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EAST ASIAN HISTORY: A Tripolar Approach  
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*Chapter Fourteen*

The Korean War and  
a New East Asia

East Asia in a Globalized World



"Marriage Procession" at Seoul 清溪川 Korea painted by Elizabeth Keith (1897-1956) in 1921.



Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai



The Korean War (1950-53): The Red Line segment of the perimeter was defended by the ROK (Republic of Korea) Army and the Blue Line segment was defended by the U.S. and other UN armies.



T. F. Shtykov, Kim Jeong-suk, Kim Il-sung, Park Heon-yung's bride & Park



MacArthur inspecting frontier (1951.2.7)



Eisenhower visits the Korean frontier before inauguration (1952.12.4.)



14.1. Itō Hirobumi and the (12-year old) last crown prince of Chosun dynasty



14.2. Peng Dehuai and Kim Il-sung



14.3. D. MacArthur and H. S. Truman



14.4. PRC "People's Volunteer Army" advancing at the sound of a bugle.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN THE KOREAN WAR AND A NEW EAST ASIA EAST ASIA IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

In 1853, Commodore Perry forced the Tokugawa shogunate to open up the nation. The Japanese people threw out the shogunate and commenced westernization-cum-industrialization. Japan won the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese wars, and annexed the Korean Peninsula. In the final days of World War II, the Americans and Soviets agreed to take the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel as the dividing line of the Korean Peninsula between the Soviet and U.S. occupation zones.

Stalin believed that a Third World War between communism and capitalism was inevitable, but he wanted to determine the time and place for the final showdown. Unification of the Korean Peninsula by Kim Il-sung would provide a springboard for an invasion of Japan, but Stalin did not want the Korean War to become the main battleground. Europe, Stalin thought, was the right place to deliver the death blow to world imperialism. Stalin did not want to see Mao improving relations with the U.S. nor achieving a hegemonic role in East Asia. The progress in the Korean War had to be carefully manipulated as to let Mao carry the greatest part of the burden of diverting the U.S. forces from Europe to Asia and at the same time burn Mao's bridges to West.

The first foreign excursion of the PRC army after its victory in 1949 was an invasion of Korea. The object of the PRC rulers was to keep the U.S. forces at a safe distance from its Manchurian frontier and to make sure that the state that bordered Manchuria was friendly.

PRC historians now project China's history in terms of its contemporary border (and beyond, in cases of the Korean Peninsula and the Mongolian steppes), as a seamless narrative of a newly defined "Chinese" nation-state. PRC rulers think of China as a territorial entity and thus of everyone living within what is today PRC territory as Chinese. In an effort to canonize a unified Chinese historiography, PRC high school textbooks have incorporated the histories of China's ethnic minorities into a single master narrative of Chinese history, according to which the non-Han peoples have *always* been Chinese and their different histories have *always* been a part of Chinese history, avoiding the term 'invade' when discussing their wars against the Han which are regarded simply as *internal disputes*. The current formulations of China's history by the government of the PRC bear directly on the future of the East Asian community.

## 1. War at the Periphery of a Bipolar World

### A TRANSIENT MULTI-POLAR WORLD

After 1800, the Chosun court was ruled by powerful clans and royal in-law families who were ruthlessly exploiting the peasantry and enriching themselves at public expense. In the late nineteenth century, however, there appeared conspicuous signs of Korean society beginning to reform, but it was apparently too late to prevent the encroachment of Japan.

In 1853, U. S. Commodore Perry and his fleet arrived off the coast of Japan and forced the Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1867) to open up the nation. The Japanese people threw out the shogunate, gathered together under the authority of the imperial court, and commenced westernization-cum-industrialization in the name of the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912), emulating Western colonialism and imperialism.

As prime minister for the second time, Itō Hirobumi (1841-1909) led Japan to victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5), acquiring Taiwan and the Liaodong Peninsula from the Qing court and extracting various concessions from Chosun, a rather unfortunate latecomer in the westernization race.<sup>1</sup>

By 1900, Czarist Russia had occupied several cities including Fengtian (also called Shenyang, Shengjing or Mukden) in Manchuria under the pretext of pacifying the Boxers and protecting the railways.<sup>2</sup> In 1903, Czarist Russia had offered the Japanese exclusive rights to the Korean Peninsula below the 39<sup>th</sup> parallel and neutralization of the area north of it. The offer was rejected by the Imperialist Japanese. Japan achieved victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), taking over Russia's leases in Port Arthur (Lüshun) and Dalian, as well as its control of the South Manchurian Railway, and making Chosun a Japanese protectorate. Russia and other Western powers recognized Japan's rights to expand into Northeast Asia.

Itō became Resident General in Korea in 1906, a position directly under the Korean king. Itō was at first in charge of diplomatic affairs, but eventually of the entire internal administration of the nation as well. Itō was shot at the Harbin railroad station, the Russian leasehold, on October 26, 1909 by a Korean, Ahn Chung-keun. General Terauchi, the war minister in the Japanese cabinet, effected the planned annexation of Korea,

<sup>1</sup> Itō Hirobumi was born to a modest samurai family of present-day Yamaguchi Prefecture at the western end of the Japanese mainland. Rising to the post of prime minister four times, he played a crucial role in the rapid westernization of Japan. He was sent to England in 1863 by the leaders of Chōshū to study Western naval science. He accepted government assignments to the U.S. in 1870 and to the Mission in Europe from 1871-3 to study taxation, budgetary systems, and treaty matters. He joined the group formed to study constitutions in Germany from 1882-3. He served as the first prime minister from 1885-8, helped draft the Meiji constitution in 1889, and brought about the establishment of the national Diet in 1890. The Meiji constitution made the Privy Council (the emperor's senior advisers) and the military above the law and answerable only to the emperor himself, bypassing the bureaucracy and legislature, and inviting unfortunate consequences for the Japanese and their neighbors. Itō became prime minister for the second time in 1892-6, and fourth time in 1900-1. When he became prime minister for the third time, in 1898, he dissolved the Diet but could not win an absolute majority. Itō resigned, only to appear in China on September 11, 1898 to give the Qing emperor Guangxu (r.1875-1908) advice on the process and methods of Reform.

<sup>2</sup> Since "Fengtian" implies "ordained by heaven," the GMD government altered

the name into Liaoning ( "Tranquility of Liao"). See Lattimore (1934: 39-40).

<sup>3</sup> Japanese empire-building was bulwarked by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902-23) -- declaring war against Germany (and taking over the German leasehold Qingdao in 1914); the Russo-Japanese Agreements of 1907-16; and the sanction of Four-Power Treaty in 1921.

<sup>4</sup> Syng-man Rhee was born in 1875. He completed a classical education and then entered an American Methodist high-school in Seoul where he learned English. He joined the Independence Society in 1896 to reform the monarchy and repel Japan's colonial designs, but was imprisoned between 1899 and 1904 for supporting the idea of a popularly elected national assembly. On his release, he went to the U.S., where he took a B.A. in 1907 from George Washington University (studying humanities and social sciences), an M.A. from Harvard University in 1908 (studying international relations and history), and a Ph.D in international law from the department of political science, Princeton University, in 1910, the same year that Japan annexed Korea. His thesis, titled "Neutrality as Influenced by the United States," was published by the Princeton University Press. He was a close friend of President Woodrow Wilson's family. Rhee came back to Korea in 1910, but fearing arrest by the Japanese colonial rulers, he fled to the U.S. in 1912. Rhee met the Democratic

and in 1910 became the first Governor-General. Korea, never before having experienced a foreign conquest dynasty, became a colony of Japan.

Although, as Eckert (1990: 334) points out, the U.S. had been "the first Western nation to sign a formal diplomatic treaty with Korea in 1882, it had also been the first foreign embassy to leave in November 1905 after the Japanese had forced the Koreans to sign a protectorate treaty. This policy of acquiescence in the Japanese seizure of Korea had been formalized in the Taft-Katsura Memorandum of 1905, by which Japan had agreed, in turn, to respect America's control of the Philippines."<sup>3</sup>

Wilson became the President of the United States (1913-21) and enumerated the Fourteen Points in January 1918 declaring the principle of humanism, respect for the self-determination of peoples, and international cooperation as the necessary basis for a new era of world peace. Wilson had lifted the spirits of colonized peoples around the world by emphasizing national autonomy and self-determination. Massive demonstrations for independence erupted in Korea on March 1, 1919 and sparked a nation-wide movement in the following months. The world powers, including the United States herself, however, possessed their own colonies and hence ignored the Korean independence movement. Syng-man Rhee was elected president of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea established at Shanghai in September 1919.<sup>4</sup> Though Rhee stayed at Shanghai only for six months (December 1920-May 1921), he held that post for five years in the U. S. until pushed out in March 1925 by the Korean nationalists centered in China. At the Cairo Conference of December 1, 1943, Roosevelt, Churchill and Jiang Jieshi stated that "in due course Korea shall become free and independent."

#### WAR AT THE PERIPHERY OF A BIPOLAR WORLD

The Korean communists found allies within the Chinese Communist movement in North China, while the Korean nationalists worked with the GMD with a 3,000-man Korean Restoration Army. By 1944, the Japanese had mobilized as many as sixteen percent of the entire Korean population, some four million people, and relocated them outside Korea to serve their war effort. In Manchuria, the number of Koreans had increased from about 0.8 million in the late 1920s to more than two million

(out of the estimated Manzhouguo population of 43 million) by the early 1940s.<sup>5</sup>

In August 1945, in the final days of World War II, the Americans and Soviets agreed to take the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel as the dividing line of the Korean Peninsula between Soviet and U.S. occupation zones. Cumings (2005: 239) notes that “during the period of the deepest Chinese Nationalist penetration into Manchuria,” that is, between December 1946 and January 1947, North Korea under Soviet occupation had served as a secure rear area for the Chinese Communist forces, “providing grain and other materials, rest and recreation, and the quartering of large numbers of troops.” The North Korean “military forces had expanded rapidly in late 1946 ... Some 30,000 Koreans under the command of Kim Ch’aek reportedly moved into Manchuria during April 1947, by which time 15 to 20 percent of the Chinese Communist forces in Manchuria were Koreans, ... a ‘volunteer’ army that prefigured the Chinese ‘volunteers’ [People’s Volunteer Army] that returned the favor in the fall of 1950 (ibid).”<sup>6</sup>

In the Korean Peninsula, a general election was carried out in the South under the auspices of United Nations on May 10, 1948, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) was established on August 15 with 73-year-old Rhee Syng-man (李承晩) as president. Stalin established a Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the North 25 days later on September 9, 1948 with 33-year-old Kim Il-sung as the chief of state.<sup>7</sup>

Kim Il-sung broached the possibility of a military invasion of the South with Stalin in March 1949. Kim tried to persuade Stalin that a popular uprising in the South would immediately be triggered by the invasion. NATO was formed in April 1949. Stalin did not reject Kim’s idea in principle but, even after the withdrawal of U. S. troops from the South in June, kept encouraging his client to pursue guerrilla warfare. Between June and September, Kim indeed dispatched 1,200 specifically-trained fighters across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel to intensify the on-going communist guerrilla war in the South, but most of the organized guerrilla units were eventually wiped out by the ROK army.<sup>8</sup>

#### “THE WAR WASN’T STALIN’S IDEA, BUT KIM’S”

The victory by the Communist Chinese, followed by the formation of the People’s Republic of China (PRC 中華人民共和

candidate for president and his former teacher, Woodrow Wilson, in an effort to gain his support for Korea, but Wilson told Rhee that international intervention to gain Korea’s independence from Japan was inappropriate. See Kaufman (1999).

<sup>5</sup> See Eckert, et al. (1990: 322).

<sup>6</sup> Cumings (2005: 240) continues: “Chinese Nationalist abuses of the local Korean population, including lumping them together with the Japanese for post-war reprisals, [brought] many Korean recruits to the Communists. ... Fully 70,000 Koreans were fighting in Manchuria by this time.”

<sup>7</sup> Kim Il-sung was born in 1912, and his family moved to Manchuria in 1919. When Japan occupied Manchuria in 1932, Kim joined the guerrilla movement resisting against the Japanese. Sometime in 1939 or 1940, Kim escaped from the Japanese extermination campaigns to the Soviet Far East and led a Korean contingent as a captain in the Soviet Army. See Goncharov, et al. (1993: 131).

<sup>8</sup> According to Suh (1988: 121), more than 3,000 guerrillas were sent south from September 1949 to March 1950. See also Stueck (1995: 30-1) and Goncharov, et al. (1993: 135-6).

<sup>9</sup> The legitimacy of his memoirs and/or accuracy was questioned in some circles. See Stueck (2002: 2-3).



14.5. Syngman Rhee in prison between January 9, 1899 and August 7, 1904



14.6. Syng-man Rhee at Shanghai as President of Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea (on April 9, 1921)

國) on October 1, 1949, in the words of Cumings (2005: 239), was an “immense strategic blessing” that provided Kim “an impregnable rear unimaginable in 1945.”

In his memoirs, Nikita Khrushchev (1971: 400-1) recalls that “at the end of 1949, Kim Il-sung arrived with his delegation to hold consultations with Stalin. The North Koreans wanted to prod South Korea with the point of a bayonet. Kim said that the first poke would touch off an internal explosion in South Korea. ... Naturally Stalin couldn't oppose this idea. ... Stalin persuaded Kim that he should think it over, make some calculations, and then come back with a concrete plan.”<sup>9</sup>

On January 12, 1950, the U. S. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, made a speech in the National Press Club declaring that the U. S. would not guarantee areas beyond Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines against military attack, a position that placed Korea outside the U. S. defense perimeter. Stalin read the speech carefully, as well as (courtesy of British spies) the top-secret NSC study upon which it was based, and authorized his foreign minister, Molotov, to discuss it with Mao Zedong. Stalin then informed Kim that the prevailing mood in the U. S. was not to interfere, and Kim in turn assured Stalin that “the war will be won in three days.”<sup>10</sup> Two months later, in April, Kim visited Moscow again, together with Park Heon-yung, the leader of the Communist operation in South Korea. Stalin gave definitive approval to Kim's invasion of South Korea on condition of obtaining the clear approval of Mao. Kim made a trip to Beijing in mid-May and obtained Mao's full support.<sup>11</sup>

Khrushchev remembers it this way (ibid: 401-2): “Kim went home, and then returned to Moscow when he had worked everything out. He told Stalin he was absolutely certain of success. I remember Stalin had his doubts. He was worried that the Americans would jump in, but we were inclined to think that if the war were fought swiftly –and Kim was sure that it would be won swiftly-- then intervention by the USA could be avoided. Nevertheless, Stalin decided to ask Mao's opinion about Kim's suggestion. ... Mao also answered affirmatively. He approved Kim's suggestion and put forward the opinion that the USA would not intervene since the war would be an internal matter... We [the Soviets] had already been giving arms to North Korea for some time. It was obvious that they would receive the requisite

<sup>10</sup> See Gaddis (2005: 42).

<sup>11</sup> See Goncharov, et al. (1993: 213-4, 136-7, and 138-54). A ciphered telegram from Shtykov to Vishinsky, January 19, 1950, reads: “Kim stated that when he was in Moscow, Comrade Stalin said to him ... in case of an attack on the north of the country by the army of Rhee Syngman, then it is possible to go on the counteroffensive

quantity of tanks, artillery, rifles, machine guns, engineering equipment, and anti-aircraft weapons.”

The key factors that contributed to Kim’s decision to attack South Korea were the U. S. troop withdrawal in June 1949, the success of the Chinese Communists in mainland China, and the Acheson declaration regarding the U. S. defense perimeter in Asia. Furthermore, Park Heon-yung, a founding member of the first Korean Communist Party in 1925 and the undisputed leader of the Korean Communist movement who had to flee to the north in 1946, assured Kim that “some 200,000 loyal followers of his organizations in the South would rise up and overthrow the South Korean Regime” once the invasion began.<sup>12</sup> Kim also believed that the war would be won too swiftly for the U. S. army to return to the Korean Peninsula.

Kim had been trying to undermine the legitimacy of the Rhee regime by amplifying the stigma of collaboration on the part of key figures of its government, with the Japanese during their occupation of Korea, and tried to rid the U. S. and her forces from the minds of the South Korean people by propagating nationalism and the danger of colonial enslavement under American imperialism. The U. S. military forces had finished their withdrawal on June 29, 1949. Kim, on the other hand, had been proposing a peaceful unification to the South Koreans from June 1949 until June 19, 1950, just six days prior to the invasion.<sup>13</sup>

Stalin had been providing Kim with planes, heavy artillery, and tanks, while Mao was handing over 40,000 veteran Korean soldiers in the ranks of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA 人民解放軍). In May, Stalin dispatched a new team of Soviet army officers to finalize the details of the invasion plan.<sup>14</sup> Cumings (2005: 263) tells us that “Scattered Soviet materials have shown that Soviet involvement in preparing and planning an invasion after Stalin gave his reluctant endorsement in January 1950 was higher than previous writers had thought.”

The heavily armed 200,000-man DPRK army unleashed an attack on the lightly armed 100,000-man South Korean army at 4:00 a.m. on June 25, 1950, thus commencing the Korean War, which was more tragic than the Spanish Civil War (1936-9).

Khrushchev remembers (ibid: 401-2): “I must stress that the war wasn’t Stalin’s idea, but Kim’s. Kim was the initiator. Stalin, of course, didn’t try to dissuade him. ... I don’t condemn

to the south of Korea. But since Rhee Syngman is still not instigating an attack, it means that the liberation of the people of the southern part of the country and the unification of the country are drawn out, that Kim thinks that he needs again to visit Comrade Stalin and receive an order and permission for offensive action by the People’s Army for the purpose of the liberation of the people of Southern Korea. Further Kim said that he himself cannot begin an attack, because he is a communist, a disciplined person and for him the order of Comrade Stalin is law.” Quote from Kaufman (1999: 120).

A ciphered telegram from Stalin to Shtykov, January 30, 1950, reads: “... he must understand that such a large matter in regard to South Korea such as he wants to undertake needs large preparation. The matter must be organized so that there would not be too great a risk (ibid: 121).”

<sup>12</sup> See Suh (1988: 112 and 121).

<sup>13</sup> See Suh (1988: 105, 113, 120).

<sup>14</sup> See Stueck (1995: 62). According to Cumings (2005: 241), total number of veterans handed over to Kim amounted to somewhere between 75,000 and 100,000. According to Noh (2000: 411), about 10,000 of these veteran soldiers were from the 166<sup>th</sup> Division of the Communist Chinese Army, and designated as the 6<sup>th</sup> Division the 1<sup>st</sup> Corps of the North Korean Army that took Seoul in three days.

<sup>15</sup> Douglas MacArthur was born in 1880 as the son of a general who had won the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Civil War and later served as a commander in the Philippine Islands. MacArthur served as aide to Theodore Roosevelt, and commanded a brigade during World War I. In 1930, he was named by Herbert Hoover as chief of staff of the army. He retired from the army in 1937, but was recalled to active duty by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941, named Supreme Commander of the Southwest Pacific Theatre, and then appointed by Harry Truman as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Japan in September 1945. MacArthur drafted a constitution for Japan, allowing Hirohito to remain as emperor (ibid).

<sup>16</sup> After the Sino-French War (1884-5), French colonial rule replaced the Qing suzerainty over northern Vietnam.

<sup>17</sup> According to Suh (1988: 121), Park Heon-yung "would have preferred a popular uprising to a military conquest to reclaim his leadership in the South, but since his followers...were all arrested in the South, Park would have to agree to military action. ... Kim ... told [on February 8, 1963] ... that Park was a liar and there had not been even 1,000 members, let alone 200,000... [and] no one revolted." Park had been accused as a spy who had "tried to sell the Korean Communist Party to the Americans (ibid: 174)." Park Heon-yung was sentenced to death in a trial on

Stalin for encouraging Kim. ... We wished every success to Kim and toasted the whole North Korean leadership, looking forward to the day when their struggle would be won."

MacArthur (1964: 328) remembers: "The South Koreans had four divisions along the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel. They... were equipped and organized as a constabulary force, not as troops of the line. ... The decision...had been made by the State Department. The argument advanced...was that it was a necessary measure to prevent the South Koreans from attacking North Korea."<sup>15</sup>

The Soviet explosion of an atomic device in August, 1949 had ended the American atomic monopoly. There followed the expulsion of Jiang Jieshi from mainland China and the concentration of Communist Chinese forces along the border of Indochina, where the French were waging a losing battle against the Viet Minh (*League for the Independence of Vietnam*).<sup>16</sup> Communist rebels stepped up pressure on British Malaya and the pro-U.S. Philippines. Now the North Korean invasion across the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel thrust the Korean Peninsula onto the global center stage.

Cumings (2005: 266) recalls that "from day one the Soviets made clear to Washington their determination to stay clear of the fighting." Khrushchev (1971: 402-3) remembers: "when Kim was preparing for his march, Stalin called back all our advisors who were with the North Korean divisions and regiments. ...I asked Stalin about this, and he snapped back at me, 'It's too dangerous to keep our advisors there. They might be taken prisoner. We don't want there to be evidence for accusing us of taking part in this business. It's Kim's affair.' ... The attack was launched successfully. The North Koreans swept south swiftly. But what Kim had predicted—an internal uprising after the first shots were fired and Syng-man Rhee was overthrown—unfortunately failed to materialize."<sup>17</sup>

On June 28, the DPRK forces occupied Seoul, and on July 1 proclaimed a general conscription, dragging young men from the streets of South Korean cities into the so-called "Volunteer Army" that was sent off to the frontier to serve as cannon fodder after a hasty, rudimentary drill.

The first contingent of the U. S. Eighth Army, the Smith Company of the 24<sup>th</sup> Division, landed at Pusan on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Stalin had never wanted to fight the U. S. army in the Korean Peninsula. On July 4, Stalin made Kim the supreme commander of the

DPRK army, and formally cleared himself and the Soviet Union out of the war. Few people have paid attention to the fact that Kim became the Supreme Commander only ten days after the date of invasion. From that date on, Kim had to handle the fighting against UN forces until he handed the command over to Peng Dehuai on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1950, months after the complete destruction of the DPRK army.

#### TRUMAN BELIEVED THAT APPEASEMENT WOULD LEAD TO FURTHER COMMUNIST AGGRESSION

Truman believed that appeasement *à la* the Munich Agreement of 1938 would only lead to further communist aggression, and hence made a swift decision to send U. S. troops to Korea. Truman approved the dispatch of the U. S. army, and acquired a Security Council resolution to send in UN forces by June 28.<sup>18</sup> Jacob Malik was boycotting the Security Council because the UN had refused to admit the PRC (People's Republic of China). Cumings (2005: 266) notes that "There is now evidence that Stalin explicitly ordered the Soviet delegation to stay away from the UN when the war began, in a message from Moscow that arrived on the morning of June 25. Why? The logic would suggest one of two possibilities: Stalin wanted to suck the United States into a war in peripheral Korea, hoping ultimately to pit the Chinese against American soldiers and thereby make Mao dependent on him ... Second, Stalin may have hoped that cloaking American intervention in the flag of the UN would destroy this body or, at a minimum, reveal it to be an American tool."

MacArthur inspected the Han River frontier on June 29, and was selected on July 14 to command the UN forces. On July 31, the DPRK army reached Korea's southern seashore, capturing Jin-ju. The ROK-U.S. forces miraculously managed to form a defense perimeter along the Nak-tong River in the southeastern corner of the peninsula. The world speculated on the possibility of a vast Asiatic Dunkirk.

The American forces might have had to abandon the perimeter altogether had it not been for a brilliant maneuver by MacArthur. On July 23, MacArthur (1964: 346) cabled Washington: "Operation planned mid-September is amphibious landing of a two division corps in rear of enemy lines for purpose of enveloping and destroying enemy forces in conjunction with

December 3, 1955 (ibid: 145). Suh (ibid: 227) contends that Kim purged Park, and hence "lost most of their supporters in the South," but later history seems to suggest that, although the spent Park and his followers were exterminated in North Korea, the DPRK-supporter underground in South Korea has been able to entrench itself in the areas of mass media, education, labor unions, and politics (mostly pretending to be freedom fighters for human rights and democracy) through ceaseless self-reproduction among "psychopathic types" and cunning camouflage-shapeshifting *à la* the West Germans spied for Stasi. When an opportunity arises, they are capable of engineering mass hysteria, in hope of inciting popular uprising, by systematically spreading false information through the mass media and the internet.

<sup>18</sup> Harry S. Truman was born in 1884 in Missouri, and operated a family farm and then a shop until 1921. He was elected to the Senate in 1934, picked by Roosevelt as vice-president, and then elevated to the presidency in April of 1945 upon Roosevelt's death in office. He made the decisions to drop the atomic bombs against Japan, implement the Marshall Plan in 1947, overcome the Soviet blockade of Berlin in 1948 with massive airlifts, and build the H-bomb in January 1950. On December 1, 1950, Truman made a statement that he would not rule out the possibility of using atomic weapons.

The U.S., however, possessed only 298 atomic bombs at that time, a number deemed insufficient to prosecute a Third World War if that were to come about. After leaving the presidency in January 1953, Truman returned to his home in Missouri, and lived another twenty years, reading military history and giving talks to college students.



14.7. Newly drafted South Korean soldiers practicing shooting with wooden sticks before dispatched to the frontier. (Photo taken 1950.9.15.)



14.8. Northbound American GIs and southbound Korean refugees.

attack from south by Eighth Army. I am firmly convinced that early and strong effort behind his front will sever his main lines of communications and enable us to deliver a decisive and crushing blow. The alternative is a frontal attack which can only result in a protracted and expensive campaign.”

MacArthur’s ingenuous amphibious landing operation at Incheon on September 15 trapped the DPRK army below the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, and completely reversed the tide of war. The UN forces began advancing almost unopposed into North Korea. According to Gaddis (2005: 43-5), Stalin was “shocked by this sequence of events,” and “was on the verge of accepting a lost war, even the prospect of the Americans occupying North Korea itself. ... ‘So what,’ he commented wearily, ‘Let it be. Let the Americans be our neighbors.’”<sup>19</sup>

It was Mao who decided to intervene with 300,000 PLA troops (designated as the “People’s Volunteer Army” 中國人民志願軍) to rescue Kim. Mao had told his advisers early in August: “We should not fail to assist the Koreans. We must lend them our hands in the form of sending our military volunteers there.” According to Gaddis (2005: 45), “Mao for a time had difficulty convincing his own advisers ... a fact that led Stalin, early in October, to tell Kim Il-sung that he would have to evacuate North Korea altogether. Shortly thereafter, though, Mao prevailed, and so was able to inform the Russians and the North Koreans that the Chinese would be soon coming to the rescue.”

#### WAR BETWEEN COMMUNISM AND CAPITALISM

Following the February/October Revolutions of 1917, the Bolsheviks (Majority/Russian Communist Party) deposed Kerensky’s Provisional Government and seized power on November 7-8. The Civil War between *Reds* and *Whites* (1918-22) erupted. The first head of the Soviet state, Vladimir Lenin (b.1870/r.1917-24) made a separate peace with Germany on March 6, 1918, and Woodrow Wilson decided to send 9,000 U. S. troops to Vladivostok in July as part of an allied expeditionary force, including a 70,000-man Japanese military force, to support the anti-Soviet forces (*Whites*) in the Russian Far East. It was only in 1933 that the U. S. recognized the new Soviet Union (1922-91).<sup>19</sup> Joseph Stalin (1879-1953) was born in Georgia and came to power in 1924, following the death of Lenin.

Stalin believed that a Third World War between communism and capitalism was inevitable, but he wanted to determine the time and place for the final showdown. Unification of the Korean Peninsula by Kim would provide a springboard for an invasion of Japan, but Stalin did not want the Korean War to become the main battleground between the Soviet Union and the U. S. Within one or two decades, Stalin thought, Europe would be the right place to deliver the death blow to world imperialism. Stalin did not want to see Mao improving relations with the U. S. and achieving a hegemonic role in East Asia. The progress in the Korean War had to be carefully manipulated so as to let Mao carry the greatest part of the burden of diverting the U. S. forces from Europe to Asia and at the same time burn Mao's bridges to the West.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. The Korean War Consolidates the PRC

### FIRST FOREIGN EXCURSION OF THE PRC ARMY

On October 19, 1950, about 200,000 Chinese "People's Volunteer Army" started to cross the Yalu River.<sup>21</sup> A son of Mao Zedong, An'ying, was killed by a bomb attack on November 25.<sup>22</sup> On November 29, MacArthur wired Washington, urgently recommending the incorporation of the Chinese Nationalist troops into the UN command. On January 4, 1951, the UN forces lost Seoul once again. The Soviet Air Force did not enter operations until January 10, 1951.<sup>23</sup>

MacArthur (1964: 378) received the following message from the Joint Chiefs of Staff: "if thereafter the Chinese Communists mass large forces against your positions with an evident capability of forcing us out of Korea, it then would be necessary...to direct you to commence a withdrawal to Japan." Mao began entertaining the idea of wiping out the ROK forces and expelling the U. S. army from the peninsula, but General Ridgway, who took command of the Eighth Army on December 26, 1950 following the accidental death of General Walker, stabilized the defense line and began limited offensives.<sup>24</sup> With the failure of the Fifth Offensive, launched from April to June in 1951, Mao concluded that it would be impossible to win the war. Stalin stationed twelve air force divisions in Manchuria on

<sup>19</sup> See Eckert, et al. (1990: 333)

<sup>20</sup> See Goncharov, Lewis, and Litai (1993: 207, 210 and 212).

<sup>21</sup> Suh (1988: 137) notes: "For Kim the war ended as early as October 1950 when the Chinese volunteers took over the fight. ... [T]hey...demanded that Kim stay clear of their management of the war. ... Peng ... told Kim that the Korean War was a fight between himself and General MacArthur, and Kim had no part in it." On February 1, 1951, the General Assembly of the UN passed the resolution condemning the PRC as an "aggressor."

<sup>22</sup> On a trip to North Korea in 2009, China's prime minister, Wen Jiabao, following the tradition, paid homage to the shrine of Mao An'ying (毛岸英).

<sup>23</sup> Chen (1994: 222-3, 289) contends that "As the result of Stalin's 'betrayal' ... China had to begin military operations in Korea without Soviet air support ... As a result, Mao and the other Beijing leaders would put more emphasis on 'self-reliance'... the prelude of the future Sino-Soviet split."

<sup>24</sup> Chen (2001: 85) notes that "Mao... and the Beijing leadership intended to win a glorious victory by driving the Americans out of Korea.... [T]he cruel reality of the battlefield forced the Beijing leadership to adjust this goal."

<sup>25</sup> See B. C. Noh (2000: 175).

<sup>26</sup> Khrushchev (1971: 232-3) remembers: "I frequently heard Stalin speak about Eisenhower's noble characteristics. ...[On the final days of World War II] the Germans had concentrated their forces against us as they prepared to surrender to the Americans and British. Stalin appealed to Eisenhower... [who] then held his troops back...thus allowing our troops to take Berlin. If he hadn't done this, Berlin would have been occupied by the Americans ... in which case ... the question of Germany might have been decided differently and our own position might have turned out quite a bit worse. ... Stalin ... made a similar request to Churchill. The Germans were fleeing from Rokossovsky and surrendering to the English ... 'Montgomery took them all, and he took their arms. So the fruits of our victory over the Germans were ... enjoyed by Montgomery!' ... Whenever I had dealings with Eisenhower in later years, I always remembered these actions of his during the war."

<sup>27</sup> See Noh (2000: 400) for the number of atomic bombs. The son of James Van Fleet, who assumed the command of the Eighth Army on April 11, 1951, was killed by the Soviet air attack.

<sup>28</sup> Norris and Kristensen (2006) state: "After the NSC reached a seeming consensus on May 20 to employ atomic weapons both strategically and tactically—that is within and outside the Korean Peninsula—the administration communicated its resolve to the

rotation, and the Soviet Air Force commander later boasted to have shot down 1,300 American airplanes during the War, at a loss of 345 Soviet fighter planes.<sup>25</sup>

Khrushchev (1971: 406) remembers: "China didn't declare war but simply sent volunteers into Korea. These troops were commanded by Peng Dehuai, whom Mao held in the highest esteem. ... Peng gave his situation reports to Mao...[and] declared categorically that the enemy would be surrounded and finished off by decisive flanking strikes. ... Unfortunately, the war wasn't ended quickly at all. The Chinese suffered many huge defeats. ... As the two sides dug in, the fighting became bloodier and bloodier. The fronts seemed to be stabilizing."

Khrushchev continues: "The Americans had the atomic bomb, and they knew we didn't. ... To make matters worse, the President at that time was Truman, who had neither an ounce of statesmanship nor a flexible mind and who was hostile and spiteful toward the Soviet Union. I can't imagine how anyone ever considered Truman worthy of the Vice-Presidency, much less the Presidency (ibid: 393). ... Stalin had no respect at all for Truman. ... Truman didn't deserve respect. This is a fact (ibid: 232)."<sup>26</sup>

MacArthur (1964: 384) remembers: "I now began to formulate...plans for destroying the Chinese forces in Korea. My decisive objective would be their supply lines. ... I would sever Korea from Manchuria by laying a field of radioactive wastes across all the major lines of enemy supply. ... Then, reinforced by Nationalist Chinese troops ... and with American reinforcement on the way, I would make simultaneous amphibious and airborne landings at the upper end of both coasts of North Korea."

By the middle of March, the UN forces reached the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. MacArthur believed that the Cold War would be won or lost in the Korean War. He wanted to bomb Manchuria and use the Chinese Nationalist forces in Korea. Congressman Martin released the letter from MacArthur dated March 20 that contended that, McCullough (1992: 838) notes, "if we lose the war to Communism in Asia the fall of Europe is inevitable... There is no substitute for victory." MacArthur was sacked by Truman on April 11, 1951 for insubordination and adherence to expanding the scope of the war, and replaced by Ridgway.

The truce negotiation that began on July 10, 1951 dragged on. Japan regained independence by signing the San

Francisco Peace Treaty on September 8, 1951. The communists behaved like victors at the truce talks, and the war of attrition continued.

#### A NUCLEAR ULTIMATUM FOR A QUICK CONCLUSION OF THE TRUCE NEGOTIATION

Dwight Eisenhower had served MacArthur as an aide. Eisenhower was elected president in 1952 with the implicit promise of ending what had become a most unpopular war, the Korean War, as quickly as possible. His son John was fighting in the war as a lieutenant. In less than a month after taking office in January 1953, Eisenhower raised the nuclear option at a meeting of the NSC. By this time, the U.S. had stockpiled 1,161 atomic bombs, deemed enough to wage a Third World War if necessary.<sup>27</sup> Secretary of State John F. Dulles delivered a nuclear ultimatum to Mao through Premier Nehru of India (1947-64) to coerce the Communists into a quick conclusion of truce negotiations.<sup>28</sup>

Stalin died on March 5, 1953. Rhee Syng-man hindered the truce talks by releasing, on June 18, 1953, the 26,930 anti-Communist prisoners of war who did not want to return to the North.<sup>29</sup> On July 4, the PRC-DPRK negotiators agreed to the provision of returning POWs on a voluntary basis only. Rhee, after securing the Mutual Defense Pact with the U.S., promised not to disrupt the truce talks any more. On July 27, the ceasefire was agreed to and implemented.<sup>30</sup> The PLA "People's Volunteer Army" left Korea by 1958, granting DPRK the formal guarantee of automatic participation by the PLA should a war break out. The frontiers of the U.S. and the PRC have effectively been extended to the ceasefire line in the Korean Peninsula.

#### KOREAN WAR CONSOLIDATES THE NEWLY BORN PRC

Ledyard (1983: 335) states: "It is striking that the first foreign excursion of the Chinese army after consolidation of its political victory in 1949 was an invasion of Korea ... Their object ... was to keep the Americans at a safe distance from their Manchurian frontier and to make sure that the state that bordered 'Northeast' was friendly and supportive of its goals."

According to Chen (1994: 220-3), "China's participation in the war caused the loss of tens of thousands of its soldiers on the battlefield, forced the expenditures of billions of dollars on

#### Nuclear Ultimatum to Conclude a Truce

Chinese and North Koreans. Both Eisenhower and [Secretary of State John Foster] Dulles believed the message had the desired effect of ending the war, the history reads."

<sup>29</sup> Stueck (2002: 172-4) notes that "Zhou Enlai initiated exploration of possible concessions on the POW issue, but ... Stalin advised firmness on the POW issue... Stalin consistently advised Mao to take a tough position in the armistice talks. At the same time... the Soviet premier always showed determination to avoid direct Soviet embroilment with the Americans over Korea. ... What is certain is that Stalin's successors moved quickly to advocate moves to end the war."



14.9. Peng Dehuai, Zhu De, Feng Xuefen, Xiao Ke, and Deng Xiaoping (left to right) at Shaanxi in 1938

<sup>30</sup> Some 600,000 PLA "volunteers" perished. About 520,000 DPRK soldiers were either killed or wounded. By the time of the ceasefire, about 200,000 DPRK soldiers, 250,000 PLA soldiers (being reduced from the peak of 300,000), 600,000 South Korean soldiers, and 300,000 U. S. soldiers were present in the Korean Peninsula.

See Noh (2000: 133, 146, 372, 401), and Gaddis (2005: 50). About 54,246 American soldiers died in combat. About 138,000 South Korean soldiers died, and 450,000 were wounded. Well over 2.5 million Korean civilians were killed or wounded. Data from the Ministry of Defense, Republic of Korea.

<sup>31</sup> According to Norris and Kristensen (2006), however, it was the nuclear ultimatum that had prevented the PRC from conquering Taiwan. Presumably invigorated by a sort of victory in the Korean War, the PRC coastal batteries began shelling Jinmen (Quemoy) on September 3, 1954, where more than 50,000 Nationalist Chinese soldiers were stationed. The crisis climaxed in January 1955. In 1958, the PRC moved forces into the Fujian province opposite Taiwan and, on August 23, artillery batteries unleashed a ferocious barrage against Jinmen. In both incidents, U.S. officials made public statements about employing nuclear weapons if war broke out, making a squadron of Guam-based B-47 bombers available for nuclear strikes against the mainland, and other nuclear warfare plans ready.

<sup>32</sup> Khrushchev continues: "Then a miracle happened. When the delegation arrived in Geneva for the conference, the Vietnamese partisans...captured... Dienbienphu. ... France pulled out of the war and evacuated its troops. ... But then that sinister man Dulles ... stepped in and imposed a long, bloody war..."

military purposes at the expense of...economic reconstruction, prevented Beijing from recovering Taiwan...<sup>31</sup> But from Mao's perspective, China's gain was considerable. China's involvement in the Korean War stimulated a series of political and social revolutions ... that would have been otherwise inconceivable during the early stage of the new republic. During the three years of the war, along with the 'Great Movement to Resist America and Assist Korea (抗美援朝)' ... CCP (Chinese Communist Party) had effectively strengthened its organizational control of Chinese society and dramatically increased its authority in the minds of the Chinese people. ... Mao was therefore more confident and enthusiastic than ever before to take a series of new steps to transform China, including the collectivization of agriculture, the nationalization of industry, the anti-rightist campaign, and the Great Leap Forward. ... The Korean War also symbolized China's rise to prominence in the international arena. ... For the first time in its modern history China had succeeded in confronting a coalition of Western powers and emerging undefeated."

### 3. Formation of a New East Asia in a Globalized World

#### VIETNAM DEFEATS THE FRENCH AND THE U.S.

When France was defeated by Germany in 1940, Ho Chi-minh (1890-1969) and his lieutenant, Vo Nguyen Giap (b. 1911), returned home from exile, and organized the Vietnam Independence League (called *Viet Minh*). With the end of World War II, Ho declared Vietnam independent, and started fighting against the French.

Khrushchev (1971: 533-4) remembers what Zhou En-lai had told him in early 1954: "Comrade Ho Chi-minh has told me that the situation in Vietnam is hopeless and that if we don't attain a cease-fire soon, the Vietnamese won't be able to hold out against the French. ... [T]hey've decided to retreat to the Chinese border if necessary, and they want China to be ready to move troops into Vietnam as we did in North Korea. ... We've already lost too many men in Korea—that war cost us dearly. We're in no condition to get involved in another war at this time."<sup>32</sup>

Giap won the final victory at Dien Bien Phu on May 7, 1954, but the country south of the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel fell into the hands

of the U.S.-sponsored regime of Ngo Dinh Diem. Ho started guerrilla war in the South, but died in 1969 without seeing the victory of the Viet Cong led by Giap.

In 1964-65, Lyndon Johnson had launched a major diplomatic effort to secure international troop commitments for the Vietnam War. The South Korean government yielded to the pressure of Johnson to send combat troops to Vietnam, and by 1966 the size of the Korean army in Vietnam reached 48,000 men. During an eight-year period until March 1973, about 340,000 Korean soldiers participated in the Vietnam War on the side of the U.S. army.

In the early 1990s, I participated in an International Seminar on “*Doi Moi* (Reform and Opening-up)” at Hanoi that was organized by Swedish economists and hosted by the Vietnamese government. I heard General Giap, who was still alive and at that time a senior minister without portfolio, saying that he “has realized that it is more difficult to win the war against poverty than the war against the French or the U.S.” The Vietnamese participants listened politely to my story about the “Korean Miracle,” seeming to harbor no grudge that Korean soldiers fought against them on the side of the U.S. As the victor of the war, apparently they could afford to be gracious.

#### DR. RHEE REPLACED BY GENERAL PARK IN SOUTH KOREA

With the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, Syng-man Rhee (1875-1965) made Herculean efforts to save the new nation from communist conquest. In face of the (April 19) Student Revolution against what the people saw as authoritarianism and corruption, however, he resigned on April 27, 1960, and then went into exile in Hawaii, where he died in 1965.<sup>33</sup>

General Park Chung-hee (朴正熙) had been arrested on November 11, 1948 and sentenced to death for taking part in the revolts in which the communist officers in the South Korean (ROK) army had conspired. Park swiftly became a turncoat, revealing the entire list of communist officers and party leaders. He was pardoned, recalled to active duty when the Korean War began, and became Brigadier General in 1953.<sup>34</sup>

Park Chung-hee led a coup on May 16, 1961. He won the first of his three terms as president in 1963. The last free election was in 1971, when Park narrowly beat his opponent, the

#### Giap Defeats the French and the U. S.

Giap was born in 1911 as a son of an anti-colonist scholar, received a law degree at the Lycée Albert-Sarraut in Hanoi in 1937, and began teaching history at a lycée before he went into exile. Giap, without any military training, came to command the entire armed forces of Ho's new government, and engraved his prodigious military tactics and strategy on the mind of people all over the world, first by bringing down the French colonialist regime in 1954 and then driving out the 500,000-man strong U.S. army from Vietnam in 1973 and unifying the country in 1976.

<sup>33</sup> Rhee went to Geneva in 1933 to make an appeal for the independence of Korea to the League of Nations, met Franziska Donner (1900-92), and married her in New York on October 8, 1934. After Rhee's death in Hawaii, Franziska returned to Seoul in 1970.



14.10. Franziska-Donner-Rhee-Weg at the Donau Park in Vienna, Austria

<sup>34</sup> Park Chung-hee was born in 1917 into an impoverished rural family. He graduated from the Taegu Teacher's School in 1937, and taught briefly in a primary school. Park entered the Manzhouguo Military Academy in March, 1940, joining a class composed of 240 Japanese, 11 Korean, and 229 Manchurian cadets, taught by fewer than 10 Japanese instructors. Among the graduates of this class, the entire 240 Japanese students and 70 non-Japanese, including Park, entered the Japanese Military Academy in October of 1942. After graduating the Academy on April 20, 1944, Park returned to Manchuria to serve from July as a second lieutenant and an aide to Commander Tang in the 4,000-man strong 8<sup>th</sup> Group of the Manzhouguo Army stationed at Rehe. When the Soviet army began attacking the Japanese army on August 9, 1945, the 8<sup>th</sup> Group decided to go over to the GMD army and surrender. The Korean officers and soldiers were incorporated into the Korean Independence Army. Lieutenant Park served eight months as a company leader. Park returned home in May, 1946, and became a second lieutenant in the newly created South Korean Army. He rose to captain after nine months and then to major in August, 1948. In the meantime, Park secretly joined the Communist officers' cell in the South Korean army, possibly believing in the ultimate unification of the peninsula by Communist forces.

<sup>35</sup> See Hong (2002) and (2005).

populist Kim Dae-jung. Park secretly dispatched the chief of the Korean CIA to Kim Il-sung in the north on May 2-5, 1972, and engineered the intriguing July 4<sup>th</sup> South-North Joint Communiqué of peaceful coexistence and ultimate unification. On October 17, 1972, Park declared martial law, and one month later enforced a new constitution that gave him absolute authoritarian powers. As if to confirm a conspiracy with Park in the south, "Premier" Kim Il-sung assumed the title of "President" of DPRK in December 1972, cementing one-person rule. Park was assassinated in 1979 by the head of the Korean CIA.

After the assassination of Park, South Korea was ruled until 1992 by two Major Generals in succession who were classmates in the military academy. Korea was thereafter ruled by the two democratically-elected activist politicians and then by a young populist, all with only a high school education. The 15-year civilian rule (1993-2007) seems to have consolidated Korea's democracy, though South Koreans are still very much vulnerable to shallow populism.

It was a miracle that Park Chung-hee (r.1961-79) served as the driver to take South Korea to the Export-Oriented turnpike. Park somehow adhered to the ideology of "Nation Building through Export Promotion" and managed to transform South Korea into a newly industrialized country, providing a solid foundation for sustained economic growth that could not be easily destroyed by a few democratically-elected populist rulers who often cause the bankruptcy of a nation. By failing to find a new driver at an appropriate time to switch to the Democratic-Market-Economy turnpike, South Korea aimlessly meandered, for quite a long while, in-and-out of the old turnpike under a series of vagrant-opportunists-turned-robber-rulers.<sup>35</sup> Cumings holds that the South Koreans "have regained a world status [on the basis of] rapid industrial growth, hell-bent-for-leather modernization, and world-class human talent (2005: 512)," and also that South Korea has "finally brought forth a democracy of which all Koreans can be proud (ibid: 402)."

#### **IMPOVERISHED DPRK ARMED WITH NUCLEAR WEAPON**

Not only Mao in China but also Kim Il-sung (Kim I) in North Korea perceived the de-Stalinization campaign initiated by Khrushchev in 1956 as a challenge to their own authority. Kim I

ruthlessly carried out purges, building up a rather primitive but lethal personality cult around himself. After the death of Kim I on July 8, 1994 who, in the words of Cumings, was “a reviled, renegade dictator (2005: 441),” his son Kim Jung-il (Kim II, b.1941/42) “assumed the mandate of heaven with the regime’s future shaky and with his people still starving (ibid: 443).”

Kim, father and son, adhered to the ideology of “Self-Reliance” and led North Korea into becoming an extremely isolated and impoverished nation. Apart from the merits of market vs. command economies, Park Chung-hee affirmed the supremacy of “outward-looking export-oriented growth strategy” while Kim I and II confirmed the disaster of “inward-looking import-substitution-oriented strategy.” To tradition-bound thinkers, it is the manifestation of *Yin and Yang*.

According to Cumings (2005: 444-5), the DPRK “leadership seems deeply frightened by the consequences of opening up the economy [like China and Vietnam]. ... [T]he population is forced into rudimentary markets...to make ends meet [since] the state seemed almost completely broken down at the local levels, with many people getting no food rations.”

Among the international community, the Kim dynasty (called “*Nation of the Sun King*” by Cumings) has been notorious for its inhuman totalitarian character. The DPRK regime was accused of being a rogue terrorist state by the U.S., sharing with Iran and Iraq the honorary label of “Axis of Evil,” officially bestowed by President George W. Bush in January of 2002.

Under the subtitle of “*Fallen Sun King*,” Cumings (2005) makes statements about “the kingdom of the Kims” (ibid: 446) as follows: “Since the death of Kim Il Sung [there occurred] a near-collapse of its energy system...and a...famine that claimed the lives of more than half million people. ... If full information were at hand, the total might be closer to two million (ibid: 442-3)... [T]he suffering of the population is truly inexcusable ... The inner circle is the critical problem. The outer circle is condemned to idolatry. It may be that the apparent stability masks instability at its center, in the failure to constitute a politics that can extend beyond the circle of family and personal relations (ibid: 446) ... The DPRK is a class society (ibid: 443).”<sup>36</sup>

The inner circle has completely enslaved the North Korean people and, with the shrill cry of *Military First* (先軍)



14.11. *The Yin and Yang*

The stark difference in nighttime lights between North and South Korea shown by Satellite image as of 2008

<sup>36</sup> Cumings continues: the “central authorities ... seem morbidly insecure and determined therefore to give the armed forces what they need, to the detriment of every other institution in society (ibid: 446). ... Today there is nothing to suggest that North Korean leaders have any intention of democratizing their system (ibid: 511).”

<sup>37</sup> Quoted by *the Economist*, December 4, 2010, p. 38.

<sup>38</sup> The Six-Party Talk experience has shown that DPRK simply pockets whatever concessions are given to it and pursues its preset nuclear strategy anyway. With the subtitle of “China is becoming more nationalistic and more assertive,” *The Economist* (December

4, 2010) states: "China's alliance with North Korea 'as close as lips and teeth'... gives the Kims special license" for any misbehavior (ibid: 38); "Under Mao, China had often bullied its neighbors ... China has ... assure[d] its neighbors that they have nothing to fear from its rise ... Now China's behavior—most recently towards Japan, South Korea and the South China Sea— has begun to alarm China-watchers (ibid: 8-10)." *The Economist* continues: China's "nationalism shows every sign of being genuine and widespread ... Nationalism may frame an issue before the leaders get to deal with it" (pp. 9-10); China "has long seemed ready to put up with almost any misbehavior by its ally, North Korea. ... Even this year it has refused to condemn the North for the sinking of a South Korean corvette...the revelation...of an...uranium-enrichment facility, and the shelling ... of [an] island [issuing repeated warnings only against the victim, South Korea --- to sit tight and "negotiate" with the DPRK, or else]. ... China's extraordinary tolerance of the Kim's roguery ... must be because they believe it in China's interest. ... China's president ... (gave) his blessing to the (Kim III's) anointing. ... China (quoting Lee Kuan Yew) would prefer a nuclear North Korea to an American presence on its own border (p. 38)." The DPRK cannot survive even a year without a continuous inflow of massive PRC grants-in aid, especially those of petroleum and grain. The PRC seems to have arrived at the conclusion that the U.S., regardless of nuclear roguery

strategy, strives to enslave the South Koreans and pluck the plums. One may say that the DPRK consists of a handful of insiders living in sumptuous clover, a small number of well-fed *keapos*, and a mass of people enslaved and starving, engulfed in every nook and corner in a continuous loyalty contest, terrorized that they will be unable to merely survive. To such a no-nonsense statesman as Lee Kuan Yew, Minister Mentor of Singapore, the DPRK insider class looks like "psychopathic types with a ruler who prances around stadiums seeking adulation."<sup>37</sup>

The DPRK, the most militarized regime on earth, is now armed with nuclear weapons, at the cost of the people's mass starvation. By deftly playing with deceit, nuclear threat, and extortion, Kim II let the two populist presidents of South Korea give him, overtly and covertly, 8 billion dollars in cash and materials during their tenure in office (1998-2007) under the slogan of "*Sunshine Policy*," allowing one of them to receive the Nobel Peace Prize and the other one to commit suicide. Kim II thereby accomplished more quickly the development of nuclear bomb and its delivery system. The DPRK is now capable of selling uranium to international terrorists, enabling them to attack major Western cities with dirty bombs. Thus the DPRK can not only terrorize South Korea and Japan with nuclear blackmail for extortion, but the DPRK can also revenge itself upon the Western nations that fought against it in the name of the United Nations.<sup>38</sup> The atheistic and rather paranoid DPRK rulers began to cry "Holy War" as if to synchronize the slogan with overseas religious zealots. Jung-il's son Jung-eun, born in 1983/82, was introduced in a dramatic way to the world as the Heir Apparent on October 10, 2010, and will presumably become Kim III.

#### CHINA, TAIWAN, RUSSIA, AND JAPAN: THE CHALLENGES

Mao was chairman and chief of state from 1949 to 1959 and chairman of the CCP until his death in 1976. In 1958, Mao broke with the Soviet model and launched the ill-conceived Great Leap Forward (1958-62), conspicuous by its radical collectivization of agriculture and backyard furnaces, under a most wasteful command economy, that cost more than 45 million deaths, mostly by man-made famine, and at least 2.5 million by torture or summary executions.<sup>39</sup> The Great Catastrophe caused his eclipse in the early 1960s, but Mao was able to engineer the

even more catastrophic Cultural Revolution in 1966 that ended officially in 1969 but seems to have lasted until the death of Lian Biao in a plane crash in 1971, or until Mao's death and the arrest of the Gang of Four in 1976.

China had Mao to drive the nation on to the Socialist-Nation-Building turnpike, but found another driver named Deng Xiao'ping at an opportune time to switch to the Socialist-Market-Economy turnpike. Deng began to execute the outward-looking export-oriented growth strategy after his visit to Singapore on 12-24 November, 1978 to hear a lecture from Lee Kuan Yew on the "opening-up and exporting commodities instead of communism." If the prosperity brought to the South Korean people by Park Chung-hee was a miracle, the prosperity brought to the Chinese people by Deng Xiao'ping (1904-97) was also a miracle.<sup>40</sup> China may still need yet another driver to switch to the Democratic-Market-Economy turnpike in order to reach its final destination.

The GMD rulers came to believe that hyper-inflation, if not wholesale corruption, was the very cause of losing the mainland to the Communists; hence, ever since they fled to Taiwan (in 1949), any smell of inflationary financing has been anathema to them. Price stability became the hallmark of the Taiwanese economy. Jiang Jieshi died in 1975, and was succeeded by his son, Jing'guo (1910-88), who had graduated from a military and political institute in Leningrad and married a Russian woman in 1935. Jiang Jing'guo kept ruling Taiwan under martial law until his death. Jiang, father and son, achieved Taiwan's economic prosperity in their lifetime and the full blooming of democracy posthumously, but no one is sure about how long Taiwan will remain an independent state in the name of Republic of China.

The Soviet Union had drivers called Lenin-Stalin to get on to the Centrally-Planned turnpike. Unfortunately, they could not find an adept new driver at an appropriate time to switch to the next turnpike. The old comrades ignored the warning road signs and continued on the first turnpike, eventually falling off a cliff into chaotic self-destruction. Russia was born out of the wreckage, and Vladimir Putin, fitted out with all the powers Russian electorate can bestow, seems to be taking the country on a ride down an Authoritarian-Market-Economy turnpike, with organized crime and corrupt government officials flourishing.

At least in terms of formality, Russia, a latecomer to a

by the DPRK, will never let South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan go nuclear, and furthermore has no option but to tolerate the DPRK serving as an unpredictable terrorizing force that can wage a proxy war, in alliance with international terrorist groups, against Western communities. The PRC seems to have outsourced the meanest thuggery to the DPRK to assume a position of a "safe spectator" with the soon-to-be-achieved nuclear parity with the U.S.

<sup>39</sup> And yet, as Dikötter (2010: x-xi) writes, "Mass killings are not usually associated with Mao and the Great Leap Forward, and China continues to benefit from a more favorable comparison with the devastation usually associated with [Pol Pot's] Cambodia or the [Stalin's] Soviet Union."

<sup>40</sup> Deng was born into a *Hakka* family (*kejia* 客家 guest people) who are the descendants of northern Chinese who had migrated, mostly at the time of the Southern Song. Deng had participated in a work-study program in France in 1919-24, and studied at the *Communist University of the Toilers of the East* in Moscow in 1926, where Jiang Jing'guo was his classmate. Deng returned to China in 1927. Among the "Export-Oriented Asian Four," the Singapore-Hongkong strategy was to actively court foreign direct investments (FDI) while the Korea-Taiwan strategy was rather inhospitable to the multinational companies. See Hong (1998).

<sup>41</sup> Rowski (ibid) further quotes Jin Baoshen (1992): “The language of the ‘five peoples’ were officially enshrined as the languages of the empire, and the emperor commissioned ... to promote each language. The emperor himself, as the crucial link uniting these diverse peoples, learned Manchu, Chinese, Mongolian, Uighur, and Tibetan.”

<sup>42</sup> The quote is from Rawski (1998: 231). See also Dunnell (1996: 19).

<sup>43</sup> Ho (1998: 151) notes that “the 1990 census [has] shown only 3% of China’s population [were] minorities in strategic Inner Asian areas.” Rawski (1996) states: “China’s leaders from Sun Yat-sen through Mao Zedong have consistently argued that the country was rightfully dominated by Han Chinese (ibid: 839). ... Since 1949, China’s policy toward ethnic minorities has veered between ensuring minority representation...and...the ultimate assimilation of minority peoples (ibid: 841).” Sun Wen had already urged “to promote the migration of Han Chinese into the minority regions, and justified an assimilation policy by identifying it as the contemporary counterpart of the historical process of sinicization (ibid: 839).” Rawski (ibid: 839) quotes Benson (1990): “Chiang Kai-shek [Jiang Jieshi] continued...arguing that since ethnic minorities...were already part of the greater Chinese race, they could have no separate identity.”

market economy, has already established a democratic polity, while China, the early starter, still maintains an archaic Communist dictatorship that is institutionally susceptible to absolute corruption. It will be interesting to see which one of these two giants will first realize an “affluent and democratic” advanced society effectively governed by law based on a constitution incorporating institutionalized checks-and-balances.

After more than a 100-year journey of a government-guided catch-up commencing with the Meiji Restoration, Japan became an economically advanced state by 1980. It had boasted of its MITI-MOF-led turnpike of rapid economic growth, if not its quasi-one-party rule. Japan, however, has fallen into the so-called lost decades since the early 1990s, perhaps signaling the necessity for a fundamental restructuring of its traditional system led by bureaucrats and financial elites and an economy clustered around gigantic conglomerates (*zaibatsu* turned *keiretsu*), subject to manipulation, intimidation, and corruption.

#### TO REPLACE THE “CHINESE” WITH THE “EAST ASIAN PEOPLE”

Rawski (1996: 835) states that “The Qianlong emperor identified himself as the ruler of five peoples: the Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Uighurs, and Chinese. Whereas Confucians assumed that their principles were universally applicable, the core of the Qing policy was a universal rulership based on the submission of divergent peoples, whose cultures would remain separate”<sup>41</sup> Although the Manchu “emperors identified shamanism with Manchu tradition,” the public images of the Qing emperor were a Confucian Monarch to the Han Chinese, the Bodhisattva Manjusri (*the bodhisattva of compassion and wisdom*) to the Mongols and Tibetans, and a tolerant and generous ruler to the Muslims.<sup>42</sup>

In order to inherit all of the territories of the Qing Empire that were inhabited by non-Chinese peoples encompassing as much as 63.7% of the now-PRC territory, modern China’s leaders including Sun Wen had at first defined themselves as a multiethnic empire-state transcending Han identity. Once the Han Chinese domination was consolidated under the PRC, however, government policy seems to have veered toward massive migration of the Han Chinese into minority territories; *assimilation* of minority peoples that constitute a “mere 8%” of the population of the PRC; and creation of a newly

defined “Chinese” nation-state.<sup>43</sup> The PRC historians began to project China’s history in terms of its contemporary border (and beyond, in cases of the Korean Peninsula and the Mongolian steppes), as a seamless narrative of one realm, the territory of the modern PRC state.

Ho (1998: 141) contends that “It seems reasonable to generalize that the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Chinese was a most elemental biological fact that ensured the long-range sinicization of their alien conquerors.” During 1891-1942, the population of Manchuria more than doubled (from 22.6 to 46.8 million), while the population of the Hebei-Shandong area increased by only 23% (from 64.7 to 79.6 million). The total population of Manchuria more than doubled, also, between 1949 and 2000.<sup>44</sup> The pre-1949 migrations were driven mostly by personal economic motivation to escape dire poverty, but the post-1949 occupation of Manchuria with a Chinese population was centrally planned. The Han Chinese came to constitute more than 84% of the total population in Manchuria, and it is now asserted that the Manchus became, Rawski (1996: 839) quotes Liang Bing (1988), “for the most part indistinguishable from Chinese.” The Manchurian conquest, in the words of Rowe (2009: 12), “inevitably led to the cultural assimilation and presumably also the biological eradication of the Manchu race. ... [I]n the Chinese view, a Manchu people no longer existed.”

According to Baranovitch (2010), “whereas in the early 1950s, [China’s ethnic minorities] were treated as non-Chinese..., by the beginning of the twenty-first century, they were totally incorporated into the Chinese historical self through a new narrative claiming that they had always been Chinese (ibid: 85). ... [P]olitical leaders started to think of China as a territorial entity...and thus of everyone living within this territory as Chinese (ibid: 88). ... [T]he wars among the various nationalities [is regarded as] the internal struggles (ibid: 101). ... [Chinggis Khan] was transformed into a *Chinese* hero (ibid: 116).”<sup>45</sup>

Perhaps, someday, the PRC leaders will replace “China” with “East Asia,” and “Chinese” with “East Asian People,” and be free of all sorts of accusations including “Han nationalism,” “territorialization of history,” or “historiographical invention-cum-colonialism,” ushering in the spirit of *Alle Menschen werden Brüder* on the eastern part of the Eurasian continent as well

<sup>44</sup> See Gottschang and Lary (1968: 171-2), Peng and Guo (2000: 12), Du (2000: 212), and Janhunen (1996: 39).

<sup>45</sup> In an effort to canonize a unified Chinese historiography, the PRC high school textbooks have incorporated the histories of China’s ethnic minorities “into a new, inclusive, and multi-ethnic single master narrative of Chinese history, according to which the non-Han peoples have *always* been Chinese and their different histories have *always* been a part of Chinese history (ibid: 112). ... In sharp contrast to the 1951 textbook, in which the Xiongnu, Xianbei, Tibetans, Uyghurs, Qidans, Nüzhen, Mongols, and Manchus... were all...labeled ‘outsiders,’ ...[the peoples who lived ‘in **what is today Chinese territory**’] have become insiders (ibid: 102). ...[T]he 2003 textbook completely avoids using the term ‘invade’ when discussing the military actions of these peoples in their wars against the Han (ibid: 104)...[T]he new representation of non-Han peoples and their histories can also be seen as an oppressive ‘**historiographical colonialism**’ (ibid: 114). ... [It] is just another case of historiographical invention (ibid: 116).” The senior editor at People’s Education Press states: “The textbooks of old China called the Qidan and Nüzhen’s ‘foreign peoples’ and...called the war...with the Song ‘invasion of China.’ But today’s textbooks consider [them] members of the Chinese nation. ... [T]he wars between the Liao and Jin and the Song are **internal disputes** (ibid: 97).”

References begin at 439.