

History and Imagination in S/N Korean Spaces

The special theme of the September 2019 issue (Vol. 5, No. 2) of *S/N Korean Humanities*, “History and Imagination in S/N Korean Spaces,” looks into the past, present, and future of inter-Korean commonality in architecture and landscape. The contributors to the issue include some of the most prominent experts in the field.

The first article by Valérie Gelézeau (l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales, EHESS) discusses the Korean urban space by focusing on capital cities and how they structure the Korean “meta-nation”, i.e. this very unique cultural space, attached to the locus of the Korean peninsula and coherent over the historical *longue durée*, currently split into two States and fragmented into great diasporic communities, which positions are determined by political polarization. It is based on the analysis of geographical discourse on Korean “capital cities”, and “capitalness”, as the quality of some cities able to take on the power that comes with a central political role, even if they are not or no longer the current capital, in various secondary sources in English and Korean. Next to the great capitals of Korean geo-history (hyper-capitals of the present States, Pyongyang and Seoul, or legitimizing historical capital cities such as Kaesong and Kyōngju), de-capitalized cities such as Suwōn, forgotten or marginalized capitals, such as Puyo, or Kongju) form an archipelago of capitals. This archipelago of “hyper-capitals” and “shadow capitals” is scattered not only across the peninsula itself, but is also connected to many capital cities of the Korean diaspora: from the North American diaspora’s Koreatown in Los Angeles to the Central Asian diaspora’s Almaty in Kazakhstan.

The second article by Robert Winstanley-Chesters (University of Leeds and Birkbeck, University of London) explores the role of spatialization, de and re-materialization and the place of charismatic trees in Korean political history in the practices of unification employed at the Panmunjom Summit of April 27, 2018, between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and the Supreme Leader of North Korea, Kim Jong Un. Setting tree planting in a wider and longer historical/political frame as well as within the theoretical networks produced through Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's notion of De and Re-Materialization, the paper provides a different analytic and conceptual view of a day of extraordinary symbolism on which both Korea's sought for a moment to rupture the Division System which has for so long separated the peninsula

The third article by Jelena Prokopljević (International University of Catalonia/Pompeu Fabra University) explored the imaginaries of tradition and technology in the three Kims' North Korean Modern Architecture. The architecture developed in North Korea since its foundation in 1948 but especially since the proclamation of the Juche thought as the unique state ideology in the early 1960s, has included two major referential imaginaries: the Korean traditional architecture and the expression of the economic and technological progress. The presence of these imaginaries, mediated by the architectural language but also by the production policies, have oscillated throughout decades with varying intensity under the rule of each of the three Kims. The paper analyses different elements of traditionally and technologically inspired architecture, resumed in the title in two significative elements, the hapkak roof and the glass curtain wall, and looks into their transformation and modern interpretation in different times. The aim is to link the dominance of either of those imaginaries with the epoch and political discourses of Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un, as tools for establishing the periodicity of contemporary North Korean architecture despite the omnipresent discourse of the national character of North Korean architecture. All three leaders have had strong influence on the architectural creation, understood as regimes' most valuable propaganda device and have preferred one over another imaginary. It will also be interesting to link these variations with changes in the international

architectural scene.

In addition to the special feature articles, the September 2019 issue of *S/N Korean Humanities* also presents an article by Kim Jongsuk (Korea University of Japan). This study examines the historical trajectory of and the impetus for the selection of bulgogi by the Koreans residing in Japan, contextualized in Japanese history as well as vis-à-vis theories of cultural anthropology and the practice thereof. Moreover, it focuses on the cultural-economic and diachronic processes of bulgogi's development into a veritable ethno-national food industry amidst the influence of Japanese society upon Korean-Japanese dietary habits. Finally, the study addresses the place of Korean culinary traditions, including bulgogi, in education that may impart a sense of Korean ethno-nationalist consciousness in the third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation Korean-Japanese in various social spaces within Japanese society. This is so done in face of lived experiences in the attempts to solve the problem of heritage of ethno-nationalist consciousness for the Korean-Japanese people.

Robert Lauler (Daily NK) explores the Cold War-era Sino-North Korean relationship through his review of the recently published book *A Misunderstood Friendship: Mao Zedong, Kim Il-sung, and Sino-North Korean Relations* by renown Chinese scholars Zihua Shen and Yafeng Xia. Based on the latest documents taken from archives in the former Soviet bloc and China, the book's chronological review of the relationship provides a broad overview of the dynamics between the two countries during the critical years of the Cold War spanning from the early 1950s to the mid-1970s. Specifically, the text traces the relationship from its conflict-ridden early days in the Korean War and post-war period to its heyday in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The book then moves on to illuminate the more complex bilateral relationship that emerged during Chinese rapprochement with the United States in the 1970s. As Robert shows, the book is suitable for both students, scholars and policymakers alike and sheds critical new light on a relationship whose understanding is required to comprehend the broader dynamics in Northeast Asian geopolitics.

With the publication of the September 2019 issue, *S/N Korean Humanities* remains committed to a search for inter-Korea commonality which will serve as a foundation for peace and reconciliation of all Korean people and bridge the study of *Hankukhak* and *Chosŏnhak*. As the Institute of Humanities for Unification (IHU) launches the second phase research project (funded by the National Research Foundation of Korea) for the next seven years, we look forward to engaging with the broader international scholarship in our dedication to building integrated Korean studies and sharing the insights of “humanities for unification (*T’ongilinhak*).”

Kim Sung-Min

Editor-in-Chief

S/N Korean Humanities