taiwan and US Involvement*

In 1885, under Qing dynasty leadership from 1644 to 1911 CE, Taiwan became China's twenty-second province. However, during the last decades of the Qing dynasty, China experienced economic difficulties and political chaos. This caused the loss of its territorial control over its Eastern seaboard to foreign powers. At the end of the first Sino-Japanese War in 1895, under the Shimonoseki treaty, Taiwan was ceded to Japan, which retained control of it until the end of World War II in 1945.<sup>7</sup> After the defeat of Japan in World War II, Taiwan was restored to Chinese control due to a pledge made by world leaders such as Theodore Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Chiang Kai-shek at the Cairo Conference in 1943, which was later adhered to by the Soviet Union. Hence, from 1945, Taiwan became a province of China once again.<sup>8</sup> The conflict between Nationalists and Communists in China reached its peak during the civil war of the late 1940s. From their bases in Northern China, the Communists, led by Mao Zedong, gradually expanded their control to the whole mainland, successfully claiming the land as the People's Republic of China (PRC) on October 1, 1949. On the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government, known as ROC, fled to Taiwan in late 1949. From the Communist perspective, Taiwan remained the last issue that needed to be settled in order to complete their victory over the Nationalists. They confidently expected that their forces would accomplish this goal in 1950, but the involvement of the US in Taiwan frustrated the Chinese. The US intervention in the Taiwan conflict in 1950 arose from the outbreak of the Korean War. The US had not set out to deliberately intervene in the Chinese Civil

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5 Ibid., 96.

6 Joshua S. Goldstein and Jon C. Peveho U.S.e, *International Relations Tenth Edition* (Boston: Pearson Education, 2014): 52.

7 Gary Sheu, "No, Taiwan's Status Is Not Uncertain," *The Diplomat*, August 08, 2014, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/08/no-taiwans-statU.S.-is-not-uncertain>.

8 Winberg Chai, "Missile Envy: New Tensions in China-US-Taiwan Relations," *Asian Affairs* 34, no. 1 (Spring, 2007): 39.

War. However, with the onset of the Korean War in June 1950, President Truman ordered the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait to prevent Communist forces from attacking the Nationalists in Taiwan. The US administration viewed the Korean War in Cold War terms and saw North Korea as part of the Communist bloc that launched an attack on South Korea, an anti-communist state. The actions taken in Taiwan were part of a regional and global containment strategy to prevent any further communist expansion. By deploying its forces in the Taiwan Strait, the US had effectively intervened in the Chinese Civil War. China believed that the US was using Taiwan as part of a strategy to encircle and weaken the mainland. Conversely, the US viewed China's aggressive intentions as part of its expansionist design policy. The US' defense link with Taiwan was part of its system of alliances in the Asia-Pacific that held China's containment as a primary objective. A Mutual Defense Treaty with Taiwan was signed in 1954, and, for the next three decades, the US treated Taiwan as having separated from China, viewing the mainland as an illegitimate governing force that threatened the US' position in the policy landscape.<sup>9</sup>

### *The Enactment of TRA*

Under the terms of the Shanghai Communiqué of February 1972, the US began to normalize its diplomatic relations with China. The US acknowledged the 'One-China Principle' which states that Taiwan is a part of China. Essentially, the US extended diplomatic recognition to the PRC, with both governments opening liaison offices in their respective capitals. Taiwan remained a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) until 1971, when it chose to voluntarily exit the council rather than face a vote of expulsion. In 1972, China assumed Taiwan's UNSC seat and by 1978, an agreement to establish full diplomatic relations between the US and China was set to take effect. This event marked the end of formal diplomatic relations between the US and Taiwan and its previous Mutual Defense Treaty.<sup>10</sup>

Instead, the US-Taiwan defense link continued on a different basis.<sup>11</sup> Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) on March 29, 1979 to provide a framework for a new US-Taiwan relationship, signed into law by President Carter on April 10, 1979.<sup>12</sup> The TRA provided the continuation of extensive commercial links, with defense support to maintain Taiwan's ability to defend itself.<sup>13</sup> In other words, the TRA

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9 Derek McDougall, *Asia-Pacific in World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2007): 164-165.

10 McDougall, *Asia-Pacific in World Politics*, 166.

11 Alexander Chieh-cheng Huang, The United States and Taiwan's Defense Transformation, *Brooking*, February 16, 2010, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/the-united-states-and-taiwans-defense-transformation>.

12 Steven M. Goldstein and Randall Schrive, "An Uncertain Relationship: The United States, Taiwan and the Taiwan Relations Act", *Cambridge University Press*, no. 165 (2001): 147-172.

13 McDougall, *Asia-Pacific in World Politics*.

provided Taiwan with defensive capability, and enabled the US to maintain its capacity to oppose any force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, social and economic systems of Taiwan.<sup>14</sup> The TRA makes it clear that any threat to Taiwan would be considered a threat to the security of the entire Western Pacific. Section 2(b) (4) of the TRA states: “Any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, [is] a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.” Section 2(b) (6) also asserts that it is US policy to maintain the capability “to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.”<sup>15</sup>

## U.S.-Taiwan Relations Today

### *Threat from China*

China has always maintained a single, consistent policy towards Taiwan, regarding the island as a province of China. However, according to China’s Defense White Paper, Taiwan refused to recognize the 1992 Consensus which embodies the ‘One-China Principle’. Instead, Taiwan furthers down the path of separatism by increasing efforts to sever the connection with the mainland in favor of gradual independence, pushing for *de jure* independence, intensifying hostility and confrontation, and borrowing the strength of foreign influence.<sup>16</sup> The presence of the US in Taiwan can be explained by a democratization process. According to Immanuel Kant’s democratic peace theory, although democratic states fight wars against authoritarian states, democracies almost never fight each other, as they tend to be capitalist states whose trade relations create strong interdependence. War would be costly, disrupting trade, and citizens of democratic societies (whose support is necessary for wars to be waged) may simply not see the citizens of other democracies as enemies.<sup>17</sup> This is precisely why Taiwan, as a fellow democracy, receives greater support from the US. The US’ view of international order is not only confined to balance of power considerations, it also puts a premium upon domestic stability in the form of democratic institutions within states.

There are, of course, several more reasons behind the US’ presence in Taiwan. Through the TRA, the US’ position in relation to Taiwan can be characterized as a form of strategic ambiguity. The US acts as a security guarantor for Taiwan, but at the same time, does not encourage any attempts by Taiwan to change the status

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14 Winberg Chai, “Missile Envy,” 40.

15 Jaw-ling Joanne Chang, “Lessons from the Taiwan Relations Act,” *Orbis: A Journal of World Affairs* 44, no. 1 (Winter, 2000): 64-65.

16 “China’s National Defense,” Ministry of National Defense of the People’s Republic of China, last modified July 2019, [http://eng.mod.gov.cn/publications/2019-07/24/content\\_4846452.htm](http://eng.mod.gov.cn/publications/2019-07/24/content_4846452.htm).

17 Goldstein, *International Relations*, 95.

quo from a province of China to an independent country.<sup>18</sup> For China, Taiwan's unification and incorporation into the Motherland evokes a sense of justice from a past, where the existence of Taiwan as a separate administrative authority represents an injustice. China considers intervention by any foreign power as an interference in its internal affairs that is paramount to injustice and humiliation. If it acts as a *de facto* independent state, China fears that Taiwan could indirectly encourage separatist tendencies in other regions of the mainland. If it declares independence, Taiwan could set a dangerous precedent. Under these circumstances, China's existing minority problems are likely to intensify, as secessionist movements in Tibet and Xinjiang for example, could be further encouraged. Thus, *de jure* independent Taiwan could become a serious threat to Chinese sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Taiwan issue is also a challenge to the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its ideologies. If it turned out that the CCP were incapable of controlling its territory, confidence in the Party would be undermined.<sup>19</sup>

While China has been publicly and formally willing to reject the use of force to settle other regional issues, such as the Spratly islands dispute, this is not the case for Taiwan. Indeed, China has been doing everything in its power to make credible its threat to use force in order to stop Taiwan from declaring independence.<sup>20</sup> To show that it is decisive in defending its 'One-China' policy, Beijing took a crucial step that codified its resolution to dissuade Taiwan from any possibility of formal secession. On March 2005, the National People's Congress passed the anti-secession law, which gave China the right to "employ non-peaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity."<sup>21</sup> The menacing tone of China's legislation, accompanied by more than 1,200 ballistic and cruise missiles poised just across the Taiwan Strait, has been an explicit warning to Taiwan that China was ready to take it back by force, should its leaders challenge the status quo in the Strait.<sup>22</sup> Considering the huge gap between Taiwan and China in terms of overall national power and military strength, there is little Taiwan can do to protect itself.<sup>23</sup> While China's military budget has skyrocketed, Taiwan's defense outlays have remained flat. Defense spending as a percentage of GDP hovers close to 2 percent — despite pledges to sustain an investment in defense of at least 3 percent. Compounding problems include a plan to shift to an all-volunteer force — meaning that a larger share of military resources must be allocated to cover personnel costs. Despite deep cuts in force levels, the implementation of the program has been

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18 Mau Kuei Michael Chang, "Taiwan's Nationalistic Politics and Its Difficult 'StatU.S. Quo'", *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, no. 21 (2005): 91-124.

19 Dario Kuntić, "The Ominous Triangle: China-Taiwan the United States relationship," *CIRR* 21, no. 72 (2015): 247-248.

20 David C. Kang. *China: Identity, Sovereignty, and Taiwan within China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007): 93.

21 Kuntić, "The Ominous Triangle," 262.

22 *Ibid.*

23 *Ibid.*

delayed due to an inability to attract recruits. Furthermore, morale is low among the armed forces and much of Taiwan's military equipment is getting old and obsolete.<sup>24</sup> Thus, as a protectionist measure, Taiwan needs to tread carefully and nurture its informal alliance with the US as a guarantor of its survival.

### *US-Taiwan Arms Sales*

The TRA contains explicit references to the continuation of the sales of US arms to Taiwan. It is a source of tension in the US-China relationship. Even after US-China diplomatic relations were normalized in 1979, the US insisted on selling weapons to Taiwan for the following three reasons. First, the US arms sales to Taiwan would give more confidence in Taiwan's defense capability against the PRC. As a result, Taiwan does not need seek radical solutions, such as nuclear options that would contradict American interests.<sup>25</sup> Second, the continuation of US arms sales to Taiwan could reduce suspicion and doubt from other allies in the region about US' reliability in keeping its defense commitments.<sup>26</sup> Third, if Taiwan remained strong militarily, the PRC would be less likely to launch an attack on the island.<sup>27</sup>

In the US-China Joint Communiqué on Arms Sales to Taiwan in 1982, the US agreed to gradually reduce its sales of arms to Taiwan and promised that future arms sales would not exceed, either in qualitative or quantitative terms, those of recent years.<sup>28</sup> However, the record of US arms sales since suggests that the communiqué has a limited constraining effect on American behavior. This limited constraining effect can be seen in the chart below, which displays the number of Taiwan arms sales as reported to Congress from 1990 to August 2019 for foreign Military Sales (FMS) in US dollars. This data was taken from the US-Taiwan Business Council, which is based in the Washington, District of Columbia.<sup>29</sup>

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24 Shelley Rigger, Dennis V. Hickey, and Peter Chow, *U.S.-Taiwan Relations: Prospects for Security and Economic Ties* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, April 2017): 10-11.

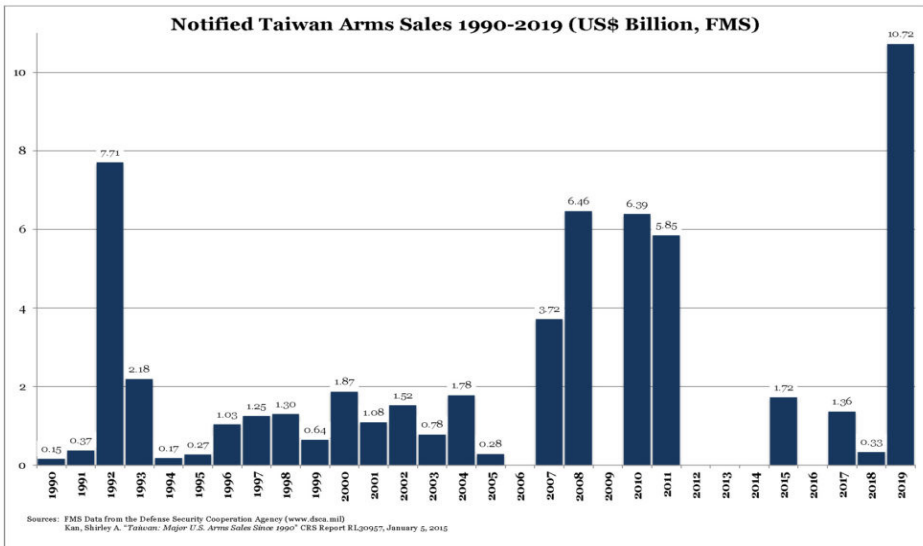
25 Chang, "Lessons from the Taiwan Relations Act", 66.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 "Joint Communiqué of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America (August 17, 1982)," Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America, Accessed April 23, 2020, <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zmgx/doc/ctc/t946664.htm>.

29 "Taiwan Arms Sales Notified to Congress, 1990-2019," U.S.-Taiwan Business Council, last modified August 21, 2019, <https://www.UStaiwandefense.com/>.



In 2015, during Obama's presidency, the highest amount of US-Taiwan arms sales reached 1.72 billion US dollars.<sup>30</sup> During Trump's administration, beginning from 2017, the US-Taiwan arms sales reached 1.36 billion US dollars.<sup>31</sup> There is a decrease of 0.33 billion US dollars in 2018, but sales increase exponentially in 2019 to 10.72 billion US dollars.<sup>32</sup> This chart shows that although the US has agreed to obey the 1982 communiqué, it does not guarantee that it will reduce or stop its arms sales to Taiwan. There is possibility for the US to continue its arms sales to Taiwan for a long time. From China's perspective, the presence of the US in Taiwan is a form of intervention in China's sovereignty over Taiwan. Because of China, the US has to adopt a cautious approach to any arms deals or high-level exchanges with Taiwan. Although China has the military capability to unify Taiwan and the mainland, the presence of the US consistently provides security to Taiwan and has emerged as an obstacle to China's integration.<sup>33</sup> It is not just an obstacle for integration, but the US' arms sales to Taiwan also threatens to undermine China's sovereignty and national interests. If the tension between the two countries continues, US-China bilateral relations could be negatively impacted.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 "Taiwan Arms Sales Notified to Congress, 1990-2019."

33 Deng Yuwen, "Is China planning to take Taiwan by force in 2020?" *South China Morning Post*, January 03, 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/2126541/china-planning-take-taiwan-force-2020>.



## Taiwan Under Tsai Ing-wen's Administration

Since Deng Xiaoping, Chinese leaders have realized that the US plays an essential role in China and Taiwan relations. Today, Xi Jinping diverts from the political heritage of his predecessors, developing a new strategy, which emphasizes that the Taiwan issue should not interfere with US-China bilateral relations. Xi has been trying to isolate the Taiwan issue from the US-China bilateral relationship while developing his rhetoric of a “new type of great-power relationship.” Xi’s stance has excluded mentions of the Taiwan issue in his published discussions, communications, and joint statements related to the United States.<sup>34</sup> Since Taiwan is of great value for China, the Middle Kingdom will not allow Taiwan to become a bargaining chip while it works to develop a new type of relationship between major powers. Xi’s objective is to isolate the Taiwan issue from the US-China bilateral relationship, and cut any US involvement in cross-strait relations, or at least verify that there is no direct US involvement.<sup>35</sup>

Under Xi’s administration, “Peaceful Reunification” and “One Country, Two Systems” have become China’s guiding principles to resolve the Taiwan matter and the optimal way to achieve national reunification.<sup>36</sup> This formulation has consistently been rejected across the political spectrum in Taiwan, and although Xi seeks to soften the impact of such policies by proclaiming that China would consider Taiwan’s history and circumstances, negative reactions from Taiwanese people still prevail. Taiwan maintains that, unlike Hong Kong, it is not a colony. With US aid in developing defense capability and a fully-developed central government, Taiwan has no incentive to downgrade itself from an effectively independent polity to a local or regional government of the PRC.<sup>37</sup> In the beginning of the 1980s, Taiwanese citizens began to discover and promote what scholars call “Taiwan subjectivity.” Taiwan subjectivity refers to the fact that Taiwan does not exist solely as the object of others’ intentions and desires, but as the subject of its own history with a legitimate claim to self-government.<sup>38</sup> Subjectivity is not the same as Taiwanese independence because it does not prescribe any particular relationship with Beijing, but rather insists that the people of Taiwan have a right to decide for themselves what that relationship will be. As China’s political and military strength increases, Taiwan’s subjectivity and autonomy faces many challenges. Taiwan has a limited freedom to act; they need to choose between a close relationship with China, which puts them at risk of falling under the country’s influence, or decide to drift further away from China which could

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34 Jing Huang, *Xi Jinping’s Taiwan Policy: Boxing Taiwan with the One-China Framework, within Taiwan and China: Fitful Embrace* (California: University of California Press, 2017): 245.

35 Ibid., 245.

36 Alan D. Romberg, “Cross-Strait Relations: Portrayals of Consistency Calm on the Surface, Paddling Like Hell Underneath,” *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 45 (Fall, 2014): 6.

37 Romberg, “Cross-Strait Relations,” 6.

38 Rigger, Hickey and Chow, *U.S.-Taiwan Relations*, 2.

lead to provocation of military responses and economic sanctions.<sup>39</sup>

Taiwan's responses and alignment to China has differed depending on its leadership. Under President Chen Shui-bian from 2000 to 2008, Taiwan leaned away from China, but under President Ma Ying-Jeou from 2008 to May 2016, Taiwan has steered toward the Middle Kingdom. The current Democratic Progressive Party President and Taiwan's first female President, President Tsai Ing-wen, has been re-elected for a second term in January 2020. She straddles a stable balance between protecting the subjectivity of Taiwan and avoiding confrontation with China. Her administration has not accepted the preconditions to China's 1992 Consensus for good relations, but has instead based her policy on avoiding confrontation and provocation, while disallowing Beijing to dictate the terms of the relationship.<sup>40</sup>

Since Tsai's election, Beijing has gradually taken different measures to convince Taipei to return to the 1992 Consensus. On June 2016, Beijing suspended official communication with the Taiwanese government and reduced mainland tourism to Taiwan, igniting protests by the tourism industry. The Chinese administration also locked out Taiwan from the 39<sup>th</sup> assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization.<sup>41</sup> Since then, Beijing has begun to slowly accede Taipei's remaining diplomatic allies to switch their alliance to Beijing. Consequently, São Tomé and Príncipe dropped Taiwan on December 2016 while also convincing states like Nigeria to downgrade their relationship to unofficial relations.<sup>42</sup>

### Triangle Relation Between Xi Jinping's and Donald Trump's Administrations

Today, the disagreement on which government is legitimate still undermines China-Taiwan cross-strait relations in Xi Jinping's administration. Xi's policy towards Taiwan continues to follow the fundamental approach adopted by the previous Hu Jintao administration. It prioritizes prevention of Taiwan's *de jure* independence over promotion of reunification. Xi also emphasizes the strengthening of the "One-China" principle strategic framework in China-Taiwan relations, hoping that it will push Taiwan towards eventual reunification. This has been incorporated into his grand goals for China as expressed in his "Chinese Dream." Although Taiwanese people seem to identify less with mainland China nationally and politically, Taiwan has been drawn into China's economic orbit while its international status, in terms of both legitimacy and influence, continues to decline. Therefore, Taiwan recognizes the increasing difficulty in moving away from mainland China's influence both economically and politically. The dilemma faced by Taiwan is that it will either be drawn into China's orbit or be marginalized in international affairs as well as in regional economic integration efforts. Taiwan has little choice but to accept the fact

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39 Rigger, Hickey and Chow, *U.S.-Taiwan Relations*, 2.

40 *Ibid.*, 2-3.

41 *Ibid.*, 14.

42 *Ibid.*

that it will have greater interdependence with the mainland.<sup>43</sup>

Greater economic interaction between China and Taiwan plays an important role in China's Taiwan policy. China is Taiwan's largest trading partner and also the island's number one destination for foreign direct investment.<sup>44</sup> China hopes that the benefits of economic cooperation will lead to negotiations with Taiwan on the future status of Taiwan and eventually end with reunification.<sup>45</sup> For the central Chinese government, using Taiwanese investors to achieve unification is the ultimate goal. China has always hoped that Taiwan's investment in China would lead the way for reunification and disincentivize independence.<sup>46</sup> PRC officials have explicitly stated that economic interaction with Taiwan is intended to promote unification.

Conversely, US involvement also has an important role in determining the resolution of the conflict. The issue will be hard to solve without a cooperative relationship between the US and China. Trump's administration has been approving arms deals with Taiwan at a faster rate than under Obama's and Bush's administrations, and has also shifted its foreign policy from not provoking China, to challenging the mainland government and focusing on Taiwan's defenses.<sup>47</sup> China under Xi's administration has repeatedly warned the US against seeking closer military ties with Taiwan, and has protested against every arms deal they have made. Every US-Taiwan exchange has been seen as a violation of the "One-China Principle" but Trump, who views China as a strategic competitor instead of a partner, continues to develop closer ties with the island and helps to boost its defenses as part of his national security strategy in dealing with China.<sup>48</sup>

On May 2018, Trump agreed to issue the marketing license required for US manufacturers to sell to Taiwan the technology it needs to build eight submarines. This was previously approved by President George W. Bush, but has been stalled since 2001. A month after the agreement, hundreds of US arms dealers and former US military officials travelled to Taiwan for the first-ever defense industry forum jointly held by the US-Taiwan Business Council and Taiwan Defense Industry Development Association in the southern city of Kaohsiung.<sup>49</sup> Since July 2018, at least four US warships risked escalating tensions in the South China Sea, challenging China's military expansion in the Indo-Pacific, by passing through the Taiwan Strait during

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43 Huang, "Xi Jinping's Taiwan Policy," 239-240.

44 "The World Factbook: Taiwan," Central Intelligence Agency, last modified March 16, 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tw.html>.

45 Kuntić, "The Ominous Triangle," 250.

46 Ibid.

47 Lawrence Chung, "US, Taiwan military ties closer than ever as Donald Trump challenges Beijing," *South China Morning Post*, October 29, 2018, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/2170449/U.S.-taiwan-military-ties-closer-ever-donald-trump-challenges>.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

freedom of navigation operations.<sup>50</sup> On July 7 and again on October 22, when the US Navy vessels were still in transit, Taiwan's military issued a statement about the destroyers' movements in the Taiwan Strait.<sup>51</sup> Other than the competition between the US and China, US skepticism towards China encourages close US-Taiwan relations. Though the current American administration is reconciliatory and pragmatic, the US is still highly skeptical about China's intention to develop its military. The US has been particularly concerned about the lack of transparency in China's military programs.<sup>52</sup> The Pentagon's annual reports on Chinese military power have constantly pointed out that China's emergence as a global military power poses serious threats to US interests.<sup>53</sup> The US Department of Defense was alarmed by China's investment in disruptive military technologies designed for nuclear, space, and cyber warfare. If accurate, those military developments would come with serious impacts on the balance of power in the region and beyond.<sup>54</sup> Washington has also noted that the long-range projection capabilities developed by the People's Liberation Army, PLA, has reinforced China's claims over disputed territories.<sup>55</sup> China is the second economic power in the world behind the US, and third in military and global firepower, behind the US and Russia.<sup>56</sup> Consequently, it is only logical for the US to build strong relations with Taiwan to defend its influence in the Asia-Pacific.

## Conclusion

The involvement of the US with Taiwan through the TRA cannot be avoided since both countries share the same ideology. The TRA was adopted by the US to protect Taiwan from China's expansion, but it has become controversial due to China's claims over the region. Besides its intentions to maintain Taiwan's defenses, US involvement in Taiwan can be seen as an intervention to hinder the development of China in the Asia-Pacific. Although it can provide security for Taiwan, the TRA is also a form of US strategic ambiguity that justifies their situational policies for their own interest in the Asia-Pacific.

As long as the US continues to involve itself in Taiwanese security matters through the TRA, especially with its arms sales implications, it will be hard for China to unify Taiwan. In the end, the triangular relationship between US-Taiwan-China

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50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Francis Yi-hua Kan, "Cross-Taiwan Strait Relations after President Ma's Inauguration," *38th Taiwan-U.S. Conference on Contemporary China* (July 14–15, 2009): 21.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Global Firepower, "2019 Military Strength Ranking," last modified 2019, <https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>.

raises a dilemma. The option to end the arms sales to Taiwan will remove a major irritant in the US-China relationship and would increase trust and cooperation in bilateral relations. It could also lower the risk of armed conflict in East Asia. However, there is no guarantee that cutting security ties with Taiwan will transform the US-China relationship since their interests clash on many other issues, such as North Korea, maritime disputes in East Asia, and economic issues. The reputation of the US in the region is also at stake. Walking away from a commitment to Taiwan will send a troubling signal to other US allies, such as Japan and South Korea. Meanwhile, the reunification of China and Taiwan threatens US hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region.

The TRA creates a complex problem that is hard to resolve. This paper argues that the TRA needs to be reviewed in order to create a win-win solution for all parties. The US-China governments must review the points in the TRA which allow for US intervention. However, the Chinese government first needs to embrace Taiwan by promoting a peaceful approach rather than an aggressive approach. There is no denying that firm action is needed to maintain China's sovereignty over Taiwan. However, the important point to be considered is that any kind of aggressive approach only increases Taiwan's dependency on the US security umbrella. Thus, it will be hard for China to halt US intervention. For now, the only offer that can be given to Taiwan to resolve this matter is the "One Country Two Systems" policy even though it will not be easy to achieve since all parties have their own interests. Moreover, the "One Country Two Systems" policy is not effective when used as a long-term permanent policy, as in the case of Hong Kong. It may not be the most lucrative offer because of the unequal power distribution between China and Taiwan. However, it could reduce the possibility of China's invasion by force and Taiwan's independence. In the end, "One Country Two Systems" creates a conducive environment for all parties and its effects within the Asia-Pacific region.

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# DRIFTING BETWEEN KOREA AND JAPAN: 1.5-GENERATION ZAINICHI KOREANS UNDER JAPANESE COLONIAL RULE

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*This paper focuses on “1.5-generation Koreans” who immigrated to Japan when they were still children and spent their childhood and adolescence there during the colonial period. The research examines and analyzes how these Koreans developed different identities and ethnic consciousnesses from their parents. During Japanese colonial rule over Korea from 1910-1945, approximately two million Koreans immigrated to Japan for the purpose of seeking a way to make a living, or as forced laborers and mobilized soldiers. First-generation Koreans who immigrated to Japan as adults during the colonial period maintained a strong sense of being Korean in Japanese society where Koreans were usually discriminated and marginalized. In contrast, some of their children, 1.5-generation Koreans, developed contrasting identities and ethnic consciousnesses from their parents. It can be argued that there were three cases: (i) Those who felt humiliated for their ethnic origin; (ii) those who had come to regard themselves as “Japanese” and adapted to Japanese society; and (iii) those who had come to believe they were “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire.” All these three cases were derived from the ambivalent nature of Japan’s ruling policy towards Korean, which attempted to “incorporate” Koreans as loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire while simultaneously leaving space for their political and social discrimination. This research serves to present relativized and multi-dimensional perspectives on the history of the colonial period and the national/ethnic identity of Korean people.*

**Keywords:** *Ethnic consciousness, identity, Japanese colonial rule, Japanization, 1.5-generation Koreans, zainichi Koreans.*

## Introduction

*Fellow Koreans and compatriots abroad. One hundred years ago today, we were united as one. ...On that day, we were reborn as citizens of a republic; we were no longer subjects of a dynasty or a colony of Imperial Japan. ...We Koreans were also united as one in Yongjeong, China, across the border*

*in what was North Ganbo; in Vladivostok in the Maritime Province of the Russian Far East; in Hawaii; and in Philadelphia. Anyone and everyone who felt a part of the Korean nation organized and took part in a rally.*<sup>1</sup>

This is an excerpt from the speech delivered by South Korean President Moon Jae-in on March 1, 2019, during the centenary anniversary of the March First Independence Movement. The movement was a nationwide independence movement that began on March 1, 1919 and spread across the Korean Peninsula, which was under Japanese colonial rule. In the speech, President Moon stated that, “fellow Koreans and compatriots abroad...were united as one,” and “reborn as citizens of a republic” of Korea.<sup>2</sup>

President Moon’s speech implies that Korean people’s national identity and ethnic consciousness developed in response to Japanese colonial rule at that time, and that their identity and ethnic consciousness united them as a single people in a single nation. Moreover, this national identity and sense of unity have remained strong in South Korean people considering the fact that even today, Korean people sometimes hold nation-wide demonstrations and rallies when diplomatic relations between Korea and Japan become rattled. This suggests that identity and ethnic consciousness not only concern individuals but can become a tool to unite people as a single nation.

However, it can be questioned whether Korean people actually developed a common identity as Koreans became “one.” As will be discussed in detail in the next section, one’s identity develops through close interaction with specific social environments in which one lives at a specific time. In fact, a number of researchers, as well as Koreans themselves, point out differences in identity and ethnic consciousness among Koreans depending on whether they live on the Korean Peninsula or in Japan, the latter of whom are called *zainichi* (Japanese-resident) Koreans.<sup>3</sup> Choi Seungkoo argues that *zainichi* Koreans’ ethnic identities partly develop out of experiences of discrimination in Japan, which is peculiar to the case of *zainichi* Koreans but not of Koreans living in Korea.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, these ethnic minorities in Japan are not regarded as Koreans (*Hankukin*) once they go or return to Korea.<sup>5</sup> In this regard, they are “not [fully] Korean nor Japanese,”<sup>6</sup>

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1 The Republic of Korea. Cheong Wa Dae, “Address by President Moon Jae-in on 100th March First Independence Movement Day,” accessed April 29, 2020, <https://english1.president.go.kr/BriefingSpeeches/Speeches/128>.

2 Ibid.

3 Lee Kenji, *Nikkan Nashonarizumu no Kaitai* [The Dismantling of Japan’s and Korea’s Nationalism] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobo, 2009), 26; Park II, “*Zainichi*” *toiu Ikikata* [A Life as “Zainichi”] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1999), 234; Yoon Geon-cha, *Zainichi wo Kangaeru* [Thinking About Zainichi] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2001), 326-328.

4 Park, “*Zainichi*” *toiu Ikikata*, 75.

5 Lee, *Nikkan Nashonarizumu no Kaitai*, 26.

6 Park, “*Zainichi*” *toiu Ikikata*, 234.

and, hence, possess “multiple identities.”<sup>7</sup> If not “multiple,” their identities may be, as Yoon Geon-cha argues, in a cycle of constantly changing relations between Korea and Japan.<sup>8</sup>

Other researchers emphasize further differences in identity and ethnic consciousness between first-generation *zainichi* Koreans (i.e. those who immigrated to the Japanese mainland from Korea) and later generations (i.e. descendants of first-generation *zainichi* Koreans).<sup>9</sup> Following Korea’s liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945, a majority of first-generation *zainichi* Koreans longed to return to Korea, a unified Korea, in the future. They looked towards the homeland instead of considering the possibility of spending a whole lifetime in Japan. However, in the 1970s, some second-generation *zainichi* Koreans began developing a new way of perceiving their life in Japan that was different from that of first-generation Koreans. They had been born and grew up in Japan, and some had never been to Korea. They expected to spend their whole lives in Japan. Consequently, some second-generation Koreans began seeking a new identity not as native Koreans in the homeland (the Korean Peninsula) or “alien” Koreans in Japan, but as “*zainichi*” Koreans. In this, they focused on their lifestyle in Japan instead of looking towards the homeland as older generations had done.<sup>10</sup>

While the existing literature presents important and insightful discussions, particularly regarding *zainichi* Koreans to whom identity has long been a central issue, they do not sufficiently discuss the differences within the same generation of *zainichi* Koreans. Therefore, this paper examines differences among first-generation *zainichi* Koreans highlighting the complexity and diversity of their identities and ethnic consciousness. More specifically, it focuses on those first-generation *zainichi* Koreans who immigrated to the Japanese mainland at young ages and spent their adolescence in colonial Japan. These cases can be contrasted with those of their parents that are also first-generation Koreans but immigrated to the Japanese mainland only after they became adults. The former group shall be termed in this paper as 1.5-generation Koreans since they were closer to the second-generation in terms of their life experiences since they spent their childhoods and adolescences, the latter of which is, according to Erikson, the important period for one’s identity development,<sup>11</sup> in Japan.

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7 Lee, *Nikkan Nashonarizumu no Kaitai*, 26.

8 Yoon, *Zainichi wo Kangaeru*, 328.

9 David Chapman, *Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008), 37-59; Chung Youngjin, *Zainichi Chōsenjin Aidenteitei no Yuragi* [Variations of Zainichi Koreans’ Identities] (Kyoto: Horitsu Bunka Sha, 2018), 59; Yoon, *Zainichi wo Kangaeru*, 200-202.

10 Chapman, *Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity*, 44-46.

11 Erik Erikson, *Jigadōitsusei: Aidenteitei to Raifu Saikuru* [Psychological Issues: Identity and the Life Cycle], trans. Keigo Okonogi (Tokyo: Seishin Shobo, 1959=1973), 111-118.



First, the paper reviews various theories of identity and the so-called “Japanization policy” that was applied to Koreans during the colonial period. While this policy will be discussed in more detail later, it should be noted that the Japanization policy was at its peak when 1.5-generation Koreans were adolescents, and therefore it can be assumed that the policy exerted significant influence on the development of the identities and ethnic consciousness of 1.5-generation Koreans. Following the review of identity theories and discussions on the Japanization policy, the paper moves to the analysis of some specific cases of 1.5-generation Koreans which show their unique patterns of development of identity and ethnic consciousness. The analysis takes a sociological approach based on identity theories, and analyzes autobiographies written by 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans to observe one’s inner changes related to development of identity and ethnic consciousness. To examine such inner aspects of individuals, it is necessary to analyze detailed autobiographies that cover a sufficient period of time. In this respect, it should be noted that autobiographies available for this analysis are rather limited. Due to low literacy among *zainichi* Koreans at the time, available autobiographies are mostly written by those people who attained a higher level of education such as intellectuals, authors, educators, and social activists.

The research is expected to enrich the existing literature through the sociological analysis of life experiences of 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans, presenting relativized and multi-dimensional perspectives on the history of the colonial period. Such perspectives may provide opportunities for future study to re-examine the national/ethnic identity of Korean people and to re-think the issues of the colonial past—especially in an attempt to, in President Moon’s words, “wip[e] out the vestiges of pro-Japanese collaborators.”<sup>12</sup>

### Theories of Identity

It was Erik Erikson who first articulated the concept of identity. According to the author, one develops identity during adolescence through the stage of “identity diffusion.” During this stage, one adjusts one’s ego to the roles and values that are assumed to be expected in society, so that identity may develop towards adulthood.<sup>13</sup>

While Erikson discusses identity from a psychosocial development perspective, others put more stress on social aspects of identity development. According to these theorists, such as Mead, Berger, and Luckmann, identity develops through social interaction. That is, one develops identity by negotiating

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12 Cheong Wa Dae, “Address by President Moon Jae-in on 100th March First Independence Movement Day.”

13 Erikson, *Jigadōitsusei*, 111-118.

one's ego with the expectations of others or that of society's.<sup>14</sup> While this statement is similar to Erikson's, their discussion goes further by pointing out that identity does not develop and complete at once. It can continuously change and re-develop depending on changing historical, political, and social environments, and depending on the relationship between oneself and the world.<sup>15</sup>

Stuart Hall relates this negotiating process of identity development to power relations. Resembling the argument on disciplinary power that Michel Foucault made in his book *Discipline and Punish*, Hall argues that identities are "produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices," and that "they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion."<sup>16</sup>

Hall also discusses the issue of identity in relation to the colonial experience. According to the author, the colonized were "positioned and subjected in the dominant regimes of representation."<sup>17</sup> Consequently, they were not only "constructed as different and other within the categories of knowledge" of the colonizers, but also made to "see and experience [themselves] as 'Other'."<sup>18</sup> A similar argument was made by Chizuko Ueno who, based on Hall's discussion, argues that a "(social) minority" is defined by power relations in which someone in power minoritizes a specific group of people who in turn identify themselves as the minority or "Others."<sup>19</sup>

The self-minimization that Ueno points out further leads to the issue of complexes of ethnicity argued by Albert Memmi. Examining the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, Memmi discusses that as a possible solution to the status of a "creature of oppression" under the colonial situation, the colonized attempts "to become equal to that splendid model [of the colonizer] and to resemble him."<sup>20</sup> He adds that "[...]ove of the colonizer is subtended by a complex of feelings ranging from shame to self-hate" of the colonized.<sup>21</sup> Although his argument does not

14 George H. Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1934=1967), 175, 178-179; Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 131-132.

15 Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 173; Stuart Hall, "The Meaning of New Times," in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, eds. Dave Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (London: Routledge, 1989=1996), 225.

16 Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs 'Identity'?" in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall and Paul de Gay (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 4.

17 Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 225.

18 Ibid.

19 Chizuko Ueno, "Joshō: Datsu Aidenteitei no Riron" [Introductory Chapter: Theories of Post-Identity], in *Datsu Aidenteitei* [Post-Identity], ed. Chizuko Ueno (Tokyo: Keisoshobo, 2005), 30-31.

20 Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, trans. Howard Greenfield (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1957=1991), 119-121.

21 Ibid.

directly concern the issue of identity, it certainly presents important implications to identity discussions, especially for identity of colonial subjects.

These various theories on identity have important implications to the development of identity and ethnic consciousness of Koreans, particularly 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans. Identity develops and re-develops repeatedly in close interaction with environments and within specific historical, social context. Power relations in society also exert influence on one's identity development, which is particularly applicable to the cases of ethnic minorities and the colonized. In this regard, 1.5-generation Koreans may be one of the most appropriate examples to examine this implication since they spent their adolescence, an important period for one's identity development, in the Japanese mainland as ethnic minorities who were direct subjects of the "Japanization policy," as discussed in the next section.

### Japan's Ambivalent Policy Towards Koreans in Colonial Japan

To analyze the development of identity and ethnic consciousness in 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans, it is necessary to grasp an overview of the contemporary political and social environments in which they spent their childhoods and adolescence. Therefore, this section will look at a brief history of *zainichi* Koreans during the colonial period focusing on colonial measures that might have exerted a significant influence on the development of identity and ethnic consciousness of 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans.

Although there had been Koreans living in Japan before the twentieth century, the increase of Korean immigration to the Japanese mainland in modern times was accelerated by Japan's colonization of Korea in 1910. The colonization deprived many Koreans of their means of living on the Korean Peninsula through colonial measures such as the land reform project (1910-1918) and the rice production development program (1920-1934). As a result, the number of Koreans migrating to the Japanese mainland to make a living began to increase.<sup>22</sup> The rise of Korean immigrants to the Japanese mainland was further enabled by the transport infrastructure that had been laid throughout the peninsula by the Japanese with the purpose of improving the efficiency of exporting agricultural and industrial products from Korea to Japan, and more importantly, to facilitate military logistics as Japan expanded its influence on the continent.<sup>23</sup>

Koreans immigrated to the Japanese mainland following familial ties or those of neighbors from the same village and from the late 1930s, through forced labor and war mobilization. At the end of 1944, the Korean population in Japan is said to have been 1,936,843 a significant increase compared to 2,527 in 1911. Although there is no official record, it is estimated that at the time of Japan's surrender in the Second

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22 Kim Chanjung, *Kankoku Heigō Hyaku-nen to "Zainichi"* [100 Years since the Annexation of Korea and "Zainichi"] (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2010), 30-32, 68-69.

23 Naoki Mizuno and Mun Gyongsu, *Zainichi Chōsenjin: Rekishi to Genzai* [Zainichi Koreans: History and the Present] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2015), 24-25.

World War in August 1945, there were approximately 2.1 million Koreans living on the Japanese mainland.<sup>24</sup>

Under Japanese colonial rule, Koreans were regarded as Japanese subjects and given Japanese nationalities. However, the Japanese authorities became concerned that the increasing number of these colonized subjects might “disturb” the social order, particularly after the March First Independence Movement when Koreans carried out mass demonstrations across the Korean Peninsula from March to May in 1919, to resist Japanese colonial rule.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the Japanese government adopted measures of “indoctrination of Koreans” and of their “assimilation” so that they would become “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire.”<sup>26</sup> This “indoctrination” and “assimilation” of Koreans was implemented in various forms. For instance, Koreans were denied using the Korean language and instead forced to use Japanese. Additionally, their names were changed to Japanese names. They were strongly encouraged to visit and pay homage at shrines of Japanese Shinto which is originally an indigenous folk religion but was “invented” in the modern times as a state religion, a tool to unite the nation with the Emperor at its pinnacle.<sup>27</sup>

Among various measures of the Japanization policy, education was the most crucial tool used to Japanize 1.5-generation Koreans. *Zainichi* Korean children had not been subject to compulsory education. However, partly for the purpose of transforming Koreans into “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire,” and partly out of fear that Koreans might gain and strengthen ethnic consciousness and rebellious attitudes against the Japanese through private education,<sup>28</sup> in 1930 the Japanese authorities applied compulsory education to *zainichi* Korean children, and from 1934 they further strengthened encouragement for enrollment.<sup>29</sup> At school, Korean children received “Japanization” education alongside Japanese children, using the Japanese language, learning Japanese history, and more importantly, indoctrinating themselves to the spirit of Emperor worship.<sup>30</sup>

At the same time, Koreans in the Japanese mainland were put under the control and scrutiny of the police through, for example, the nation-wide organization named *Kyōwakai*. Since the establishment of the first *Kyōwakai* in Osaka Prefecture in 1924, the organization opened chapters across the country, particularly after 1936

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24 Kim, *Kankoku Heigō Hyaku-nen to “Zainichi”*, 21, 119; Mizuno and Mun, *Zainichi Chōsenjin*, 80-81.

25 Kim, *Kankoku Heigō Hyaku-nen to “Zainichi”*, 60-61; Mizuno and Mun, *Zainichi Chōsenjin*, 19-20.

26 Kim, *Kankoku Heigō Hyaku-nen to “Zainichi”*, 94; Mizuno and Mun, *Zainichi Chōsenjin*, 49.

27 Mizuno and Mun, *Zainichi Chōsenjin*, 35-36, 62, 75-76.

28 E. Patricia Tsurumi, “Colonial Education in Korea and Taiwan,” in *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*, eds. Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 294-296.

29 Kim, *Kankoku Heigō Hyaku-nen to “Zainichi”*, 30-32, 95-98.

30 *Ibid.*, 95-98.

when the then Home Ministry (*Naimushō*) issued a directive, and they were put under the Central *Kyōwakai* (*Chūō Kyōwakai*) established in 1939. From this time onwards, under the supervision of the Special Police and through hiring Koreans as local officers, *Kyōwakai* functioned to control *zainichi* Koreans. The organization encouraged Koreans to adapt to Japanese lifestyle and work for the Japanese Empire through, for example, wearing Japanese clothes, visiting and paying homage at Shinto shrines, donating to the country, and volunteering for public construction work. Assimilation of and control over Koreans through *Kyōwakai* was further tightened as Japan went to war with China. During the Second World War, Koreans were mobilized through the organization's network for Japanese war efforts through donations and later as laborers and soldiers.<sup>31</sup>

The Japanese authorities adopted the Japanization policy towards Koreans through various measures as discussed above. It was a way to show that Japan's colonial administration was different from colonialism of the Western powers which put different races under their control in their remote colonies such as those in Africa and Southeast Asia. On the contrary, the Japanese authorities regarded Koreans as racially close to the Japanese. This provided a base for the Japanization policy towards Koreans that attempted to "assimilate" and "convert" them into the "loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire" throughout the colonial era.<sup>32</sup>

However, the Japanization policy had an ambivalent character since it left some room for distinguishing Koreans from the Japanese. For instance, Koreans were given Japanese nationality when Japan colonized Korea, nevertheless, different family registration decrees were applied to the two ethnic groups so that Koreans remained legally differentiated from the Japanese.<sup>33</sup> Conscription ordinances were applied to Koreans several years later than to the Japanese because the Japanese authorities were cautious about providing Koreans with weapons as they were concerned that armed Koreans might become a threat to colonial rule.<sup>34</sup> This reveals that for the Japanese authorities, Koreans were still "Others" who were "peripheral" and "inferior," and in some cases could even become a threat to the colonial administration.

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31 Kim Gwang Yol, "1940-nendai Zenhan ni Okeru Nihon Keisatsu no Zainichi Chōsenjin Tōsei Taisei" [The Control System by Japanese Police over Zainichi Koreans in the First Half of the 1940s], in *Teikoku Nihon no Saihen to Futatsu no "Zainichi"* [The Reorganization of the Japanese Empire and Two "Zainichi"], eds. Kim Gwang Yol et al. (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2010), 59-67; Mizuno and Mun, *Zainichi Chōsenjin*, 59-63.

32 Shinobu Oe, "Higashi Ajia Shinkyū Teikoku no Kōtai" [Change from an Old to a New Empire in East Asia], in *Kindai Nihon to Shokuminchi 1* [Modern Japan and Colonies 1], eds. Shinobu Oe et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1992), 24-27.

33 Eiji Oguma, "*Nihonjin*" no Kyōkai: Okinawa, Ainu, Taiwan, Chōsen, *Shokuminchi Shihai Kara Fukki Undō Made* [The Boundaries of the Japanese] (Tokyo: Shinyosha, 1998), 154-161.

34 Eiji Oguma, *Tan'itsu Minzoku Shin'wa no Kigen: "Nihonjin" no Jigazō no Keifu* [A Genealogy of Japanese Self-Images] (Tokyo: Shinyosha, 1995), 256.

The fact that Koreans were still regarded as “peripheral, inferior Others” in Japanese society was more obvious in social life. They lived in slums with very poor sanitation, were mostly engaged in low-wage, dangerous, and dirty occupations, such as mining and construction, were denied job opportunities by Japanese employers, marriage to Japanese people, and many other forms of social access.

The Japanization policy was, after all, a double standard with simultaneous acts of assimilation and discrimination against Koreans. As a result, Koreans could not be fully “Japanized” not only because Koreans themselves resisted, but also because institutionally the colonial rule left room for distinguishing Koreans from the Japanese as “peripheral, inferior Others,” and socially Koreans had to endure many forms of discrimination in daily life.

In such an environment, many first-generation *zainichi* Koreans who immigrated to the Japanese mainland as adults generally developed anger and hatred against the Japanese and maintained their pride in being Korean as a sign of resistance against the Japanese. Some of them did not hesitate to show that they were Koreans, by wearing Korean clothes in the public and even resisting verbal and physical discrimination.<sup>35</sup> Still, there were some first-generation *zainichi* Koreans who did not want to reveal that they were Korean, or even tried to adapt to the Japanese community, in order to protect themselves from marginalization and discrimination within a local community. Nevertheless, many first-generation Koreans remained proud of their Korean identities, and had a strong will, as well as courage, to resist discrimination against them by Japanese people. Such an attitude might have come from the fact that they were already adults when Korea was colonized or when they were compelled to immigrate to Japan, therefore, they had a clear understanding that their suffering was caused by Japan’s imperialism and colonialism.

The feelings of anger and hatred towards the Japanese that many first-generation Koreans developed were shared by 1.5-generation Koreans as they realized the unfair treatment that Koreans faced in Japan, whether through their own first-hand experiences or that of other Koreans around them such as their parents.<sup>36</sup> However, the experiences of 1.5-generation Koreans were not so simple. Having spent their childhood and adolescence in Japan, some of them developed identities and ethnic consciousnesses that differed from that of first-generation Koreans who immigrated to the Japanese mainland as adults, as will be examined in the following sections.

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35 Kim Teseng, *Watashi no Ningen Chizu* [My Map as a Human] (Tokyo: Seikyusha, 1985), 78; Yoon, *Zainichi wo Kangaeru*, 93.

36 Hyeon Soon-im, “Shokumin shihai no konjō mada nukete imasen” [They haven’t overcome their colonial ill-nature], in *Zainichi Issei no Kioku* [Memories of First-generation Zainichi Koreans], eds. Eiji Oguma and Kang Sang-jung (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2008), 393-395; Jang Doo-sik, *Aru Zainichi Chōsenjin no Kiroku* [A Record of a Zainichi Korean] (Tokyo: Dohsei Publishing, 1976), 32; Jung Hwan-gi, *Zainichi wo Ikiru* [To Live a Zainichi’s Life] (Tokyo: Shinzansha, 1990), 32-33.

### 1.5-generation Koreans: Humiliated for Their Ethnicity

Personal experiences of 1.5-generation Koreans had other consequences besides the development and strengthening of anger and hatred towards the Japanese. One case is the development of feelings of humiliation for their ethnicity.

Kwon Sun-geum, who was born in Andong-gun, Gyeongsang-bukdo, in 1926 and immigrated to Japan at the age of three, recalls she did not want other children to know that she was Korean. On a rainy day, for example, when her mother came to school to pick her up with her umbrella and in Korean clothing, she could not go to her mother out of fear that fellow students might know that her family was Korean and tease her.<sup>37</sup>

Historian Kang Duk-sang who was born in Hamyang-gun, Gyeongsang-namdo, in 1932 and immigrated to Japan at the age of two in 1934 remembers a similar story. He recalls that he did not want his mother to come to events at his school since it was obvious that his mother was Korean.<sup>38</sup> On another occasion, when he saw that a Korean female student was being teased by Japanese students for being Korean, he recalls that he could not stop their behavior. Although he was physically stronger than those Japanese students, he would simply feel humiliated by the simple word "You, Korean!"<sup>39</sup>

Another example is the novelist Kim Tal-su, who was born in Changwon-gun (the present Changwon City) of Gyeongsang-namdo in 1920 and immigrated to Japan at the age of ten in 1930 to join his mother, eldest brother, and younger sister who had moved to Japan five years earlier. His father had passed away in Japan in 1928. He recalls that when his mother threw stones back at Japanese boys who teased them on a street, he rather felt embarrassed about his mother:

*In such a situation, I could not help feeling both embarrassed and miserable at the same time. I felt such embarrassment and misery, not so much for the fact that the kids teased us and threw stones at us, but rather that my mother threw stones back at them.*<sup>40</sup>

These cases show that some 1.5-generation Koreans came to hide their ethnic origin out of a feeling of "shame" for their ethnicity. This tendency is unique to

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37 Kwon Sun-geum, "Hibaku wo norikoe fujinkai katsudō ni kōken" [Having gone through the atomic-bombing, I worked for a women's association], in *Zainichi Issei no Kioku* [Memories of First-generation Zainichi Koreans], eds. Eiji Oguma and Kang Sang-jung (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2008), 335-336.

38 Kang Duk-sang, "Watashi to rekishigaku no deai" [The encounter between me and history], in *Zainichi Issei no Kioku* [Memories of First-generation Zainichi Koreans], eds. Eiji Oguma and Kang Sang-jung (Tokyo: Shueisha, 2008), 647.

39 Kang, "Watashi to rekishigaku no deai," 647-648.

40 Kim Tal-su, *Waga Ariran no Uta* [My Arirang Song] (Tokyo: Chuokoron-sha, 1977), 47.

1.5-generation Koreans and cannot be found among first-generation Koreans.

There were some first-generation Koreans who did not make it obvious that they were Koreans since they thought it was “wise” to not overtly show their ethnicity while living as minorities in Japan. When they immigrated to Japan, these first-generation Koreans had already developed their ethnic identities and understood the fact that they were minorities. Therefore, it is likely that they expected to be targets of discrimination in Japanese society.

In contrast, 1.5-generation Koreans’ attitude of hiding their ethnicity emerged from a feeling of “shame” of being Korean, rather than as a reluctant but strategic means to live in Japanese society as in the case of first-generation Koreans. It should be added that, unlike first-generation Koreans, 1.5-generation Koreans were not immediately aware that they were different from other Japanese children. In fact, historian Park Jong-myeong, who was born in Gwangju, Jeolla-namdo, in 1928 and immigrated to Japan at the age of five, said that “I gradually came to understand that I was teased and bullied because of being Korean. But I didn’t know why [being Korean was the reason for bullying]....”<sup>41</sup> When these 1.5-generation Koreans later came to understand that they were “Others” in Japan whom Japanese people regarded as “inferior,” 1.5-generation Koreans internalized this perspective, seeing themselves as “shameful Others.” Therefore, they necessarily came to terms with the unfair treatment against them.

As Hall has argued, under the colonial situation and through colonial experience, the colonized people internalize the negative image held by the colonizers and come to see themselves as “inferior Others.”<sup>42</sup> Albert Memmi further argues that the negative image of “inferior Others” held by the colonizers are accepted and put in practice by the colonized people, and as a result the colonized contribute to consolidate such an image.<sup>43</sup>

Scholars’ arguments may help explain the 1.5-generation Koreans examined in this section. They reflected the idea of “inferior Koreans” that was prevalent in Japanese society. It does not mean, of course, that they believed in their “inferiority” themselves. Nevertheless, by living in Japanese society, receiving education at school in Japan, and being surrounded by or interacting with Japanese people, 1.5-generation Koreans reluctantly accepted and internalized the perspective of those in power; they began to see Koreans as “peripheral, inferior Others” which they put in practice through trying to hide their ethnicity, instead of developing anger or hatred against the Japanese. Some 1.5-generation Koreans put in practice their “inferiority” in a different way: adaptation to Japanese society. This is the case that will be examined in the next section.

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41 Park Jong-myeong, “Genjitsu wo ikiru tameno jissenteki na rekishigaku wo” [Practical history for living in the reality], in *Zainichi Issei no Kioku* [Memories of First-generation Zainichi Koreans], eds. Eiji Oguma and Kang Sang-jung (Tokyo: Shueisha 2008), 432.

42 Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” 225.

43 Albert Memmi, *Jinshu Sabetsu* [Le Racisme], trans. Masami Kikuchi and Shigeo Shirai (Tokyo: Hosei University Press, 1982=1996), 195-196.



### 1.5-generation Koreans: Adapted to Japanese Society

Some 1.5-generation Koreans adapted to Japanese society without necessarily developing anger, hatred or a sense of resistance against the Japanese. One example is the case of Jang Tae-hee, who was born in Changnyeong-gun, Gyeongsangnam-do, in 1912 and immigrated to Japan on his own at the age of 11 in 1924.

Jang spent his first five years in Japan at a confectionery, where he lived with the Japanese owner and his wife who treated him as if he was their real son. He established a good relationship with this family and in fact he visited them six years after he left them in 1929 to join his father in Hiroshima.<sup>44</sup> This may show that his good personal relationship with Japanese people lessened his negative feelings towards the Japanese:

*While I lived and worked hard, I learned that not all Japanese people were bad. The Murakami family [that owned the confectionery] saved me from a human trafficker and raised me as if I was their real son. Later, I worked for Kyōwakai which was a nation-wide organization that subjected Koreans in Japan under the control [of the Special Police] and mobilized Koreans [for Japan's war effort]. However, there were nice people among the Special Police.<sup>45</sup>*

It is noteworthy that Jang mentions *Kyōwakai* here. In the post-liberation era, those Koreans who had worked for *Kyōwakai* were regarded as “pro-Japanese” and many of them did not want to reveal their past involvement with the organization, even though most were reluctantly involved in the organization to survive under the colonial rule. In this respect, it was highly unusual that Jang does not hesitate to reveal his past affiliation with *Kyōwakai* and even says that there were nice Japanese people in the Special Police that supervised *Kyōwakai*. Whether his past deeds and perspectives may be interpreted as pro-Japanese or not, it is at least certain that he established good relations with some Japanese individuals and as a result, he held rather positive impressions about those individuals, if not about the Japanese as a whole.

Another case of a 1.5-generation Korean who adapted to Japanese society is that of novelist Kim Tal-su, who was quoted earlier. When he immigrated to Japan at the age of ten, he couldn't speak or understand Japanese. His family was so poor that they could not afford proper education for the children. Therefore, he started working to help his family as soon as he arrived to Japan, and discontinuously funded himself to attend schools for three years at different primary schools, a half

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44 Jang Tae-hee, “Okizari ni sareta kankokujin gembaku giseisha ireihi” [The Cenotaph for Korean Atomic-bomb Victims left abandoned], in *Ikiru: Hibakusha no Jibun-shi* [To Live: Autobiographies of Atomic-bomb Victims], ed. Hibakusha no Jibun-shi Henshū linkai (Hiroshima: Hibakusha no Jibun-shi Henshū linkai, 1995), 18-19.

45 *Ibid.*, 39-40.

year at a junior high school in evening course, and three years at a college.

Despite unsatisfactory schooling, Kim familiarized himself with Japanese literature from a young age as he read novels that he found in the trash or bought from ragpickers for cheap prices. He then began to dream of studying literature and even becoming a novelist himself.<sup>46</sup> He recalls that he was particularly moved by works by Japanese novelist Naoya Shiga who wrote many “I” novels, that is, novels based on the author’s own life:

*I encountered typical Japanese “I” novels for the first time [through Shiga’s works]. “If Shiga writes such novels,” I thought, “I will write novels about us, Koreans.” But what I had in my mind was only “within the framework of zainichi Koreans.”<sup>47</sup>*

In this quotation, it can be pointed out that Kim was motivated to write “I” novels as a Korean which may demonstrate his ethnic consciousness. However, at the same time, it can be said that his sense of being Korean is not particularly strong and it was rather narrowly defined as it was only “within the framework of zainichi Koreans.” In fact, he said that he was not familiar with Korean literature at that time:

*I had only discussed world literature and Japanese literature, but what about Korean literature which is supposed to have significance for me, a Korean? Strangely enough, having spent ten years since I came to Japan as a small child who knew nothing at the time, I have become “half-Japanese.” The language I speak, novels that I read...all are in Japanese. In other words, almost everything I see and hear is in Japanese, and there is nothing I could do about it.<sup>48</sup>*

Kim did experience discrimination from Japanese people during his childhood and adolescence, whether being teased by children or rejected for employment because of being Korean. Nevertheless, having become a “half-Japanese,” his feeling towards the Japanese was not only of anger and hatred, at least at this point. A young literature enthusiast, he even lamented Korean people’s unfamiliarity with literature which, to him, was one factor that led Korean people to lead miserable lives and with low status in Japan.<sup>49</sup>

The development of a sense of “half-Japanese” and lament for Korean compatriots is not exclusive to Kim. For example, Jang Doo-sik, who was born in Haman-gun, Gyeongsang-namdo, in 1916 and immigrated to Japan in 1923, also argues that through reading Japanese literature, he “came to have sensibilities of Japanese people on purpose, and perceive myself as a terribly unfortunate person

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46 Kim, *Waga Ariran no Uta*, 169.

47 Ibid., 169-170.

48 Ibid., 188.

49 Ibid., 155, 169.

since I was born Korean.”<sup>50</sup>

Kim Moon-seon, who was born in Chungcheong-bukdo in 1925 and immigrated to Japan at the age of three in 1928, recalls that he felt he was different from other Koreans. After Japan went into the Second World War in 1941, he began construction work with Koreans under a Korean boss. However, the environment of being surrounded only by “pure Koreans” was nothing but uncomfortable for him:

*I was more and more Japanese while I lived in different Japanese communities one after another, hiding the fact that I was Korean. [I was] half-Japanese that pure Koreans' community scorned at that time. ... This place [new working place] was under total control of a pure Korean community. It felt like another world. ...Because [I] say something and do something based on my Japanese sense, those pure Koreans scorned me, and I couldn't get along with them and often alienated.*<sup>51</sup>

The examples examined above demonstrate that the 1.5-generation Koreans who spent their childhood and adolescence in colonial Japan did not necessarily develop a strong sense of self as Koreans nor a sense of resistance against the Japanese. They could have been aware of prejudice and discrimination against them and had bitter feelings, however, the discrimination against Koreans in Japan had been so deeply institutionalized and prevalent in society that they, despite their discontent, internalized this unfair social environment. Moreover, since they were always exposed to the thoughts and sensibilities of the Japanese people whom they interact with on a daily basis, they themselves imitated and practiced the way of thinking of the Japanese people, consequently contributing to consolidate the negative image against Koreans held by the Japanese.

It can further be argued that their internalization and practice of the Japanese way of thinking might have come from their complexes about their Korean ethnicity. As discussed earlier, Albert Memmi argues that as a possible solution to the status as “inferior” colonial subjects, they attempt to become “equal” to the colonizers and, at the same time, develop “a complex of feelings ranging from shame to self-hate.”<sup>52</sup> In a similar manner, it is possible that some 1.5-generation Koreans tried to become closer to the Japanese colonizers out of desperation to detach themselves from the “inferior” status and negative image of Koreans held by the Japanese and also internalized by themselves, some even developing into self-hate.

Based on this, it can be argued that some 1.5-generation Koreans developed complicated, or even contradictory, feelings towards their Korean ethnicity as well as first-generation compatriots. This is expressed by some 1.5-generation Koreans

50 Jang, *Aru Zainichi Chōsenjin no Kiroku*, 49.

51 Kim Moon-seon, *Hōrōden: Shōwashi no Naka no Zainichi* [A Story of a Wanderer: A Zainichi Korean in the History of the Showa Era] (Tokyo: Sairyusha, 1991), 106.

52 Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 119-121.

such as Kim Teseng who was born in Jeju-do (Jeju Island) in 1925 and immigrated to Japan at the age of five in 1930. He recalls the thoughts and feelings that he held towards Korean adults when he was fourteen seeing them as “ignorant, filthy, lazy, untrustable, barbarous, cunning, and indecent.”<sup>53</sup> At the same time, however, he also confesses his thoughts and feelings were rather complicated:

*[W]ere they no more than such people? Was it really true? ...[S]uch an image [about them] was something that was imposed on me by those [Japanese] people who treated [Korean] people as vicious creatures and at the same time rejected [them] and denied them any opportunity to get out of their adversity. It was obviously prejudice. And it was because of this very prejudice that [Korean] people were persistent in their [Korean way of] life despite of suffering through despisal and humiliation [by the Japanese]. But I could not understand it [their lives] since I myself was polluted by such prejudice without myself realizing it.*<sup>54</sup>

Here Kim expresses his confused, conflicting thoughts: he follows the Japanese by holding a negative image towards Koreans, but at the same time, he is critical against the discriminative attitude of the same Japanese people. This contradictory thought and attitude manifested itself among Koreans yet in a different way after Japan went to war in the 1930s and Koreans were mobilized. Some 1.5-generation Koreans were “willing” to work for Japan’s war effort. However, their “contribution” was not necessarily based solely on their “willingness,” but also based on the awareness of discrimination against them and out of desperation to overcome it.

### 1.5-generation Koreans: Aspired to Work for the Japanese Empire

The cases discussed in the previous section examined the 1.5-generation Koreans who adapted to Japanese society. The cases that will be discussed in the following go beyond it. They are 1.5-generation Koreans who even became “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire.”

The news of Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 gave Kim Moon-seon, who was quoted in the previous section, a “sense of indescribable tension,” a feeling that he felt because, he thinks, he had become a “Japanese.”<sup>55</sup> When Japan lost the war four years later in August 1945, he said: “as a military boy tried hard to hold back my tears” as he saw his Japanese boss at a coal mine was weeping.<sup>56</sup>

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53 Kim, *Watashi no Ningen Chizu*, 79.

54 Ibid.

55 Kim, *Hōrōden: Shōwashi no Naka no Zainichi*, 105.

56 Ibid., 137.

Jang Tae-hee, who was also quoted in the previous section, is another example. Jang says after Japan went to war, he worked hard for the sake of Japan's war effort:

*I did this job [of making military swords] earnestly every day. Believing [that this was] for the Japanese military and for Japan to win the war, I worked hard without any personal interest and gain.<sup>57</sup>*

Jang also worked as a member of *Kyōwakai* and sold war bonds to and collected donations from compatriot Koreans for war effort.<sup>58</sup> He even says that he "behaved as if [he was] a Japanese, more so than Japanese people, and even cooperated for Japan's war effort."<sup>59</sup>

Kim and Jang's ambivalent identities of being Korean and being a "loyal subject of the Japanese Empire" may seem contradictory. However, it is not necessarily so, as Yoon Geon-cha discusses:

*Young generations who had the Emperor-centred sense of value drilled into them came to live a different psychological world from their parents whose lives were filled with "everything Korean." These Korean children who had grown up as "loyal young boys and girls" always kept it in mind to "become Japanese more than Japanese people," and as a reaction to the denial of their identities as Koreans, they even came to have a mentality that they were willing to die for the Emperor.<sup>60</sup>*

It can be argued that their "willingness" to contribute to Japan's war effort among some Koreans was a result of the Japanization policy during the colonial period. Their "willingness" was also a means to overcome discrimination against Koreans in Japanese society. For instance, historian Kang Duk-sang says he was an "enthusiastic military boy,"<sup>61</sup> and entered Tama Junior High School in Tokyo which was, according to Kang, a quasi-military academy since the school was for students who wanted to enter a formal training academy for military cadres such as army and naval officers.<sup>62</sup> He recalls that his aspiration to be an "enthusiastic military boy" emerged because he was "desperate to get out of poverty and discrimination."<sup>63</sup>

Regarding this psychological state, Kim Gi-bong, who served the Japanese Imperial Army, discusses that even though serving the Japanese Empire was only to "play right into the hands of [the authorities of] the Japanese Empire," Koreans

57 Jang, "Okizari ni sareta kankokujin gembaku giseisha ireihi," 21-22.

58 Ibid., 20-21.

59 Ibid., 28.

60 Yoon, *Zainichi wo Kangaeru*, 126.

61 Kang, "Watashi to rekishigaku no deai," 648.

62 Ibid., 648.

63 Ibid.

still needed to prove that “we Koreans were in no way inferior to the Japanese.”<sup>64</sup> In other words, consciously or unconsciously, becoming an “enthusiastic military boy” and serving the Japanese Empire was, as Setsuko Miyata argues, a means for Koreans to prove that they were not “inferior” but equal to Japanese people, and consequently to dismiss all discrimination against them.<sup>65</sup> Or in the words of Ko Samyong, serving the Japanese Empire and also dying for the Japanese Emperor was “the final conclusion” and “the only exit” left for Koreans who “were born as non-Japanese ‘Japanese’” in order to get out of the “never-ending” “suffering” from discrimination against them.<sup>66</sup>

Yoon Geon-cha further elaborates these arguments, discussing the fact that these Koreans wished to become loyal subjects of and serve the Japanese Empire to emerge from discrimination against them was a manifestation of their “ethnic complex.” He argues that their ethnic complex made them believe that the only way for them to live a satisfactory life is to “become Japanese more than the Japanese people.”<sup>67</sup> His argument may resemble the argument by Memmi on complexes of the colonized, as discussed in the previous section.

There were 1.5-generation Koreans who became “loyal subjects” and were “willing to serve the Japanese Empire.” As a result of the Japanization policy and particularly having received Japanization education during the colonial period, they made them believe that it was their “duty” to serve the country, particularly after Japan went to war with China and in the Second World War. This pattern is similar to the cases examined in the previous section where both of these groups of 1.5-generation Koreans, having spent their childhood and adolescence in the colonial Japan, were “made into Japanese.” At the same time, their willingness to serve Japan’s war effort also came out of their desire to overcome discrimination against them in Japanese society, since they expected that becoming “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire” would be a means of proving they were not “inferior” to Japanese people.

### 1.5-generation Koreans in the Post-1945 Era

So far, some cases of unique identity and ethnic consciousness among 1.5-generation Koreans born in Korea who immigrated to the Japanese mainland at young ages, and consequently spent their childhood and adolescence in colonial Japan have been examined. Some 1.5-generation Koreans developed anger and hatred towards the Japanese as many older first-generation Koreans had. Nevertheless, as discussed in this paper, there were some cases that can be regarded as peculiar

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64 Yoon, *Zainichi wo Kangaeru*, 97.

65 Setsuko Miyata, *Chōsen Minshū to “Kōminka” Seisaku* [The Korean People and the “Japanization” Policy] (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1985), 162-164.

66 Ko Samyong, *Ikiru Koto no Imi* [A Meaning of Living] (Tokyo: Chikumashobo, 1974), 242.

67 Yoon, *Zainichi wo Kangaeru*, 97.

to 1.5-generation Koreans.

The first case was that some 1.5-generation Koreans felt humiliated for their ethnic origins. The second case was that other 1.5-generation Koreans had come to regard themselves as “Japanese,” and adapted to Japanese society. The third case was another group of 1.5-generation Koreans who had come to believe they were “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire.”

The commonality among the three cases is that these 1.5-generation Koreans had, during their childhoods and adolescences, critical periods for one’s personality development, had internalized the image of Koreans that had been constructed by the Japanese who were in power in Japanese society. This was closely related to the ambivalent policy towards Koreans of the Japanese Empire. Koreans were treated as subjects of the Japanese Empire. At the same time, Koreans were not always treated as equals as the Japanese, institutionally, socially, and psychologically. In turn, Koreans internalized this ambivalent perspective under the Japanese colonial measures which further led to the three types of development of identity and ethnic consciousness among 1.5-generation Koreans.

Then, what happened to them following Korea’s liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945? Japan’s surrender, Korea’s liberation, and return to the Korean Peninsula—all these drastic changes had them experience (re-)development and confusion of their identity and ethnic consciousness.

An example of the former case is that of historian Park Kyong-sik. Park developed his identity as Korean through participating in the post-1945 activities of *zainichi* Koreans’ movement for unification of the Korean Peninsula and abolition of discrimination against Koreans who remained in Japan:

*Up to 8.15 [the anniversary of the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule in 1945], I had been subsumed by the racist discrimination and the education policy of Japanization of the Japanese Empire, therefore, I could not develop ethnic subjectivity [i.e. consciousness] and gain any experience through which I could be proud [of being Korean].<sup>68</sup>*

*My life up to 8.15 was that of a slave, and ... I will never repeat such a humiliating life without an ethnic identity. [My life after 8.15 has been] a process of struggling to regain my identity as a Korean.<sup>69</sup>*

While Park gained and consolidated his Korean identity, there were some 1.5-generation Koreans who experienced identity confusion, some of them not being able to get out of such confusion. In the case of historian Kang Duk-sang, his ambivalent identity of being Korean and being a “military boy” of the Japanese Empire led to identity confusion after the empire dismantled and Korea was liberated

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68 Park Kyong-sik, *Zainichi Chōsenjin: Watashi no Seishun* [Zainichi Koreans: My Youth] (Tokyo: San-Ichi Shobo Publishing, 1981), 5.

69 *Ibid.*, 239.

in 1945. He recalls his complicated feeling immediately after Japan's surrender:

*[As I was told by the teacher about Japan's defeat] I cycled to my boarding house which was 20 kilometres away, being rather confused about what actually happened. When I got there, it was filled with people grieving. Everyone was raising their face to the sky, punching the floor out of chagrin, and crying out. It was then, for the first time, that I comprehended that Japan had lost the war. However, I didn't know why, I just couldn't join that crowd in great sorrow. I was only a bystander, stunned and staring at them crying.<sup>70</sup>*

He then headed home, and on his way, he stopped at the house of a compatriot where dozens of Koreans gathered from across the town and were having a celebration. There he saw people making a Korean national flag. For Kang, it was the first time in his life to see the Korean national flag. He recalls:

*Not knowing it was the Korean national flag, I was just stunned and gazing at them waving the flag and yelling "Hurray, Great Korea!" and "Hurray, independence!" Earlier I was a bystander amid the grieving crowd [of the Japanese] in great sorrow for the 8.15 surrender, and now I couldn't join the [Korean] people with a joyous mood for liberation. I felt some discomfort with both groups of people.<sup>71</sup>*

Similarly, Jung Hwan-gi who was born in Jinyang-gun, Gyeongsang-namdo, in 1924 and immigrated to Japan at the age of three in 1927, recalls that when his father said he wanted to return to Korea immediately after Japan's surrender, Jung and his elder brother felt a "great anxiety" because "since we came to Japan at a young age, we didn't know the homeland [Korea]. We were more fluent in Japanese than in our mother tongue [Korean]. Having received education at Japanese schools, in the Japanese language, and as Japanese, both my brother and I sometimes felt the homeland was like a foreign country."<sup>72</sup>

Some others actually experienced difficulties after returning to Korea. Eom Boon-yeon who was born in Hapcheon-gun, Gyeongsang-namdo, in 1929 and immigrated to Japan with her family when she was one in 1930, returned to Korea following Japan's surrender and Korea's liberation. However, she recalls that Korean returnees from Japan like Eom had to endure prejudice and discrimination as they were regarded as "pro-Japanese" who had had "luxurious" lives in Japan and had

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70 Kang, "Watashi to rekishigaku no deai," 650.

71 Ibid., 650-651.

72 Jung, *Zainichi wo Ikiru*, 73-74.



little knowledge of the Korean language and customs.<sup>73</sup> In terms of the language, for example, after returning to Korea she could not have an opportunity to receive a proper education and learn the language, and lacked confidence, particularly in writing, throughout her life.<sup>74</sup> As a result, many Korean returnees felt it was difficult to adapt to their new life in Korea, leading to some sort of identity confusion.

The ambivalent identity experienced by these 1.5-generation Koreans may sound perplexing. However, it may be understandable since, for those 1.5-generation Koreans who spent their childhood and adolescence in Japan, Korea was “not where [they] ‘return to,’ it [was] the place to ‘go’.” Unlike their parents, Korea was “an unknown place” for them, and their “experience and knowledge about Korea was too little for [them] to feel unconditional affection only because it was [their] homeland.”<sup>75</sup> In some cases, their memories of their time in Japan could be something to long for, even though they also experienced discrimination. The childhoods and adolescences they spent in Japan could still be “a precious time,” and Japan was “the root of [their] life” whereas they “can find nowhere in Korea that reminds [them] of [their] childhood.”<sup>76</sup>

These 1.5-generation Koreans experienced (re-)development and confusion of their identity and ethnic consciousness following Japan’s surrender and Korea’s liberation. Whether (re-)development of their full and firm identity as Korean or an ambivalent, confusing identity, it can be pointed out that it again occurred under the influence of a power relation either *vis-à-vis* the Japanese in Japan where they remained, or *vis-à-vis* Koreans in the homeland to which they returned. In the new political and social environment of the post-1945 period, 1.5-generation Koreans developed a new sense of self, reflecting the new power relations. Koreans as “Others” in Japanese society who were now fully aware of their ethnicity and clearly distinguished from the Japanese, especially having been deprived of their previous Japanese nationality following the dismantlement of the Japanese Empire; or returnees in Korea who were not necessarily familiar with the life in Korea and were envied by their compatriots in Korea for their previous life in Japan.

## Conclusion

This paper examined the development and changes of identity and ethnic consciousness among 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans that occurred within the colonial power relationship with the Japanese. The cases of 1.5-generation *zainichi*

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73 Eom Boon-yeon, “Hiroshima kara nigete kita” [I escaped from Hiroshima], in *Hiroshima E: Kankoku no Hibakusha no Shuki* [To Hiroshima: Autobiographies by Korean A-bomb Victims], ed. Kankoku no Gembaku-higaisha wo Kyūensuru Shimin no Kai (Hiroshima: Kankoku no Gembaku-higaisha wo Kyūensuru Shimin no Kai, 2019), 131-132.

74 *Ibid.*, 132.

75 Lee Sang-geum, *Hambun no Furusato: Watashi ga Nihon ni Ita Toki no Koto* [A Half Homeland: The Time I Spent in Japan] (Tokyo: Fukuinkan Shoten, 2007), 418.

76 *Ibid.*, 9.

Koreans examined in this paper are particularly unique to them compared to those of first-generation Koreans. There were primarily three cases as follows: (i) Those who felt humiliated for their ethnic origin; (ii) those who had come to regard themselves as “Japanese” and adapted to Japanese society; and (iii) those who had come to believe they were “loyal subjects of the Japanese Empire.”

Moreover, 1.5-generation Koreans who spent their childhoods and adolescences in colonial Japan were directly influenced and affected to a significant degree by some of the most drastic changes of the geopolitical landscape of the region such as Japan’s colonial rule over Korea, and the collapse of the Japanese Empire. These changes were accompanied by shifting power relations surrounding them. Consequently, their identities and ethnic consciousness developed, changed, re-developed, and even went through periods of confusion following Korea’s liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945.

With such peculiarity and dynamics, the cases of 1.5-generation *zainichi* Koreans examined in this paper may represent the diversity of identity and ethnic consciousness among Korean people. They also present an example of the dynamics, complexity, and diversity of one’s identity and ethnic consciousness that are formed in interplay with others within the power relations of society. As suggested by President Moon’s words quoted at the beginning of this paper, identity and ethnic consciousness can be a strong tool to unite people. However, it should be remembered that there is always some room for diversity and complexity which is sometimes overlooked. This understanding may lead to re-examination of the national/ethnic identity of Korean people, and to relativized multi-dimensional perspectives on the issues of the colonial past.



# ESSAYS

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**WHAT'S IN A (STAGE) NAME? PUBLIC PERSONAS, PRIVATE SELVES, AND THE TRANSGRESSION OF AUTHENTICITY**

*Sooyun (Clara) Hong*

**MAYLING AND MAY FOURTH — UNDERSTANDING THE INTERNATIONALISM OF MADAME CHIANG KAI-SHEK'S SPEECH TO THE US CONGRESS IN 1943**

*Joel Petersson Ivre*

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# WHAT'S IN A (STAGE) NAME? PUBLIC PERSONAS, PRIVATE SELVES, AND THE TRANSGRESSION OF AUTHENTICITY

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*The K-pop star often goes by two names: the stage name and “real” name. On the Archive of Our Own, a major fan fiction repository, the tags are designed to facilitate searches for either name. Given that the common practice among K-pop fan fiction writers is to use the “real” name, this paper asks how a specific examination of the stage name in the K-pop medium might redefine the relationship between the stage name and the real name in celebrity discourse. To this end, this paper compares two different constructions of the celebrity text: one constructed by the K-pop industry through reality television and one constructed by fan fiction writers reflecting upon their own craft. This paper argues in favor of a connection between these constructions: namely, that the K-pop industry and K-pop fan fiction are both premised on the construction of a dichotomy between the public person and the private self that is performatively transgressed in order to generate an affect that cannot be evoked by either the public or the private alone. The paper concludes by suggesting that these transgressions point toward a new model of celebrity as embodied by the K-pop idol: not a static “persona” but a dynamic negotiation between the “very-much-public” and the “not-so-public.”*

## What is “Real Person Fiction” (RPF)?

Every year, Tumblr — a microblogging platform and social networking site that Morimoto and Stein define as the “main locus of online fandom activity”<sup>1</sup> — puts out a “Fandometrics” report, a compilation of the most popular topics discussed on the platform that year. In 2015, this report declared that “Larry Stylinson,” a portmanteau

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1 Lori Morimoto and Louisa Ellen Stein, “Tumblr and Fandom,” *Transformative Works and Cultures*, no. 27, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3983/twc.2018.1580>.

of the names of One Direction members Harry Styles and Louis Tomlinson, was “the number one ‘ship’ [relationship] on the site.”<sup>2</sup> Between 2016 and 2017, Fandometrics reported that the amount of fan fiction about K-pop stars on Tumblr had gone up by ten percent.<sup>3</sup> In 2018, “Jikook”, a portmanteau of Jimin and Jungkook, members of the K-pop boy band BTS, was one of the top five most popular ships on Tumblr.<sup>4</sup> Of the top 100 ships that year, seventeen were pairings between real-life people of which more than half were related to K-pop. At time of writing, the “K-pop” tag had 273,830 works on the Archive of Our Own (AO3), a “noncommercial and non-profit central hosting place for fanworks” and a major destination for posting and reading fan fiction.<sup>5</sup> These are examples of the phenomenon known as “real person fiction,” a genre of fan fiction that writes about “actual people, rather than fictional characters.”<sup>6</sup> It has historically been a controversial practice even within fan fiction communities. Just thirteen years before “Larry Stylinson” became the most popular “ship” on Tumblr, Fanfiction.net banned all fan works about real people from its platform.<sup>7</sup> In the 2013 interview that accompanied the twentieth anniversary edition of *Textual Poachers*, an ethnographic text on fans and fan practices, author Henry Jenkins commented that he “was asked not to write about real person slash”<sup>8</sup> by his subjects while he was working on the book. In her 2018 *Medium* article on RPF, Tonya Riley wrote that the genre continues to raise “murky questions of consent and ownership of public identity.”<sup>9</sup> A Reddit thread from the same year, titled “RPF’s (Real Person Fics): How Do You Really Feel?”, gives some examples of the common questions raised about the issue: Is it just creepy? Is it an invasion of privacy? Is it something you would want someone to do about you (and does that matter)? Is RPF different from simply fantasizing about celebrities in private? What if the celebrity sees it? Can they ask you to stop? Is there a fundamental difference between “real” celebrities and fictional characters? Is RPF a form of obsession? A form of stalking? Is it dehumanizing?<sup>10</sup>

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2 Tonya Riley, “The Dubious Ethics of ‘Real-Person Fiction,’” *Medium*, January 12, 2018, <https://medium.com/s/darkish-web/the-dubious-ethics-of-real-person-fiction-5cd6b-d498c16>.

3 Riley, “Dubious Ethics.”

4 “2018’s Top Ships,” Fandom on Tumblr, November 28, 2018, <https://fandom.tumblr.com/post/180587157919/2018-ships>.

5 “About the OTW,” Archive of Our Own, accessed May 9, 2019, <https://archiveofourown.org/about>.

6 “RPF,” Fanlore, accessed May 17, 2019, <https://fanlore.org/wiki/RPF>.

7 Riley, “Dubious Ethics.”

8 Henry Jenkins, *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*. Updated 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary ed. (New York: Routledge, 2013), xxxiii.

9 Riley, “Dubious Ethics.”

10 LadyFangs, “RPF’s (Real Person Fics): How Do You Really Feel?”, *r/Fanfiction* Reddit thread, September 26, 2017, [https://www.reddit.com/r/FanFiction/comments/72mv40/rpfs\\_real\\_person\\_fics\\_how\\_do\\_you\\_really\\_feel](https://www.reddit.com/r/FanFiction/comments/72mv40/rpfs_real_person_fics_how_do_you_really_feel).

An example of such “real person fiction” in the K-pop medium is “In the Territory of the Dragon King,” by Archive of Our Own (AO3) user curledupkitten (*chanyeol*).<sup>11</sup> This fan fiction work focuses on the relationship between two members of the K-pop boy band EXO: “Byun Baekhyun/Do Kyungsoo | D.O.” In fact, this is the work’s only tag. The “tag” is a function of AO3, a major fan fiction repository, which allows creators to optimize their work for the archive’s search engine by appending character names, common tropes, or content warnings.<sup>12</sup> The sole tag for “In the Territory of the Dragon King” is a relationship tag. Anyone looking for fanfiction works about the relationship between EXO members Baekhyun and D.O. can use this tag to facilitate their search. The tag “Byun Baekhyun/Do Kyungsoo | D.O.” has a notable punctuative characteristic. The second name, Do Kyungsoo, is connected via a vertical bar to the name D.O., which refers to the fact that the EXO member known as D.O. has two names: D.O., a stage name based on his surname of Do, and Do Kyungsoo. What should we call this second name? His given name? His legal name? His real name? If we call it a “real” name, does this mean that the stage name, and by extension the stage persona, is not real? What does that signify for “real person fiction”?

“In the Territory of the Dragon King” is an “alternate universe” work that reimagines the EXO members as characters in a world where EXO, a massively popular K-pop boy band, does not exist. Instead, the EXO members are given new backstories: Baekhyun runs a small inn on Jeju Island, inherited from his grandmother, and Kyungsoo is a businessman from Seoul who comes to visit.<sup>13</sup> The cast of characters is not limited to EXO members, but is drawn from a wide variety of K-pop idol groups, all of whom are referred to by their “real” names. This is a common practice in writing RPF fanfiction, particularly in K-pop, where many idols use stage names. The AO3 tags have been designed to facilitate searches for both the “stage name” and the “real name” hence, the vertical bar in “Do Kyungsoo | D.O.” Why do K-pop fan fiction writers consistently use the “real name,” while simultaneously claiming that they do not transgress upon celebrities’ “real selves?”<sup>14</sup> In this paper, through a comparison of two different constructions of the celebrity text – one constructed by the K-pop industry through reality television and one constructed by fan fiction writers reflecting upon their own craft – I argue that while both the K-pop industry and K-pop RPF are premised upon the dichotomy between the public persona and the private self, both performatively transgress that dichotomy to generate an affect that cannot be evoked by either the public or the private alone. On one hand, K-pop RPF relies on the theoretical divide between the

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11 Curledupkitten [chanyeol], “In the Territory of the Dragon King,” *Archive of Our Own*, May 17, 2014, <https://archiveofourown.org/works/2160063/chapters/4722243>.

12 “Archive FAQ,” Archive of Our Own, accessed November 24, 2019. [https://archiveofourown.org/faq/tags?language\\_id=en#whatisatag](https://archiveofourown.org/faq/tags?language_id=en#whatisatag).

13 Curledupkitten (chanyeol), “In the Territory of the Dragon King.”

14 Grisclair, “RPS, Slash, and K-Pop: 3 Great Tastes that Taste Great Together! Or Something,” LiveJournal post, May 29, 2012, <https://grisclair.livejournal.com/77953.html>.

public persona and the private self in order to justify its own existence even as its practices threaten any such clear-cut divide. On the other hand, the K-pop industry constructs this public/private dichotomy *in order to* transgress upon it in the pursuit of authenticity, and that it is this authenticity that fans are seeking when they speak of the “real.” I conclude by suggesting that these transgressions point toward a new model of celebrity as embodied by the K-pop idol: not a persona, a mask or stage name to be removed at will, but a constant negotiation between the very-much-public and the not-so-public.

### Background on Stage Names

On the English-language Korean entertainment news website *Soompi*, Azra\_A describes stage names as “a fun K-pop tradition where performers go by an alias that adds an extra dimension to how we see them.”<sup>15</sup> For example, in EXO, Suho is a stage name that refers to the idol’s position as leader of the group, as the word “*suho*” in Korean also means “to protect.” Idols can change their stage names throughout their career – both GOT7 member Junior (now Jinyoung)<sup>16</sup> and BTS member Rap Monster (now RM)<sup>17</sup> changed their stage names, but the close association between the initial stage name and the K-pop idol can be hard to break. For instance, all the EXO members still go by their original stage names, even if the reasoning behind those names no longer exists. For example, in 2019, EXO’s Chen released two solo albums under the name “Chen” despite the fact that it has been many years since he was promoted as part of the subunit EXO-M.<sup>18</sup> EXO-M was a subunit of EXO, based in China, that sang in Mandarin, and Chen’s stage name was deliberately designed to reflect his membership in that group despite the fact that he neither identifies as Chinese nor speaks Mandarin natively.<sup>19</sup>

Situating the K-pop idol within the broader context of celebrity studies necessitates looking at three different bodies of research: film stars, TV celebrities, and music celebrities. This is primarily due to the multimodal nature of K-pop. Although K-pop is broadly understood “as an abbreviation for Korean popular music,” Suk-

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15 Azra\_A, “12 K-Pop Idols with Unique and Meaningful Stage Names,” *Soompi*, August 22, 2019, <https://www.soompi.com/article/1347136wpp/12-k-pop-idols-with-unique-and-meaningful-stage-names>.

16 J.K, “GOT7’s Junior Announces He’ll Be Using Real Name from Now On,” *Soompi*, August 16, 2016, <https://www.soompi.com/article/887297wpp/got7s-junior-announces-hell-using-real-name-now>.

17 J.K, “BTS’s RM Officially Announces Change to Stage Name,” *Soompi*, November 13, 2017, <https://www.soompi.com/article/1076975wpp/btss-rm-officially-announces-change-stage-name>.

18 Gim Minji, *News1*, August 29, 2019, <https://n.news.naver.com/entertain/article/421/0004169282>.

19 Marggee, “EXO Member Profile and Facts: Chen,” Wordpress post, July 2, 2017, <https://bloggingdiscover.wordpress.com/2017/07/02/exo-member-profile-and-facts-chen/>.



Young Kim points out that “K-pop is a music scene whose Korean origin and global destination constantly vie to define its identity.”<sup>20</sup> Kim embraces the “generative” potential of this identity crisis by suggesting other possible meanings for the “K” in K-pop, such as “kaleidoscopic,” “keyboard/keypad,” “Kleenex,” and “korporate.” It is the “kaleidoscopic” term that I seize upon here to describe K-pop’s place at the confluence of film and music. Kim writes that “kaleidoscopic pop leads to the crucial concept of multimedia... first as multiple forms of performance, combining acting, singing, dancing, and talk shows to create a complex array of multimedia performances rather than just a music genre.”<sup>21</sup> The K-pop star must be understood not only as a music celebrity, but also as someone who embodies what Kim calls “spectacular visuality, which includes good looks, a unique fashion statement, and dance moves.”<sup>22</sup> P. David Marshall also points out the element of visuality present among music celebrities outside of the K-pop context: “the presentation of the star, his or her music roots, style of dress, manner of speech, and public display of sexuality are all significant markers for the structuring and differentiating of youth culture.”<sup>23</sup> Given this kaleidoscopic confluence, the following section considers stage names in all three contexts (film, TV, and music) before looking at stage names in K-pop proper.

Stage names are mentioned briefly in Richard Dyer’s book *Stars*, a film studies text that looks at the development and significance of stardom in Hollywood. Dyer mentions that John Wayne and Marilyn Monroe used stage names while Jane Fonda and Robert Redford did not. He attributes this difference to cinema becoming increasingly “character-oriented,” a term that he borrows from literary scholars who characterize novelistic literature as moving away from “emblematic” characters to “particularized” characters.<sup>24</sup> Dyer also notes that “names can be foregrounded in relation to identity... it is very common for people to speak of a character in a film as having the star’s name.”<sup>25</sup> Here, Dyer discusses the conflation of the film star with their onscreen character, which in his view obscures the original “constructed-ness” of the film star:

*Stars are, like characters in stories, representations of people... However, unlike characters in stories, stars are also real people... Because stars have an existence in the world independent of their screen/“fiction” appearances, it is possible to believe... that as people they are more real than characters*

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20 Suk-Young Kim, *K-Pop Live: Fans, Idols, and Multimedia Performance* (California: Stanford University Press, 2018), 8.

21 Kim, *K-Pop Live*, 9.

22 *Ibid.*, 15.

23 P. David Marshall, “The Meanings of the Popular Music Celebrity: The Construction of Distinctive Authenticity,” in *Celebrity and Power: Fame and Contemporary Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 161.

24 Richard Dyer, *Stars*, 1998 ed. (London: British Film Institute, 1979), 97-98.

25 *Ibid.*, 109.

*in stories. This means that they serve to disguise the fact that they are just as much produced images, constructed personalities as “characters” are.*<sup>26</sup>

In Dyer’s turn of phrase here, stars are “*more real* than characters in stories.” Their offscreen personalities, as the word *personality* implies, are always in relation to their onscreen personas. Not only are offscreen personalities just as “constructed” as onscreen characters, as Dyer says, but “realness” as physical existence carries an affective value that transcends and partially conceals this process of construction.

On the television side, Su Holmes’s essay “It’s A Jungle Out There!” looks at the stage name/real name dialectic through the case of Jordan/Katie, a “26-year-old glamour model has found fame in Britain largely due to the size of her surgically-enhanced breasts.”<sup>27</sup> Jordan’s appearance on a reality TV show generated an “*extraordinarily* self-conscious debate about the relationship between ‘Jordan,’ the media image, and the person known in reality as ‘Katie Price,’ who was perceived by the show as being her ‘real’ self.”<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting here that this dual identity was primarily focused through the lens of Jordan/Katie’s romantic relationship with another celebrity on the show.<sup>29</sup> As I will suggest later, the use of real names in RPF fan fiction cannot be disentangled from the depiction of interpersonal relationships between the “characters” in the story. Moreover, the other participants on the show frequently switched between the names Jordan and Katie, a fact that will be significant when I discuss EXO’s own reality TV show later in this paper. Holmes ends her discussion of this case with the note that Jordan/Katie are not as equal in that binary as the “slash” suggests. The Jordan/Katie persona/personalities are not only inextricably bound up with class and gender, but the reality show itself buys into “the notion that there is a ‘core’ to be found, even if this is partly ‘in process’ in the [show]. What is important... is the general suggestion that the public (celebrity) self and the private (‘real’) self may well be blurred, but they can ultimately be separated.”<sup>30</sup> Like in Dyer’s account, the “private/real” carries a value that the “public/celebrity” does not. In reality television, it may appear as though the value of the “real” (the “core”) is being extracted from the public/celebrity “ore” that surrounds it. In fact, this value is generated through the simultaneous processes of blurring and separation. Separating the “real” from the “less real” identifies a “core” to be extracted, but the “ore” in this extended metaphor (i.e. the “public/celebrity”) is not discarded but rather given enhanced value through the process of extraction.

A similar process of value generation occurs in the case of music celebrities. In “The Meanings of the Popular Music Celebrity,” P. David Marshall argues that

26 Ibid., 20.

27 Su Holmes, “It’s a Jungle Out There! Playing the Game of Fame in Celebrity Reality TV,” in *Framing Celebrity: New Directions in Celebrity Studies*, ed. Su Holmes and Sean Redmond (London: Routledge, 2006), 56.

28 Ibid.

29 Holmes, “Jungle,” 57.

30 Ibid., 58.

“the transformations that have taken place in popular music in the twentieth century can be attributed to a number of factors... all of [which] have been modalized around concepts of *authenticity*.”<sup>31</sup> Lip syncing, in particular, has come to embody this problem of authenticity in musical performance. In his book *Liveness*, Philip Auslander compares the lip syncing scandals of Milli Vanilli and Ashlee Simpson to discuss how fans of pop music, who do not necessarily conform to the same ideologies as fans of rock music, respond differently to questions of authenticity.<sup>32</sup> Crucially, Auslander mentions that Simpson rehabilitated her image by appearing on *Saturday Night Live* and publicly acknowledging her mistake, as well as introducing (in live performance) a song she wrote about the scandal.<sup>33</sup> Auslander writes that this “positioned Simpson squarely within rock ideology by stressing her authorship of the song and its autobiographical nature.” Auslander and Marshall’s insights suggest that music celebrities are just like reality TV stars in the sense that authenticity (“realness”) is about proving an existence behind the image, which in turn adds value to the image. The acknowledgement of and performative gesture toward *interiority*, the perception of “something else” that lies beneath the public persona, and the idea of *depth* is crucial here, partially concealed but always informing the persona above as *intimacy*. The creative act of writing a song about one’s personal experience connects the “interior” with the “public.” The public scandal is given new depth and weight: the audience, who has previously known only the “public,” feels like they have gotten a privileged glimpse into the “private.” In similar terms, Marshall writes that the love songs performed by teen idols serve as a conduit between the audience (the fan) and the “personal and private realm of the singer” and more generally that “popular music works... [to break] down the distance between the pop star and the individual audience member at the very least in the level of fantasy for the audience member.”<sup>34</sup> The idol’s relationship to celebrity is characterized as a “play between accessibility to the group members’ intimate world and the impossibility of fully entering that world.”<sup>35</sup> In his paper about the Korean pop star Rain, Hyunjoon Shin suggests that the English stage name “Rain”, a literal translation of the Korean stage name “*Bi*”, served to position the star within a global market.<sup>36</sup> However, this does not explain the Korean stage name *Bi*, but rather suggests that the stage name is less about marketing and more about characterizing the “play” between accessibility and impossibility.

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31 Marshall, “Meanings of Popular Music Celebrity,” 150 (emphasis mine).

32 Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (London: Routledge, 2008), 126.

33 Ibid.

34 Marshall, “Meanings of Popular Music Celebrity,” 177.

35 Ibid., 179.

36 Hyunjoon Shin, “Have You Ever Seen the *Rain*? And Who’ll Stop the *Rain*?: The Globalizing Project of Korean Pop (K-Pop),” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 10, no. 4 (2009): 514-515.

The claim that idols are always making calculated decisions about whether to refer to their fellow members by their stage names or their real names is not made here. Nonetheless, the *effect* is one of intimacy, a private world that is separate from the world of onstage performances and televised appearances, at which fans can get a glimpse of through these posts and broadcasts. The real name serves as a kind of shorthand for this private world, proof of “the basic and essential authenticity that a ‘real’ person is housed in the sign construction.”<sup>37</sup> In Marshall’s words, the real name represents “accessibility to the group members’ intimate world” while the stage name represents “the impossibility of fully entering that world.”<sup>38</sup> Intimacy, as the *transgression of distance*, can only be created by *first creating distance*, which the stage name does. Marshall uses the term “transgression” in a similar way in his essay ‘The Cinematic Apparatus,’ arguing that the “maintenance of celebrity status for the film actor” involves an “intense search for their meaning and coherence beyond the screen into their private lives.”<sup>39</sup> While there are many factors behind the use of stage names in Korean entertainment, not least of which is a cultural preoccupation with names as a source of good fortune<sup>40</sup>, many Korean celebrities speak of the fact that their real name did not “sound celebrity-like” enough to use.<sup>41</sup> In other words, an important function of the stage name is to create this sense of distance from everyday life, to nominally move the star from the sphere of private ordinariness into the sphere of public extraordinariness. Marshall goes even further and argues that it is this “combination of familiarity and extraordinariness [that] gives the celebrity its ideological power.”<sup>42</sup> Bound up in that is the idea that the ordinary sphere is the “real” and the extraordinary sphere is somehow “false,”<sup>43</sup> meaning that a K-pop star who uses a stage name must periodically gesture back to their real name to prove their realness and to demonstrate their authenticity by performatively transgressing upon the distance they have created.

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37 P. David Marshall, “Preface,” in *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014), xix.

38 Marshall, “Meanings of Popular Music Celebrity,” 179.

39 P. David Marshall, “The Cinematic Apparatus and the Construction of the Film Celebrity,” in *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 105.

40 “Name Change in Korea,” *Ask a Korean! (Blogspot)*, October 18, 2013, <http://askakorean.blogspot.com/2013/10/name-change-in-korea.html>.

41 Platinum1004, “Why Do Many Korean Actors/Singers Change Their Names: Comments,” Reddit post, June 10, 2014, [https://www.reddit.com/r/koreanvariety/comments/27qp-pl/why\\_do\\_many\\_korean\\_actorssingers\\_change\\_their](https://www.reddit.com/r/koreanvariety/comments/27qp-pl/why_do_many_korean_actorssingers_change_their).

42 Marshall, “Cinematic Apparatus,” 86.

43 Dyer, *Stars*, 43.

## The K-Pop Celebrity Text in Reality Television

In 2013, EXO starred in their own reality TV series called *EXO's Showtime*.<sup>44</sup> *Showtime* purports to depict the “off-stage” life of the EXO members, but actually shows the members participating in highly staged events such as throwing birthday parties (Episode 3), exchanging Secret Santa gifts (Episode 4), and engaging in musical or physical games with each other (Episode 9). In her essay on English-language celebrity reality TV, Su Holmes notes that “reality TV’s claim to present the real, to strip away the celebrity persona, comes into conflict with its status as an openly performative space which is deeply self-conscious about its mediated status.”<sup>45</sup> The footage in *Showtime*, as in most Korean reality shows, does not attempt to pass itself off as raw or unedited; on the contrary, the show features vivid subtitles and visual effects to accentuate the viewing experience. *Showtime*’s claim to authenticity therefore lies not in how it is presented (i.e. its format), but in how the people onscreen comport themselves. The members are shown wearing casual clothing, cracking inside jokes, and perhaps most crucially, referring to each other by their *real names*.

In one segment, other idols at SM Entertainment are asked whether they can identify the EXO members by name. During this segment, TVXQ member Changmin proudly proclaims that he not only knows Xiumin’s stage name, but also his real name, Kim Minseok. This display of knowledge is meant to signify that he is close enough to Xiumin, or at least interested enough in him, to know both his names. A few seconds later, both members of TVXQ are unable to identify Lay’s stage name, although they both know that his real name is Zhang Yixing. Yunho pretends to leave the room (i.e. escapes the camera frame) in embarrassment at not knowing the answer, but Changmin soon reveals that this was a charade; he does know Lay’s stage name. This interaction is a particularly complicated interplay between stage name and real name. Depending on the context, knowing the stage name *or* knowing the real name can be a sign of intimacy (i.e. senior-junior intimacy within a company). Not knowing either or both can be a sign of shame, of a breakdown in relations between neighbors. More generally, this interaction exposes the conflict that Holmes points to in reality TV, between its claim to “strip away the celebrity persona” and its “status as an openly performative space which is deeply self-conscious about its mediated status.”<sup>46</sup> Changmin pretending not to know Lay’s stage name is a staged joke, partially if not completely for the benefit of the camera, yet it paradoxically signifies authenticity and intimacy by bridging the perceived, if not actually real gap between TVXQ, a legendary idol group that has been promoted for more than ten years at the time of the broadcast, and EXO, a relatively new idol group that have been together less than two years. *Showtime* itself gestures to this

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44 *EXO's Showtime*, performed by EXO (November 28, 2013—February 13, 2014; Seoul: SM C&C/MBC Every1), TV.

45 Holmes, “Jungle,” 52.

46 *Ibid.*

conflict: when Suho approaches the members of Super Junior to ask them the same question, he finds two of them rehearsing in their dressing room. The subtitles make note of this fact, but add a little addendum: “Is this a set-up? Or is it real?”

By the ninth episode, the show begins to make distinctions between the stage name and the real name depending on the context. During a rehearsal, Luhan reminisces about a song that Suho used to sing during their trainee days. When Suho begins singing the song in the present-day, the subtitles note, “Suho is singing trainee Junmyeon’s favorite song.” The subtitles give the impression that Suho and Junmyeon (Suho’s real name) are different people, separated not only by their name but their idol/trainee statuses. The stage name/real name dichotomy works here to show that the celebrity has a past, has depth, and more importantly that fans can have access to that depth by knowing more about their past. Similarly, in episode four, the members speak about an incident in which they witnessed D.O. crying while watching anime, and the subtitles denote this moment as “The young boy Kyungsoo was moved by the animation.” Although the members do not specify when this incident took place, the use of “young boy” as well as D.O.’s real name gestures back to a nostalgic past.

Another example of this can be seen in a girl group member’s appearance on a reality show called *Baek Jong Won’s Alley Restaurant*.<sup>47</sup> Solar, a member of the girl group MAMAMOO, was brought on the show to sample a dish served by a restaurant on the show. Her appearance was almost immediately questioned by the show’s hosts, who joked that the name “Solar,” an English name, sounded like a person who would enjoy pasta (typically perceived to be a “Western” food) more than the dish that she had been brought in to sample, *cheonggukjang*, a fermented soybean stew perceived as a typical Korean food. One of the hosts, prompted by a cue card that had been prepared for him by the production staff, then delivered the punchline of the “joke”: Solar’s real name is Kim Yong Sun, a name that all three hosts instantly associate with the countryside, Korean-ness, and other ineffable factors related to *cheonggukjang*. In highlighting the difference between her stage name and her real name, the hosts’ first question verifies Solar’s claim to enjoy this dish. Although Solar does not speak during this segment as she is not in the same room as the hosts, the revealing of her real name is a performative transgression that reinforces her authenticity as a Korean woman who enjoys *cheonggukjang*.

### The K-Pop Celebrity Text in Fan Fiction Meta

The exploitation of the interplay between “accessibility” and “impossibility”<sup>48</sup> is not confined only to the Korean celebrity, the K-pop idol, and the K-pop industry. Fan producers also mine this “gap” in interesting ways. LiveJournal user grisclair, in a post defending the practice of RPF, writes:

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47 *Baek Jong Won’s Alley Restaurant*, “Episode 208,” directed by Jeong Ujin, I Gwanwon, and Yun Jongho, aired November 13, 2019, on SBS.

48 Marshall, “Meanings of Popular Music Celebrity,” 179.

*The thing about RPF is: there is no way for you to know whether the “source text” is genuine. For FPF fandoms such as books or TV shows, the source text is pretty black and white...The source text is predetermined as the “canon” by the original author. In the case of RPF, the “source text” gets a little muddy. What we call “canon” in RPF fandom is essentially TV appearances, interviews, some stalkerish/blurry candid snapshots, anecdotal “fanaccounts,” and such subjective sources. What percentage of these things are scripted, played up, jokes, lies, or plain misinterpretation by fans? What is the guarantee that what these celebrities show on camera is how they are like off-camera/in private life? Fans are just observers trying to interpret this (very choppy, very unreliable) source text.<sup>49</sup>*

This is very similar to Dyer’s contention that the film star is a construction “known and expressed only through films, stories, publicity, etc.”<sup>50</sup> Grisclair’s account suggests that fans are well-aware that both the distance and the intimacy designed to bridge the distance are constructions, and that the “real” personality is as much on-camera as the “stage” persona. Far from being alienating, however, RPF writers like grisclair see that impossibility as productive:

*My source text is unreliable and sketchy as fuck. Real Person and Fictional Persona are similar in superficial characteristics, but the Fictional Persona is absolutely a Fictional Character in my head. I share this Fictional Character with other people in the same fandom, and we make up a Collaborative Fantasy Space where our headcanons interact and build our interpretations of these Real People with personas we happen to love.<sup>51</sup>*

The impossibility of a reliable source text, of truly knowing the celebrity on an intimate level, frees the fan producer from a certain level of commitment to the real. Grisclair quotes another writer in saying:

*While I’m writing about them...I write them in a certain way, a little more thoughtful than they probably are, a little more genuine, a little more confused. I write them trying harder to get through life than I think they really are... I romanticize their problems, their struggles, to give them greater weight and depth than just some fucking rich kid who’s all woe is me, my life is so hard. I do that because I don’t want to read about their bloated, competitive, soulless, consumptive, defensive little lives.<sup>52</sup>*

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49 Grisclair, “RPS, Slash, and K-Pop.”

50 Dyer, “Stars,” 20.

51 Grisclair, “RPS, Slash, and K-Pop.”

52 Ibid.

On the other hand, this describes RPF writers' dependence on what I have discussed previously as the perception of *depth*, the "'real' lurking *beneath*,"<sup>53</sup> which the stage name/real name dichotomy gestures toward. Celebrities become more interesting, by these writers' own admission, when they are perceived to have greater underlying problems than "just some fucking rich kid who's all woe is me, my life is so hard."<sup>54</sup> This is what critics of RPF mean when they call RPF exploitative, when fanfiction writers make use of real personal tragedies to lend their characterizations "greater weight and depth."<sup>55</sup>

It is possible to make a comparison here between these writers and Joshua Gamson's "game players."<sup>56</sup> In his research into the relationship between audience and celebrity, Gamson identified game players as a category of audience who "read the celebrity text as semi-fictional" rather than realistic and are "unconcerned with questions of truth and authenticity. Rather, the celebrity system becomes a source of play."<sup>57</sup> Grisclair's earlier comments also bear a resemblance to Holmes' comments about the "ever-present oscillation" in reality TV programming, in which "viewers have not so much abandoned the '*idea* of authenticity' as they aim to search out the moment when people seem to be 'really' themselves in an unreal environment."<sup>58</sup> Holmes goes on to say that "this structure is in many ways resonant of our relations with the textual construction of celebrity: we understand the mediated nature of the celebrity image, but we are perpetually encouraged to search the persona for elements of the real and authentic, beckoned by the promise of intimate access to their 'real' selves."<sup>59</sup> This suggests that RPF writers, instead of being characterized as deviant – Sean Redmond writes that "obsessive fans blur and confuse the real and the fictional so that the star or celebrity is imagined to respond to, or get in the way of, their wishes and desires"<sup>60</sup> – should be considered as "an audience highly conversant in the concept of celebrity image production and construction"<sup>61</sup> who are taking up the industry's invitation "not simply to seek out the 'real' self behind the image but also to (apparently) view the processes of fabrication and performance which constitute this entity."<sup>62</sup> The "interplay" between accessibility and impossibility that RPF writers take up in their work is the same play that is "actively precipitate[d]"

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53 Holmes, "Jungle," 58.

54 Grisclair, "RPS, Slash, and K-Pop."

55 Ibid.

56 Joshua Gamson, *Claims to Fame: Celebrity in Contemporary America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 178.

57 Ibid.

58 Holmes, "Jungle," 53.

59 Ibid.

60 Sean Redmond, "Intimate Fame Everywhere," in *Framing Celebrity: New Directions in Celebrity Studies*, ed. Su Holmes and Sean Redmond (London: Routledge, 2006), 34.

61 Ibid., 62.

62 Holmes, "Jungle," 62.



by reality television programs as “integral to... viewing pleasure.”<sup>63</sup> It is a chicken-and-egg scenario where fans’ desire to “search the persona for elements of the real and authentic” is co-opted by the industry’s desire to capitalize on the “promise of intimate access.”<sup>64</sup>

### The Relationship Between the Fan Fiction Text and the Reality TV Text

At first glance, “In the Territory of the Dragon King” appears to have no connection to the EXO members’ real lives. None of the EXO members have any significant connection to Jeju Island, the primary setting for the fan fiction work and the characters are surrounded by characters that are also drawn from public personalities such as other EXO members and other idols at SM Entertainment rather than the idols’ non-public friends and family. Part of Baekhyun’s arc in the fan fiction work involves the loss of his friend, Yixing, Lay, who left Korea to move back to China, but the work was written long before Lay’s effective hiatus from EXO promotions in South Korea.<sup>65</sup> Unlike Tao, Luhan, and Kris, Lay remains nominally part of the group. But the characterizations are notably similar to how the EXO members present themselves in their reality shows. Baekhyun is effervescent and talkative, masking a deep insecurity about his future, and Kyungsoo is shy and reserved until he opens up to Baekhyun over the course of the story. While Baekhyun and Kyungsoo’s relationship in the fan fiction text is certainly beyond what any reality show would suggest, the close friendship between Baekhyun, Chanyeol, and Jongdae in the fan fiction work mirrors the relationship that the three idols show in their reality series. For example, all three characters are the same age and affectionately referred to by fans as the “beagle line.”<sup>66</sup> There is also an unexpected pleasure when curledupkitten includes details like Baekhyun being unable to eat cucumbers in Chapter Four, a strong dislike of which the idol has expressed in shows like *Roommate*.<sup>67</sup> Such references testify to curledupkitten’s dedication as a fan and reward other fans’ close reading, not only of the fan fiction text but of the celebrity text as well.

I take these examples within the context of the meta essays referenced above, and argue that RPF writers are performing the same transgression of authenticity that K-pop stars perform, using the real name to gesture an interiority that can be explored in the narrative world of the fan fiction work. However, RPF writers like grisclair see that interiority as theirs to invent, breaking the relationship between the real name and the star’s “real” interiority.

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63 Holmes, “Jungle,” 62.

64 Ibid., 53.

65 EmmyKookieMin, “What Is the Deal with EXO’s Lay?” Allkpop forum post, January 3, 2018, <https://www.allkpop.com/forum/threads/what-is-the-deal-with-exos-lay.132437/>.

66 Minjiya, “5 Reasons Why EXO’s Beagle Line Is Called the Beagle Line,” *Soompi*, January 26, 2016, <https://www.soompi.com/article/813027wpp/5-reasons-why-exos-beagle-line-is-called-the-beagle-line>.

67 July 27, 2014, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A\\_EpbP93bcA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_EpbP93bcA).

## Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that K-pop fan fiction writers and the K-pop industry both negotiate transgressions of authenticity. RPF writers are borrowing the stage name/real name construction and its performative transgression from the K-pop industry, but the industry sets up that dialectic because of the existing fan desire for intimacy/authenticity. In order to prove themselves as being authentic and consists of depth, K-pop idols move back and forth between the stage name and the real name as the situation requires. The notion that they might do it unconsciously is no less indicative of the industry's willingness to exploit the gap that the stage name/real name dichotomy presents. At the surface level, the K-pop industry continues to espouse a "static" model of celebrity in which stars are essentially ordinary people who occasionally don a "mask", the "persona", for work purposes. In actuality, the K-pop idol embodies a dynamic model of celebrity in which value is generated through the constant negotiation between the ostentatiously public and the ostensibly private. RPF exists because the entertainment industry's transgression of authenticity depends on fans being savvy media consumers, to "understand the mediated nature of the celebrity image" while being "perpetually encouraged to search the persona for elements of the real and authentic."<sup>68</sup> But RPF writers turn this back on the industry by performing their own transgressions of authenticity. They destabilize the "basic and essential authenticity that a 'real' person is housed in the sign construction" by substituting their own definition of what makes a person "real." Intimacy is not the reward of the transgression of distance, but rather an affect that is generated through the act of transgression. In RPF, the real name is the vehicle by which writers "reach back" toward an interiority that is theirs to invent. By using real names in their work, RPF writers both give the lie to their statement that they are only interested in the fictional persona of celebrities and expose the real name for what it is: not a true signifier of the celebrity's interiority, but yet another media construction.

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# MAYLING AND MAY FOURTH: UNDERSTANDING THE INTERNATIONALISM OF MADAME CHIANG JAI-SHEK'S SPEECH TO THE US CONGRESS IN 1943

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*This paper analyzes the writings of Madame Chiang Kai-shek (also known as Soong Mayling), one of the most famous Chinese political figures during and after WWII. The paper traces Madame Chiang's writings from her teenage years, through her political career, to an ending in her speech to the United States Congress in 1942. The paper argues that her journey to the United States was not only — as it is often argued — aimed at supporting the immediate war effort, but was also a key moment for Madame Chiang to articulate her internationalist vision of a post-war world order. Therefore, this paper considers her a part of the nationalist movements across the colonized world, which “appropriated Wilsonian language” for their own nation-building purposes.*

## Introduction

*We of this generation who are privileged to help make a better world for ourselves and for posterity should remember that, while we must not be visionary, we must have vision so that peace should not be punitive in spirit and should not be provincial or nationalistic or even continental in concept, but universal in scope and humanitarian in action, for modern science has so annihilated distance that what affects one people must of necessity affect all other peoples.<sup>1</sup>*

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1 Mayling Soong Chiang, “Speech to the U.S. House of Representatives,” *American Rhetoric*, February 2, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20200202044247/https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/soongmaylingspeechocongress.htm>.

On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1943, Soong Mayling—to the world better known as Madame Chiang Kai-shek, wife of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, the leader of Nationalist China — delivered a speech to the House of Representatives of the United States Congress. She was the second woman, and the first Chinese national to do so. She was a remarkable historical figure in many ways. She was an American-educated daughter of one of the mightiest families in early 20<sup>th</sup> century China, and her long life was shaped by a close relationship to both China and the United States. She was, for many reasons, a controversial figure in both countries. During her fundraising tour for the Nationalist war effort in the United States, where she gave her speech, American press described her as the “most powerful woman in the world,” and crowds swarmed the events she attended.<sup>2</sup> However, she slowly fell out of favor with the American public as her visit dragged on for eight long months. When it eventually became clear that the Nationalists would never retake the Chinese mainland, she was even blamed for the “loss of China” in the eyes of many Americans.<sup>3</sup> Although it was far from obvious at the time, it would be no understatement to call her speech to Congress the most triumphant moment of her international political career.<sup>4</sup>

In the quote from her speech to the House of Representatives that opens this paper, she lays out an idea of a globalized world that echoes Wilsonian sentiments of the previous World War as well as the more contemporary “vision” of the signatories of the first United Nations declaration, signed in 1942, that became the first step towards the formation of a post-war world order. However, while Madame Chiang was a skillful orator and adept at modifying her message to fit her audience, it would be too simple to assume that she, as some biographers suggest, was simply attempting to “appear idealistic,”<sup>5</sup> suggesting dishonesty on her part, or trying to appeal to “Americans’ deepest emotional need as a nation” in order to “justify her own strange mix of American and Chinese.”<sup>6</sup> She was indeed a strange mix of American and Chinese, but her Americanness is often overemphasized. Her thoughts and ideas were shaped not only by her Christian faith and American

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2 Anne O’Hare McCormick, “Abroad: The Voice of China in the Lend-Lease Debate,” *New York Times*, March 8, 1943.

3 See for example: Perry Johansson, “Fantasy Memories and the Lost Honor of Madame Chiang Kai-Shek,” *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 23, no. 2 (2016): 109–20. Perry argues that scandalous rumors surrounding Soong Mayling (especially those concerning a supposed affair with US Presidential candidate Wendell Wilkie) were a type of projection of American inability to deal with “the loss of China.”

4 From a realpolitik-perspective, one could argue — and I do in fact argue — that China’s inclusion in the United Nations was a more triumphant moment for Madame Chiang. But as that moment took place in the midst of the Chinese Civil War, I believe that it is fair to argue that her speech to the House of Representatives was at least more triumphant.

5 Hannah Pakula, *The Last Empress: Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and the Birth of Modern China* (Simon and Schuster, 2009), 224.

6 Laura Tyson Li, *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek: China’s Eternal First Lady* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006), 203.

education but also by her Chinese patriotism. Like many Chinese at the time, she was deeply troubled by decades of humiliation that China had suffered from foreign aggression.

Through the use of four different primary sources representing four distinct stages of her political life, from her return to China from the United States as a young college graduate in 1917 to her 1943 tour of the United States, this paper will provide a new perspective on her speech to Congress by showing that Madame Chiang was a convinced internationalist, albeit for fundamentally nationalist motivations. In so doing, this paper will portray her as a political *thinker* rather than the “larger-than-life”<sup>7</sup> political *persona* that she is often portrayed as. Through this perspective, this paper will argue she shaped an originally nationalistic desire to avenge China into an internationalist vision as a strategy for restoring China’s lost influence on the world stage, making her a key figure in one of the many contemporary anti-colonial struggles which emerged after the First World War, and saw some measure of success after the Second.

### Previous Works on Madame Chiang Kai-shek

There has already been plenty of research done into Madame Chiang’s life. Laura Tyson Li’s *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek: China’s Eternal First Lady* published in 2007, and Hannah Pakula’s *The Last Empress* from 2009 contain two accounts of Madame Chiang’s life written after her death in 2003.<sup>8</sup> Sterling Seagrave’s *The Soong Family* chronicles her entire family and was written in 1985 while Madame Chiang was still alive.

Madame Chiang never wrote an autobiography, but her alma mater, Wellesley College, maintains an archive with some of her correspondence. Especially of note is her long correspondence with Emma DeLong Mills, a fellow student at Wellesley who was her close friend. This correspondence, covering the years 1917-1921, is publicly available on the college’s website. A study with this collection as its exclusive focus is Thomas A. DeLong’s *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and Miss Emma Mills: China’s First Lady and Her American Friend*.

This paper will divide its primary sources into four categories to be discussed in separate sections. These sources include the abovementioned correspondence with Emma De Long Mills (1917-1921); two publications titled *Madame Chiang’s Messages in War and Peace* (1938) and *China in Peace and War* (1940), two books that are in fact different editions of each other, allowing for comparison between them; *We Chinese Women* (1943), a short collection of speeches and writings from

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7 Daniel Palm and Linda Chiang, “‘The Only Thing Oriental About Me Is My Face’: The True Picture of Madame Chiang Kai-Shek,” in (*En*)*Gendering Taiwan: The Rise of Taiwanese Feminism*, ed. Ya-chen Chen (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 55, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63219-3\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63219-3_4).

8 For a review that compares both works, see: David D. Buck, “The Last Empress: Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and the Birth of Modern China,” *China Review International* 16, no. 3 (2009): 362–66.

1942 that was designed to coincide with her trip to America where she delivered her speech to the United States Congress in 1943, which the final section of this paper will discuss.

### Mayling before Madame

Soong Mayling was born to a Chinese Christian home in Shanghai in 1897. Her father Charles Jones Soong's life is often told as a rags-to-riches story. As a young boy, he left the southern Chinese island province of Hainan and moved to America where he spent his formative years, later converting to Christianity. He returned to China as a missionary where he married Ni Guizhen, an educated woman who belonged to one of China's oldest Christian families dating back to Italian missionary Matteo Ricci. Mr. Soong eventually abandoned his missionary career in favor of a number of entrepreneurial activities, such as bible-printing, which made him rich. He also befriended and became the benefactor of the revolutionary Dr. Sun Yat-sen who is still held in high regard by Chinese of every ideological persuasion as the father of modern China, and who later married Mayling's sister Soong Chingling.<sup>9</sup> In short, the home that Soong Mayling was born into at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was unique by Chinese standards: it was Christian, wealthy, and intimately engaged in the great quest of restoring China to its former glory. Her formative decade in the United States from 1907-1917 is often cited as the main reason behind her Georgia-tinted American accent and the ease with which she took to American ways during her adult life, but given Mayling's family background, her bonds to the West and America were tied long before she was born.<sup>10</sup> Even before travelling to America, Mayling and her two sisters received Western schooling in their home, located in the countryside outside of Shanghai. Removed from Chinese traditions and even physically distanced from the reality of the common Chinese at the time, it is perhaps less surprising that she understood the United States as well as she did, and more surprising that she understood China as well as she did.

Mayling herself seemed very aware of her dual identity and although it would come to be her defining strength later in life, the fact troubled her in her youth. In an often-quoted remark to her American friend Emma DeLong Mills, she wrote that "the only thing Oriental about me is my face."<sup>11</sup> Four months after her return to China, she complained again that "I have not yet assimilated to the things Eastern and

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9 Laura Tyson Li, *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek*, 2006.

10 This was particularly evident in obituaries, see: "Madame Chiang Kai-Shek," *The Economist*, accessed May 12, 2020, <https://www.economist.com/obituary/2003/10/30/madame-chiang-kai-shek>; Jonathan Fenby, "Madame Chiang Kai-Shek," *The Independent*, October 25, 2003, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190421194614/https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/madame-chiang-kai-shek-37348.html>."

11 See: Palm and Chiang, "The Only Thing Oriental About Me Is My Face," 53–68.

Oriental.”<sup>12</sup> With these comments, she echoed the words of her own father who, after he returned to China from America, wrote to a friend in North Carolina: “Yes, I am walking once more on the land that gave me birth, but it is far from being a homelike place to me. I felt more homelike in America than I do in China.”<sup>13</sup> Just as her father had expressed this sentiment during a period of despondency before his luck turned around, Mayling penned her comments during a time of her life that was somewhat of an interlude between her return from America and her marriage to Chiang Kai-shek.

### Madame’s Vision

This section identifies the Chinese humiliation at Versailles Treaty as being central to the formulation of her vision, and then traces the evolution of Soong Mayling’s vision after she became Madame Chiang Kai-shek from the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 to her speech to the United States Congress in 1943.

#### *Mayling and May Fourth — Mayling’s Convictions Take Shape*

Despite her ambivalence towards her own status as an American-educated Chinese, it is clear that Mayling was fiercely patriotic and determined to work for the betterment of her country. Biographer Laura Tyson Li suggests that “Mayling carried back to China...an unshakable belief in the quintessentially American notions that one can shape one’s own fate and that one has a moral obligation to better the fate of others.”<sup>14</sup> She was now applying these notions to the enterprise of improving China. She expressed this ambition in her very first letter to Emma DeLong Mills, sent from Vancouver in July of 1917 as she was returning home to China. Mayling described the sorry sight of a group of Chinese workers on their way to the West Front in France and vowed that “[I]f ever I have any influence, I shall see to it that no coolies are being shipped out, for China needs all her own men to develop the mines.”<sup>15</sup> In the following months and years, she continued to bemoan the state of her country in her letters to Mills while at the same time expressing her wish to change it. After the Allied powers gave the German colony of Qingdao to Japan as a part of the Treaty of Versailles, a fuming Mayling wrote to Mills:

*It is thought that because the Japs have bribed certain officials in Peking to agree to the clause regarding Tsingtau [Qingdao], the officials have*

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12 Mayling Soong Chiang, “Letter from May-Ling Soong Chiang, 1917-12-15, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills,” December 15, 1917, MSS.2, Wellesley College Archives.

13 Laura Tyson Li, *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek: China’s Eternal First Lady* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2006), 20.

14 *Ibid.*, 42.

15 Mayling Soong Chiang, “Letter from May-Ling Soong Chiang, 1917-07-03, Vancouver, British Columbia, to Emma Mills,” July 3, 1917, MSS.2, Wellesley College Archives.

*promised to do away the boycott movement. My heart bleeds for the poor [protesting] students, and I hope those who are so rotten, so damn greedy and inhuman as to sell their country Will Go To Hell [sic]. It is bad enough to hate men of another nation, but to feel perfectly helpless with rage against the very men who by all laws of decency and humanity should be patriotic is Hell. I can understand as I never could before, what France must have gone thru when Alsace and Lorraine went to Germany. With [Qingdao] tho [sic], it is even worse for I feel that it is the first echo of the knell to China's integrity and solidarity. Yet if there be a God, I cannot help thinking that China will be avenged, yet how hard to wait until that day.*<sup>16</sup>

Her rage is palpable in this passage — however Christian her upbringing, nobody could ever charge Soong Mayling of being excessively pious. By saying “if there be a God” she even hints at some agnosticism, though most likely it is no more than a linguistic flourish. She was in fact very much a Christian, and at the time, she was volunteering for several Christian organizations in Shanghai, which also came to be her first training ground in politics. Therefore, the use of profanity in the above passage is notable since she rarely used it with the exception of the occasional “damn” in her letters to Mills. Read in their context, her vows and outbursts come off as naive and impulsive, caught up in the righteousness of a cause that she, at this point, could only vaguely articulate.

Equally notable is her condemnation of the Chinese officials who sided with the Japanese.<sup>17</sup> Here, she views patriotism as a virtue that should be upheld “by all laws of decency and humanity.”<sup>18</sup> Finally, it is worth noting that her wish to see China avenged did turn out to be somewhat prophetic. At the end of World War II, her country sat at the victors’ table in a capacity that it had been denied in Versailles. In her published texts and speeches, discussed in the following sections, she frequently makes references to the Treaty of Versailles.

*Madame Chiang's Messages in War and Peace (1938) and China in Peace and War (1940)*

*Madame Chiang's Messages in War and Peace* was published in 1938. It is the largest work that carries her name, spanning more than 400 pages. What makes the book a particularly interesting text is that Madame Chiang was not satisfied

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16 Mayling Soong Chiang, “Letter from May-Ling Soong Chiang, 1919-06-05, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills,” June 5, 1919, MSS.2, Wellesley College Archives.

17 The reality of negotiations at Versailles was more complex than Soong Mayling (or the Chinese public) appreciated at the time, but the important point here that she *perceived* that her country had been “sold out.” For a detailed account of the Chinese negotiators at Versailles, see: Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford University Press on Demand, 2007).

18 Mayling Soong Chiang, “Letter from May-Ling Soong Chiang, 1919-06-05, Shanghai, China, to Emma Mills,” June 5, 1919.



with the first version and ordered a reprint in 1940, retitled *China in Peace and War*.<sup>19</sup> This means that it is possible to compare the works with one another and trace the editorial changes. Comparing the contents of these books, which contains speeches, essays, correspondence, and even short stories, is beyond the scope of this paper, so this section will focus on the parts that are relevant to Madame's internationalist vision.<sup>20</sup>

Throughout both books, she expresses great frustration with the international community for its lack of response to the "undeclared war" that the Japanese had been waging on China. She declares that "all these [international] treaties appear to have crumbled to dust in way that has not hitherto been equaled in history."<sup>21</sup> Overall, she lacked confidence in any international action that supported China, but there were some indications that a more hopeful internationalist vision was taking shape. For example, in a message to a women's conference in Sydney in 1938, Madame asks the audience to "devote a period every day for international thought" and wishes for a "vacuum around any aggressor state that dares endanger the peace of the world."<sup>22</sup>

In the 1938 version of a message sent to Illinois Free State Church titled "Plea to a Young People's Conference," Madame spends considerable time admonishing the young audience, pointing out that "believe [it] or not," adults know better.<sup>23</sup> In the 1940 version, the same speech was heavily edited for length and received a new title, "Youth and World Peace." The epigraph of the chapter which previously read that "There is a compelling call to youth now to try to grow up to save their *families and countries* from the blood and flame so easily invoked by undeclared warfare [emphasis added]" has been changed to "There is a call to youth to help save *mankind* from unprovoked, undeclared warfare [emphasis added]." The differences between the two texts show that Madame reframed her vision from a nationalist focus, "families and countries," to an internationalist focus, "mankind." Furthermore, her "kids-these-days" admonitions have been almost entirely removed. The closing of the letter, by contrast, reads the same:

*Unless the aggressive peoples are taught, beyond doubt, that a high sense of justice prevails in the democratic world; that humane sentiments are paramount; that respect for treaties and international agreements is unshakably and unalterably part and parcel of the foundations of*

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19 Thomas A. DeLong, *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and Miss Emma Mills: China's First Lady and Her American Friend* (McFarland, 2007), 121.

20 From this point I will refer to her as Madame Chiang, as this was a title that she herself preferred to use and drew political clout from. This is noticeable, as women do not normally take their husband's surname in Chinese culture.

21 Mayling Soong Chiang, *Madame Chiang's Messages in War and Peace* (Hankow [Hangzhou]: China Information Committee, 1938), 4.

22 *Ibid.*, 14.

23 *Ibid.*, 161.

*Democracies, and that countries violating those principles will be instantly barred from the family of decent nations, it is easy to foresee now what use the products of advanced science may be put to in the Americas when the time is judged to be propitious.*<sup>24</sup>

Through the briefer version, Madame takes the original message and appropriates it for a different purpose, showing a broader vision of an internationalist world where countries would not suffer the kind of injustice that China had suffered. It was also a direct warning to America that it may also suffer the same agony that China was currently undergoing. In a long letter to an unnamed Chinese friend, sent in May 1938, she writes:

*As soon as the voice of the cannons die down we must hurriedly face the task of completely reconstructing cities, towns, and villages... we must seize it [the task of rebuilding the nation] to follow plans that will produce a national edifice that will ultimately make us a proud member of a peaceful family of progressive democratic nations. To my mind our destiny is with the democracies, because our people are inherently democratic in nature and spirit.*<sup>25</sup>

In the 1940 edition, that section of the letter is edited out, but then reinserted as a part of the book's final half-page chapter titled, "Our Destiny is with the Democracies."<sup>26</sup> The connection between a nation's prosperity and its inclusion into an internationalist Wilsonian world order is clearly articulated.<sup>27</sup> This is an idea so important to Madame Chiang that not only did it receive its own chapter, but it also marks the conclusion of the entire book. She would return to this idea of internationalism in subsequent publications.

*We Chinese Women (1943) – "World society"*

*We Chinese Women: Speeches and Writings during the First United Nations Year* contains a collection of Madame Chiang's speeches and writings in 1942, mostly related to her extensive work with women's organizations. The timing and location

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24 Ibid., 162-163; compare: Mayling Soong Chiang, *China in Peace and War* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1940), 182.

25 Mayling Soong Chiang, *Madame Chiang's Messages in War and Peace*, 44.

26 Mayling Soong Chiang, *China in Peace and War*, 256. Somewhat confusingly, the section is quoted as an "extract from an article in the San Francisco Chronicle Magazine, July 1938," but the two paragraphs of the chapter are identical to those in the letter, dated to May 14, two months earlier.

27 By Wilsonian world order, I refer to the type of world order envisioned by American President Woodrow Wilson and institutionalized by the League of Nations, and later (and more successfully) by the United Nations.

of its publication – New York, 1943 – suggests that it should primarily be read as a part of Madame Chiang’s propaganda effort in obtaining more financial and material aid from the United States for the war effort against Japan. But that is not to say that the ideas that she expresses within it are insincere. In fact, they are intimately connected to her internationalist vision, and unlike her previous publications, she now appears considerably more confident in it.

The contrast between the title (nationalist) and the subtitle (internationalist) is indicative of how she attempts to contextualize the work of Chinese women as a part of a greater international movement. In this publication she begins to sprinkle her speeches with references to a “world society” in a manner that seems more hopeful than before.<sup>28</sup> She calls women of other nations “sisters,” and in a message to British women war workers, she praises the contribution of British women to the war effort, comparing it to how Chinese women contribute to the war effort in China. She also publishes the reply from the directors of three British women’s war organizations, displaying the international appeal of her movement.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, in a speech to American volunteer airmen in Chungking, she calls the United States and China “sister nations facing each other across the Pacific.”<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, although she is championing the cause of women, she hesitates to use the term “feminist”<sup>31</sup> to describe herself. In an article published in *The New York Times Magazine*, dated two days later she uses a similar metaphor of brotherhood instead:

*In this new world society we must all be indeed our brother’s keeper and act accordingly. Then stronger nations will help the weaker, not patronizingly as before but as elder brothers in whom trust can be felt, guiding the younger ones until they are able to stand on their own feet.*<sup>32</sup>

She echoes this sentiment again in one of many references to racial inequality: “We must create a world society to fit the need and requirements of all races instead of adopting the procrustean method of lopping off a nation’s territories...” and “war can only be prevented if world society is so constituted that all races are given equal opportunity to develop their native genius not hampered but aided by the stronger and more advanced races.”<sup>33</sup> The implication here is that the Chinese race has been done grave injustice by the West; the reference to Versailles could hardly be more candid, which shows that Madame Chiang has not forgotten young Mayling’s wish that China would one day be avenged.

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28 Mayling Soong Chiang, *We Chinese Women: Speeches and Writings during the First United Nations Year* (New York: Alliance-Pacific Press, 1943), 26, 33, 40, 42, 43, 51, 53.

29 *Ibid.*, 47-48.

30 *Ibid.*, 11.

31 *Ibid.*, 55.

32 *Ibid.*, 42.

33 *Ibid.*, 41-42.

Another new theme emerges here. In a *New York Times Magazine* article, she suggests that the West can also learn from China by attempting to portray the fundamental principles underlying her “world society” as Chinese in origin, saying: “Obligations of nations toward one another have been one of the central themes of philosophic thought in China for thousands of years.”<sup>34</sup> This clumsy attempt to connect Chinese history to Western internationalism is quite bizarre as the historical Chinese concept of nations’ obligations towards one another entailed a tributary system of states with China at the center, and it bore little resemblance to the egalitarian “world society” she is otherwise attempting to portray.<sup>35</sup> In another article, published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, she makes a similarly convoluted argument about Chinese history and democracy, saying that “China, long before the West, embraced democratic ideals.”<sup>36</sup> Ironically, these attempts to frame China as a country that shares common intellectual ground with the West presents her as ignorant about both China and the West at best and intellectually dishonest at worst. Perhaps it is no wonder that General Joe Stilwell remarked that she was “weak on her history.”<sup>37</sup> It seems that to Madame Chiang, using history accurately is secondary to using it as a framing device for her political vision.

Anchoring the “world society” further in China, she claims that the Chinese people believe that “after victory was won the world system could be entirely altered,” and “[I]f our people and army had not been induced to believe this the war, as far as China is concerned, would have been over long ago.”<sup>38</sup> Whether such a belief was widespread in China, and if it really constituted a vital part of Chinese resilience is doubtful. At most, this statement, along with her amateur history exercise should be viewed as Madame applying her own personal convictions on to the Chinese people that she represents and as an attempt to portray China as an eager member of the “world society.”

Madame’s more overt appeal to internationalist sentiments shows an increasing confidence in them, and this is not a coincidence. Much of the language in *We Chinese Women: Speeches and Writings during the First United Nations Year*, and even the title itself, echoes that of the Atlantic Charter which UK Prime

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34 Mayling Soong Chiang, *We Chinese Women: Speeches and Writings during the First United Nations Year* (New York: Alliance-Pacific Press, 1943), 26.

35 For a critical analysis of the history and historiography of the tributary system, see: Peter C. Perdue, “The Tenacious Tributary System,” *Journal of Contemporary China* 24, no. 96 (November 2, 2015): 1002–14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2015.1030949>.

36 Mayling Soong Chiang, *We Chinese Women: Speeches and Writings during the First United Nations Year*, 31.

37 Joseph W. Stilwell, “The Stilwell Papers, Ed,” *TH White*, New York: Sloane, 1949, 76–83 quoted in: Pakula, *The Last Empress: Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and the Birth of Modern China*, 387.

38 Mayling Soong Chiang, *We Chinese Women: Speeches and Writings during the First United Nations Year*, 40.

Minister Churchill and US President Roosevelt drafted together in August 1941.<sup>39</sup> The document became the basis for the Declaration of the United Nations, which the Republic of China was among the first countries to sign.<sup>40</sup> It was with this newfound confidence that Madame Chiang set off for the United States.

*Speech before the United States Congress (1943)*

Madame Chiang presented her vision through her speech to the House of Representatives of the United States Congress. In the final part of this speech, having already dealt with a number of more immediate topics, she begins to look forward, detailing her vision of a post-war “world society.”<sup>41</sup> For the first time, she emphasizes the importance of American leadership after the war, asking: “May I not hope that it is the resolve of Congress to devote itself to the creation of the post-war world?”<sup>42</sup> She then makes an indirect reference to the Treaty of Versailles and its shortcomings: “Peace should not be punitive in spirit and should not be provincial or nationalistic or even continental in concept.”<sup>43</sup> The calm eloquence of this statement contrasts the anger and frustration she expressed as a young woman in her letters to Emma DeLong Mills. Still, even without any direct reference to China, her statement reflects the same underlying conviction that China must not be short-changed by Western powers again and that she has no intention of “selling out” her country to anyone. She returns to this idea in the second to last sentence of her speech, urging the United States and its allies that when they sit down to draft a peace treaty, they must not “be obtunded by the mirage of contingent reasons of expediency.”<sup>44</sup> This direct appeal for powerful nations to exercise restraint and consider the consequences of their actions with regards to China was perhaps not as effective as she intended; many journalists in the audience had to reach for their dictionaries in order to look up the meaning of the word “obtunded.”<sup>45</sup>

Just like she did in *We Chinese Women*, she portrays Chinese ideas as compatible with internationalism, in a clear reference to the not yet fully formed United Nations:

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39 “The Atlantic Charter,” August 14, 1941, <https://web.archive.org/web/20190924174941/https://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp>.

40 “Declaration of the United Nations,” January 1, 1942, <https://web.archive.org/web/20191029161847/http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1942/420101a.html>.

41 Mayling Soong Chiang, “Speech to the U.S. House of Representatives.” This final part is included in the Appendix.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Hannah Pakula, *The Last Empress: Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and the Birth of Modern China*, 423.

*The term “hands and feet” is often used in China to signify the relationship between brothers. Since international interdependence is now so universally recognized, can we not also say that all nations should become members of one corporate body?*<sup>46</sup>

She then stretches truth when attempting to find a common ground between the United States and China by claiming that the relationship between the two countries “has never been marred by misunderstandings.”<sup>47</sup> She assures the audience that this “one hundred and sixty years of traditional friendship” means China will be “eager and ready to cooperate with [the United States] ... to lay a true and lasting foundation for a sane and progressive world society which would make it impossible for any arrogant or predatory neighbor to plunge future generations into another orgy of blood.”<sup>48</sup> The American politicians in the audience responded to this with thunderous applause. The phrase “arrogant and predatory neighbor” could be applied equally well to both Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan.<sup>49</sup> However, Madame Chiang’s choice of the word “neighbor” suggests that she was thinking of China’s neighbor, Japan.

In another bid to display China’s eagerness to contribute to the post-world order she goes on to say that “We in China, like you, want a better world, not for ourselves alone, but for all mankind.”<sup>50</sup> Recalling the editorial changes between the 1938 and 1940 versions of *China in Peace and War*, where the word “mankind” was used to replace “families and countries,” this idea – internationalist on its face – can be traced back to nationalist roots.

## Conclusion

Madame Chiang’s internationalism was informed by her American experience, but it was not motivated by it. The motivation behind her vision was fundamentally nationalist; it originated in the desire to see China restored to its former position of wealth and power.

Soong Mayling’s conviction can be seen in her writings at a young age. As she grew into the role of a powerful politician, she began to apply herself to the improvement of China as a nation, but for a long time, she remained disillusioned with the idea that a world society could provide any benefit to her tortured country, and her writings reflected a nationalist outlook, rather than an internationalist one. Her confidence seems to have increased only after the United States joined the war against Japan and the signing of the United Nations Declaration. As her trip to America drew closer, she spoke with increasing enthusiasm, using expressions of kinship like “sisters” and “brotherhood” and began to paint the picture of a “world

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46 Mayling Soong Chiang, “Speech to the U.S. House of Representatives.”

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid.

society,” of which China would soon become an eager member.

It is at this point that she starts making tenuous arguments that China shares common democratic values with the United States. Many have questioned Madame’s actual commitment to democracy; a quote often attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt, says of Madame Chiang that “She can talk beautifully about democracy, but does not know how to live democracy.”<sup>51</sup> There is truth to this. In *We Chinese Women*, Madame Chiang claims that “I am opposed to any system which permanently gives absolute power to a single party,” which is a quite curious statement since she belonged to the leadership of a single party that was in fact striving for absolute power.<sup>52</sup> Then again, she did not intend for her definition of democracy to be a “colorless imitation of ... American democracy.”<sup>53</sup> Despite this, with regards to her internationalist vision, whether or not she was a true democrat is beside the point. By aspiring to bring China into “the peaceful family of democratic nations,” Madame Chiang is not so much making the case for democracy, as she is making the case that China is a worthy member of the “world society.”<sup>54</sup> In other words, framing China as a democracy allowed her to articulate a vision of China as an equal to Western countries, mostly the United States, within the emerging world order. This was not just a tactic with the purpose of endearing her to Americans – the discrepancy between her praise for democracy on the one hand and her party’s lack of commitment to it on the other, shows that she was personally convinced that there was no contradiction between a strong nationalist China and an internationalist China. In other words, for Madame Chiang, democracy was a means of reconciling two inherently contradictory ideologies.

Why is it necessary to understand Madame Chiang Kai-shek in this way? The common understanding of her tour of the United States in 1943 is, as Palm and Chiang writes, that “her twofold objectives were to boost morale at home and improve the chances for aid in the form of arms and money.”<sup>55</sup> The purpose of this paper is not to deny this obvious fact, but to show that Madame Chiang also had much more long-term goals for China in mind. The paper has shown how her internationalist vision evolved from anger to frustration, from frustration to hopefulness, and from hopefulness to determination, as she seized the opportunity before the United States Congress to champion her own vision of how China would be restored to its former glory. As such, she can be considered a part of the nationalist movements across the colonized world that strove for self-determination, and which, as historian Erez Manela has argued “appropriated Wilsonian language to articulate their goals and

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51 Sterling Seagrave, *The Soong Dynasty* (Harper & Row, 1985), 415.

52 Mayling Soong Chiang, *We Chinese Women: Speeches and Writings during the First United Nations Year*, 33.

53 *Ibid.*, 33-34.

54 Mayling Soong Chiang, *Madame Chiang’s Messages in War and Peace*, 44.

55 Daniel Palm and Linda Chiang, “The Only Thing Oriental About Me Is My Face,”

60.

mobilize support for them both at home and abroad.”<sup>56</sup> What is remarkable about Madame Chiang is the skill with which she spoke this language, how doggedly she pursued an international audience for it, and how her efforts eventually brought about China’s inclusion in the United Nations. That later events would conspire to give the seat of Republic of China in the United Nations to the People’s Republic of China some decades later, does not mitigate the fact that despite what she herself claimed in her speech to the United States Congress, Soong Mayling was a visionary.

### **Appendix – Madame’s Speech to U.S. Congress [abbreviated]**

[...]

It now remains for you, the present representatives of the American people, to point the way to win the war, to help construct a world in which all peoples may henceforth live in harmony and peace.

May I not hope that it is the resolve of Congress to devote itself to the creation of the post-war world? To dedicate itself to the preparation for the brighter future that a stricken world so eagerly awaits?

We of this generation who are privileged to help make a better world for ourselves and for posterity should remember that, while we must not be visionary, we must have vision so that peace should not be punitive in spirit and should not be provincial or nationalistic or even continental in concept, but universal in scope and -- and humanitarian in action, for modern science has so annihilated distance that what affects one people must of necessity affect all other peoples.

The term “hands and feet” is often used in China to signify the relationship between brothers. Since international interdependence is now so universally recognized, can we not also say that all nations should become members of one corporate body?

The one hundred and sixty years of traditional friendship between our two great peoples, China and America, which has never been marred by misunderstandings, is unsurpassed in the annals of the world. I can also assure you that China is eager and ready to cooperate with you and other peoples to lay a true and lasting foundation for a sane and progressive world society which would make it impossible for any arrogant or predatory neighbor to plunge future generations into another orgy of blood.

In the past China has not computed the cost to her manpower in her fight against aggression, although she well realized that manpower is [the] real wealth of a nation;

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56 Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, 221. Manela argues that similar movements also played out in Egypt, India, and Korea.



and it takes generations to grow it. She -- She has been soberly conscious of her responsibilities and has not concerned herself with privileges and gains which she might have obtained through compromise of principles; nor will she demean herself and all she holds dear to the practice of the market place.

We in China, like you, want a better world, not for ourselves alone, but for all mankind, and we must have it. It is not enough, however, to proclaim our idea[s] or even to be convinced that we have them. In order to preserve, uphold, and maintain them, there are times when we should throw all we cherish into our effort to fulfill these ideals even at the risk of failure.

The teachings drawn from our late leader, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, have given our people the fortitude to carry on. From five and a half years of experience, we in China are convinced that it is the better part of wisdom not to accept failure ignominiously, but to risk it gloriously.

We shall have faith, that, at the writing of peace, America and our other gallant Allies will not be obtunded by the mirage of contingent reasons of expediency.

Man's mettle is tested both in adversity and in success. Twice is this true of the soul of a nation.<sup>57</sup>

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57 Mayling Soong Chiang, "Address to the U.S. House of Representatives" (Speech, Washington, DC, February 18, 1943), American Rhetoric, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/soongmaylingspeecho congress.htm>.

# INTERVIEW

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# INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR CHO BYUNG-JAE

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*Dr. Cho is an expert in international politics within Northeast Asia with special interests in North Korean foreign relations and foreign policy. He gives a detailed analysis and opinion on the COVID-19 situation on the Korean Peninsula and around the world, providing insight into what the short- and long-term impacts of this pandemic might be. He discusses what can be observed from the North Korean responses to COVID-19, and how it can affect the internal balance within the Korean Peninsula, foreign relations, and inter-Korean relations. The interview closes with a morale-boosting commentary on the need for solidarity around the world and the opportunity that such a crisis can propel.*

**Y: First, could you give a bit more insight into your fields of study and your major interest points in your research?**

CBJ: Yes, as you know, I'm a Korean diplomat, and during my service in the Foreign Ministry, I've been involved with the affairs with North Korea, the Korean-US relationship, the US-North Korea relationship, and some international politics in the region of Northeast Asia. So, I can roughly say that is my area of interest. Particularly, while I was in the service, I had a course at the University of North Korean studies, which is located near Gyeongbokgung Palace; that was an interesting time. My dissertation was on North Korea-China-US relationship particularly in the late 1980s and early 1990s. I looked into around that time how North Korea responded to the very sudden and rapid transformations in global politics. That was the time when the Cold War was coming to an end, the Soviet Union collapsed, Eastern Europe was also transforming, and China was just starting to open and reform. China was establishing democratic relationship with South Korea, North Korea was put into a very difficult time economically, diplomatically, and so on. How North Korea responded to all these changes and transformations was a very interesting subject, so I tried to explore that. So maybe I think that was one occasion that had deepened my interest further in North Korea.

**Y: The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted countries all over the world and South Korea's response to it, which is testing, tracking, tracing, and treating, has been both praised and criticized. What contributes to differences in COVID-19 responses and outcomes in the Korean Peninsula as a whole when compared to other countries like the US or European countries and other Asian countries?**

CBJ: Since the major outbreak of COVID-19 in Korea, for the last couple of months, Korea has quite successfully coped with this outbreak pandemic, and in that sense, I think Korea was quite lucky. Or, you can say, fortunately Korea was, in a sense, prepared to cope with this pandemic. What I'm trying to say is that we had some contagious diseases before. We have this novel Corona virus attack, we had SARS in 2002, we had the H1N1 influenza, and we had MERS in 2015. And particularly the MERS outbreak, which we had five years ago, caused much damage to Korea at the time. Taking this as an opportunity, it became an occasion where Korea almost rewrote its textbooks and its manuals on our strategy to cope with any contagious diseases. So, we have strengthened our legislations, we have some stockpiles of basic materials since then, and we have streamlined all these procedures, which made it easier for the authorities to have access to some information and resources to cope with this pandemic. That was one important aspect. We were experienced, and it was a quite an exercise, practice, or training, something like that. Another point is that because of the outbreak of contagious diseases, which is transmitted through air, particularly the respiratory system and because of the fine dust we had for many years in Korea, coming from China, Korea had [already] built the facilities to manufacture some face masks, swabs and so on — some basic materials to treat respiratory diseases. That was also an advantage for Korea in coping with the disease pandemic. Because we made mistakes and some missteps, particularly in 2015, this time the government tried to rely upon the experts. It sounds very natural that in this kind of situation, we have to rely upon the experts, but you can see that it is not always the case. But this time in Korea, the leadership trusted the experts and delegated authorities and their responsibilities to the experts. And they quite successfully performed and they gained the trust of the Korean people/citizens. People fully cooperated. I think these all functioned in a very positive way so that this time Korea rather successfully coped with this pandemic. But we know that this is not all of the story; there are still some small pockets of remaining viruses in Korea and the whole world is now struggling to cope with this disease, so we don't know when we are going to have a second or third wave of this virus. So you cannot let your guard down. And you mentioned that Korea is criticized also; we are aware that because of the tracking or tracing of the infected, then the authorities have access to CCTV or to your credit card use records, and your cellphone records and so on, it means there arose a problem/issue of individual privacy. But I think that this time the South Korean government tries to maintain the balance between public need and privacy. So, I think you need to find some balance between these two. If you insist on the privacy, then you can have a lot of damage to the public and the people around you, and we cannot just give up the privacy and the individual freedoms for the sake of collective safety. In order to cope with the situation, I think finding the balance is very important. I think to a certain extent, we have succeeded in that regard as well. It's not over yet; we are just in the third month of this outbreak. I still think we have a long way to go. Even though now the countries in Europe and some states in North America are trying to reopen their economy, as soon as you reopen the economy, you see that this virus is coming back. So we are not really quite sure how long it would take to completely overcome this disease. Before that time, we cannot just let our guards down. That's a big problem.

**Y: What major points of interest can be seen in the North Korean response to COVID-19? Are there any notable points of comparison between the response of the North Korean regime and that of the South Korean government like you mentioned? And, if so, how has it affected the state of the peninsula as a whole?**

CBJ: I think this time North Korea has taken an effective measure at a very early stage of the outbreak. For example, China declared a lockdown on the city of Wuhan on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, but three days before that time, North Korea [had] suspended flights from Beijing to Pyongyang. It means that it has stopped the possibility of transmission from China to North Korea through air route. Just a couple of days later, it closed [its] border with China. You know that North Korea has quite a long border with China (1,420 kms). It completely closed this border and also its border with Russia. Around that time, there were some South Korean people/staff at Kaesong Industrial Complex — around 20 or 30 some people — and North Korea requested them to return to South Korea as well. So you can see that North Korea completely sealed its borders with the three neighbors: China, Russia, and South Korea. All the foreigners within North Korea, particularly in Pyongyang, including diplomats, were put under self-isolation, or a kind of quarantine for almost 1 month. So, it means that North Korea physically separated itself from the rest of the world. That was the first interesting feature of the way North Korea responded to the pandemic. The second one is that you must also have noticed that North Korea had [done] the utmost to protect their leader. So, they sealed all the borders, and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un had disappeared from the public scene for almost around 3 weeks. He even skipped the national event of celebrating his grandfather's birthday. When he came back, when he had some other events, then they made enough social distancing measures for their leader. Every country takes precautionary measures to their leadership, but in the case of North Korea, it was very conspicuous. And the third aspect was that North Korea started to put a lot of emphasis on ideological indoctrination. It was enforced that since the country was facing a difficult situation, the people need to overcome it with revolutionary passion and national spirit. So almost everyday, on North Korean media channels, such as the newspaper, *Rodong Sinmun* or Central News Television, people came out, telling others to get through this pandemic with vigor and loyalty to the Party under the leadership of Chairman Kim. So, I can say that these can be the three most conspicuous features in North Korea's response to the pandemic, and these measures can be efficient and effective in responding to this disease. However, [these] extreme measures cannot be emulated by South Korea or any other democratic countries because there will be potential violation and infringement of human rights.

**Y: So would you actually say that in the course of trying to respond to this pandemic that *Juche* was a key factor as well in trying to control the situation?**

CBJ: *Juche* is a theme you can find every time and everywhere in life in North Korea. So, this time as well, North Korea did not particularly request for any assistance from outside countries like South Korea or China. I think we proposed to North Korea that

we are ready to provide some assistance, know-how, or equipment to cope with the situation. However, North Korea did not respond positively, and I did not hear anything about North Korea asking for help from China or Russia. So, that expresses a part of *Juche* ideology — the so-called self-reliance. Reading this official statement or media reports from North Korea, you can see that, again, there is emphasis on self-reliance— that you have to produce some materials on your own, and we have to utilize all the resources we have in our hands to cope with the situation. So I think *Juche* ideology is again working in North Korea. *Juche* is a part of your life in North Korea.

**Y: North Korea’s case is somewhat peculiar in that it has not *officially* reported any cases of COVID-19, and certain reports have verified that the efforts to contain the virus were relatively successful despite the general weakness of the country’s healthcare infrastructure. What, would you say, were the specific actions or precautions that North Korea had taken that had led to this supposedly successful containment? Is there anything that can be learned or even imitated from the North Korean response?**

CBJ: As you said, North Korea has not reported any confirmed COVID-19 cases. However, no reporting does not necessarily mean that there has not been any case in North Korea. So, many people outside North Korea are suspecting that North Korean authorities are not telling the whole truth. As I said, North Korea is bordering with China, and it has a rather long border with China (more than 1,400 km). Second, from North Korean official news media as well, there are several stories about several hundred or [even] several thousand people that were put under quarantine. They said that it was some kind of precautionary measure, but segregating some people for quarantine or for self-isolation cannot but be some kind of meaningful measure here. We know that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has been away from the capital for quite a long time — an exceptionally long time. So, these all point to the direction that North Korea might have had some problems with this COVID-19. But, North Korea insists that it did not have any confirmed cases, and we do not have any evidence to deny North Korea’s claims. At the same time, from the perspective of controlling infectious diseases, we can take note of some measures North Korea had taken, as we have seen that North Korea had closed its borders at a very early stage. If North Korea thinks that from the public health point of view, it is not ready to cope with the situation, then closing the border can be an efficient and effective way to control the disease and to prevent the virus from coming into and spreading in North Korea. Another one was that North Korea, at this time, had been emphasizing very much on the importance of personal hygiene — washing your hands clean with soap, and wearing your masks everywhere you go. So, precautionary measures — physically separating — and much emphasis on personal hygiene — I think these are two aspects that must have helped North Korea to successfully cope with the situation. I think some countries outside North Korea can also try to learn.

**Y: What were the impacts of North Korea’s border closure due to COVID-19? What changes did the country experience economically, politically, and**

**socially, and how would that affect North Korea holistically in the near future?**

CBJ: As we have seen, North Korea took these measures at a very early stage of the outbreak. From the point of view of disease control. I think that must have contributed to the success, to a certain degree. However, there is another aspect; you know that North Korea has been under UN imposed sanctions for quite a long time and that all of these materials, including food and oil, are already in shortage. The international community was asking China to strengthen its control of the border with North Korea so that no smugglers of equipment or materials can be transmitted across the border. However, this time, North Korea closed the border on its own; before China took any measures, North Korea on its own decided to completely close its border for the sake of disease control. Some people are saying that the novel Corona virus has accomplished what the United Nations, or United States, trying to impose the sanctions on North Korea, which have failed so far. North Korea has already been under difficulties economically, but with COVID-19 and all these health measures, I think that North Korea's difficulties must have increased and the people must be undergoing a lot more of a difficult time in terms of food and oil shortages [as well as] some other health equipment shortages and so on. So, that is a toll for North Korea caused by this pandemic. The North Korean leader has reappeared to the public about one month ago after three or four weeks of absence from the public view. That was at the fertilizer factory, [where] he made the appearance after a three weeks absence. Fertilizer is for agriculture, and North Korea has been emphasizing that agriculture is the first frontline in fighting for economic development. So the food situation and the situation in agriculture must be a big issue for the North Korean leader; it means that North Korea is in some difficult situation with food and agriculture.

**Y: How might COVID-19 shape the role of North Korea in the future of international relations and leadership? Moving forward, is there a possibility that the perspective on the current Kim regime or North Korea, as a whole, can change (minimally or even drastically) when considering its generally “successful response,” especially in the eyes of foreign powers?**

CBJ: As you said, North Korea reported no confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the World Health Organization, but as I said, we cannot be 100 percent sure that no reporting necessarily means there really have not been any COVID-19 cases in North Korea. Suspicion lingers that North Korea is not telling the whole truth, and because of these quite stringent measures of border closure and so on, its economic situation is quite dire — particularly in food and medical equipment. So, there is a positive side, but simultaneously, a negative side of what North Korea has been doing in coping with this pandemic situation. I think it is still too early to suggest that North Korea has been successful or that North Korea has been failing. I think we still have to see. If North Korea is really keen to gain respect from the international community, then North Korea should not isolate itself, but rather open up to the international community. Its development of weapons of mass destruction does not help North Korea in coming to better terms with the international community.

**Y: What are the possible short- and long-term impacts of this pandemic and the Kim regime and the Moon administration's response to it on inter-Korean relations as a whole?**

CBJ: Up until the end of last year, so before the outbreak of this COVID-19 pandemic, we have been discussing inter-Korean contact [and contact ] between North Korea and the United States — how to reduce tension, how to establish permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula, and how we can achieve denuclearization. Early last year, the United States and North Korea had a summit meeting in Hanoi. After the failure and the impasse, both sides have been trying to find some way to accommodate each other's positions; we've been discussing this. That was the focus of what we'd been doing before the outbreak of COVID-19. But since the outbreak, all these efforts have been put on hold, so it was kind of suspended. That is the impact of the Corona virus on the overall situation on the Korean Peninsula. As soon as we come out of this situation, then we will try to be back on the track of this dialogue process. Even now, the South Korean government is trying to resume the dialogue with North Korea, and we are proposing to open some channels to discuss some health issues and disease control issues; we are waiting for some positive response from North Korea. The United States government also says that dialogue remains open, so they can come back to the process any time when they are ready. But you know that, now, the United States is moving towards its presidential elections in November. I think, maybe, they may think that it is not an opportune time to get back into the dialogue. We will see what happens.

**Y: Is there a clear way to distinguish whether COVID-19 is a crisis or opportunity for the Korean Peninsula? What are some important lessons to be learned from the pandemic as a whole and its impacts all around the world, and how do we overcome and move forward?**

CBJ: This COVID-19 *is* a crisis; it creates problems in every country, not just on the Korean Peninsula. You can see the global economy is down, and the countries are struggling to reopen it. The whole population is put on a kind of seize — in lockdown, having to stay at home. So, this is a crisis. But the Chinese character meaning “*crisis*” consists of two characters— one is *danger*, and the other is *opportunity*. So we can say that crisis comes with opportunities. This pandemic definitely shows that in order to secure the safety for mankind, people and countries should cooperate. So, cooperation and solidarity are what we need to cope with the threats to human security. Maybe this pandemic is not just a threat to mankind; we have other challenges as well— climate change, poverty, cyber security, and so on. We have many obstacles that no single country can manage alone. The COVID-19 crisis *is* a crisis that affects every aspect of our lives, but at the same time, it reminds mankind that you have to cooperate and unite to deal with the challenges. COVID-19 is a crisis, but comes with opportunities.





# BOOK REVIEW

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**THE WEALTH OF INFORMATION**

*AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order*  
**Review by Samuel Gardner**

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# THE WEALTH OF INFORMATION

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## *Book Review by Samuel Gardner*

Yonsei University

### **Details:**

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Perhaps no technological development is posed to be as disruptive in so many fields as Artificial Intelligence. While the United States has held the lead in AI research so far, in his new book, *AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order*, Kai-Fu Lee argues that the future may look very different. Lee, an accomplished artificial intelligence researcher turned venture capitalist and former president of Google China, possesses a unique perspective on not just artificial intelligence, but on the business culture surrounding tech firms, both in Silicon Valley and China. The book is insightful, occasionally provocative, and extremely readable, making it perfect for non-experts who want to better understand the intersection of business culture and technology in the world's two largest economies and perhaps gain some insight into a possible future.

For decades, Silicon Valley has regarded Chinese tech firms as purveyors of shoddy knockoffs incapable of competing with titans such as Microsoft or Facebook, yet that perspective has since changed. The failure of American firms to transfer their success to China, something Lee witnessed first-hand, and the tremendous success of Chinese firms such as Alibaba, Tencent, and Baidu have revealed that China has narrowed the competitive distance between the two countries considerably. Lee takes this even further, arguing that despite the American first-mover advantage and edge at technological innovation, Chinese firms are better positioned to implement those developments, applying them in thousands of use cases that will ultimately transform society. Lee argues that a combination of Chinese business culture, unparalleled access to data, and governmental coordination will allow China to take the lead in implementing artificial intelligence, a development that could prove to be both massively disruptive and profitable.

Lee spends considerable time outlining the entrepreneurial culture in China and discussing how and why it departs from the Silicon Valley model. He focuses on the willingness of Chinese firms to do whatever it takes, including shamelessly copying others' intellectual property and even outright lying to customers, as a hallmark of Chinese business culture. This has resulted in a "gladiatorial mentality" in which "competition is war."<sup>1</sup> Additionally, Chinese firms are, "unencumbered by lofty mission statements or 'core values,'"<sup>2</sup> leaving them free to follow trends in user activity wherever they lead. This relentless focus on making money and willingness to embrace bare-knuckle tactics have shaped a generation of ruthlessly effective entrepreneurs, who Lee argues are very much up to the task of challenging Silicon Valley's best and brightest.

The second major advantage of Chinese AI firms is access to the world's deepest stores of data, a resource Lee likens to "the oil that powers the generators"<sup>3</sup> of AI. This is due to a combination of cultural willingness to share data at the cost of privacy and a massive ecosystem of Online to Offline (O2O) services. These services, such as food delivery apps, bike rental apps, and the ubiquitous Wechat Pay, reveal not just the digital lives of customers but also the details of their offline lives as well—what foods they eat and when, where they go, what they purchase, with whom they spend time and for how long, and so forth. This massive store of data is invaluable for training AI algorithms, equipping them with the raw materials needed for the "deep learning" process meant to shape and refine them.

The final advantage that Lee sees is one of regulation. He explores the Chinese system in some depth, discussing how top-down directives are set, leaving promotion-hungry local officials to compete with each other to best implement those ideas. Everything, from tax breaks to free rent in designated Entrepreneur Zones, allows Chinese regulators to incentivize certain kinds of activity by throwing huge sums of money at it. Lee points out that much of this is woefully inefficient; products are made but never used, buildings are left standing empty, investments are misappropriated or simply mismanaged, and so forth. However, Lee argues that even an inefficient process can still be an effective one, especially if one is willing to pay a premium for speed with the hope of reaping the massive long-term upsides of technological innovation. These inefficient incentives were justified since "the Chinese government wanted to engineer a fundamental shift in the Chinese economy, from manufacturing-led growth to innovation-led growth, and it wanted to do that in a hurry."<sup>4</sup> This top-down regulatory strategy, though heavy handed to American eyes, has undoubtedly been effective in transforming China into an economic juggernaut, poised to harvest the lion's share of benefits from the impending AI economy.

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1 Kai Fu Lee, *AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2018), 41.

2 *Ibid.*, 45.

3 *Ibid.*, 50.

4 *Ibid.*, 65.

The middle third of the book largely deals with the drawbacks of an AI economy. Here, Lee focuses on the potential for massive job losses as increasingly sophisticated algorithms disrupt entire job sectors from transportation to medicine and even to contract law. Although past technological innovations have not resulted in catastrophic unemployment, Lee argues that they happened at a much slower pace, allowing for people to retrain — a luxury that infinitely duplicable algorithms will not afford us. Lee also argues that the nature of AI lends itself to monopolistic practices. Relying as they do on “billions of dollars in cash and dizzying stockpiles of data” the “Seven Giants of AI”<sup>5</sup> (Google, Microsoft, Facebook, Amazon, Alibaba, Baidu, and Tencent) are poised to sweep up essentially all AI talent, giving them the capital and the tools to reshape the economy. Furthermore, as their AI gets better, these giants are likely to offer better services and products to consumers— better economies of scale, algorithmic recommendations, and access to products and content — further concentrating wealth in ever fewer hands.

Perhaps the gravest threat that Lee discusses is staggering income inequality. With a handful of firms in only two countries situated to collect trillions of dollars in profits from the process of automating away entire industries, the future looks very bleak for the global have-nots. Without the need for cheap labor, it will be increasingly difficult for poorer countries to pull themselves up the economic ladder in the same way that South Korea and China had in the last few decades. Even in developed countries, it is unclear what the newly unemployed will do when manufacturing, transportation, journalism, and many other fields are dominated by machines. This is the danger Lee feels is most grave, arguing that “Within fifteen years I predict that we will technically be able to automate 40 to 50 percent of all jobs in the United States. That does not mean all of those jobs will disappear overnight, but if the markets are left to their own devices, we will begin to see massive pressure on working people.”<sup>6</sup>

One common suggestion, which has become increasingly popular in Silicon Valley, is Universal Basic Income (UBI). Such a program would provide every citizen with a guaranteed monthly income funded by taxes on those firms reaping the benefits of automation. Lee dismisses UBI as a “purely technocratic approach—one that sees each of us as a set of financial and material needs to be satisfied.”<sup>7</sup> Lee maintains that simply transferring sufficient funds to everyone to ensure that they do not starve or become homeless is fundamentally insufficient and inhuman. Instead, he suggests using the wealth generated by AI to reshape people’s relationships with work itself, using salaries to incentivize prosocial behavior such as caring for families, creating art, volunteering, and self-educating. Although the details of such a proposal are still limited, it is a fascinating vision of what society could be —one that clearly has been shaped by Lee’s personal experiences following a cancer scare, which he discusses at length in the book.

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5 Kai Fu Lee, *AI Superpowers*, 80.

6 *Ibid.*, 199.

7 *Ibid.*, 201.

“AI Superpowers” is a fascinating book that examines a vitally important issue from a unique perspective. Lee’s conclusions, though plausible, rest on a few major premises that I wish were addressed in deeper detail. For example, many of his arguments rest on the idea that the world is in an “age of implementation” rather than an age of innovation — that is, this historical point in time will reward widespread “good enough” engineers applying AI to the economy. Although predicting future technological developments is difficult, there is a chance that this may not be sustainable — that this “age of discovery” will reward deep theoretical insights over novel application of existing theories. Additionally, Lee’s rejection of UBI is somewhat puzzling, and his ideas for what could take its place are, although compelling, not thoroughly explained. Regardless, “*AI Superpowers: China, Silicon Valley, and the New World Order*” is a deeply enjoyable, eye-opening look at a possible future and a moving call to action to “proactively seize the opportunity that the material wealth of AI will grant us and use it to reconstruct our economies and rewrite our social contracts.”<sup>8</sup>







# GUIDELINES

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