



Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures
Polish Academy of Sciences



ACTA ASIATICA
VARSOVIENSIA
No. 31

Warsaw 2018

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*Acta Asiatica Varsoviensia no. 31 was granted a financial support of the
Ministry of Science and Higher Education, grant no. 772/P-DUN/2017.*

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Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw 2018
PL ISSN 0860-6102
eISSN 2449-8653
ISBN 978-83-7452-091-1

ACTA ASIATICA VARSOVIENSIA is abstracted in
The Central European Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities,
Index Copernicus, ProQuest Database

Contents

ARTICLES

- ROBERT WINSTANLEY-CHESTERS, Fish, Subterfuge and Security in North Korean and Soviet Institutional Interactions in the 1970s 7
- MARIA GRADJAN, Gender Acrobatics: The Questionable Liberalism of Popular Culture and the Emergence of Alternative Masculinity Patterns in Late-modern Japan 26
- ARNAUD DOGLIA, Ōkunoshima and Japan's Chemical Arsenal: 1900-1945 47
- MARIA SOLDATOVA, Visualizing Poetry in Urban Space: The Gwanghwamun Poetry Placard 64
- BYRAPPA RAMACHANDRA, Precursory Study on South Asian Security and Geopolitics 82
- KRZYSZTOF IWANEK, Interests before Ideas. Does Hindu Nationalism influence India's Foreign Policy? 97
- ÁDÁM RÓMA, Sino-Indian Standoff on the Doklam plateau 114
- MICHALEWICZ KATARZYNA, The image of China on the pages of the periodical *Naokoło Świata* 132
- JAKUB ALI FAHRAN, "Century of humiliation" and its influence on modern Chinese politics with special emphasis on China-Japan relations 149

BOOKS REVIEWS

Kim Myung-ja. The Korean Diaspora in Postwar Japan - Geopolitics, Identity and Nation-Building, London: I.B Tauris, 2017, 304 pages. ISBN: 978-1784537678– rev. Nicolas Levi	164
Kim Byung-Yeon. Unveiling the North Korean economy, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, 329 pages. ISBN: 978-1-316-63516-2– rev. Nicolas Levi.....	167
Editorial principles	170

BOOK REVIEW

Kim Myung-ja. *The Korean Diaspora in Postwar Japan-Geopolitics, Identity and Nation-Building*, London: I.B Tauris, 2017, 304 pages. ISBN: 978-1784537678

Around one million Koreans are permanent residents or citizens of Japan. Mainly distributed in the major industrial and economic centres of the country, the largest number of Koreans live in Osaka, followed by Tokyo and Hyogo prefectures. Like their counterparts in North and South Korea, most Koreans in Japan speak Korean, although younger Koreans who are second or third generation increasingly speak only Japanese.

The term ‘Zainichi’ Koreans (from the Japanese word meaning ‘staying in Japan’) is sometimes used to describe those who are permanent residents of Japan but who have not acquired Japanese citizenship.’

The author is Kim Myung-ja, a Teaching Fellow in Northeast Asian Politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. She completed her PhD at the Politics Department at SOAS where she received the Meiji Jingu Scholarship Award. Her MA in International Affairs was completed at the School of International Service, American University in Washington DC. She has been a guest lecturer in Korean Studies at Tübingen University and has published in the *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*. She founded and was President of the NGO, World Tonpo Network, Tokyo, an organization that seeks the peaceful unification of North and South Korea.

The book *Korean Diaspora in Postwar Japan - Geopolitics, Identity and Nation-Building*, written by Kim Myung-ja was published by I.B. Tauris in 2017. Excluding the preface, the conclusion and

additional elements, the book consists of a classic structure: five chapters, where the first chapter is theoretical, and the other are presented in a chronological order.

Chapter one is on alliance cohesion, the diaspora and nation-building policies. The author looks at how the diaspora's identity affects its host state's behaviour when both host and home states are classified as minor or middle powers as opposed to major powers. Chapter two describes the Korean Zainichi, defining them as being Korean nationals who moved to Japanese territories before the colonial period, secondly as people who moved to the Japanese territories during the colonial period and thirdly as Korean nationals who remained in Japan after the end of World War II (p. 51). Chapter three discusses the exclusionary policies towards the Zainichi in the post-world war II era (1945-1964). The author studies the impact of the Korean War on the US-ROK alliance (p. 79) and the US-Japan Alliance (p. 89).

The permanent character of Korean migration to Japan became a major problem, which is analyzed in chapter four. Finally, the fifth chapter discusses whether alliance cohesion still matter in the period starting in 1990. The author posits the hypothesis that weak alliance cohesion allows a host country to accommodate a diaspora supported by an enemy homeland in order to expand its own autonomy under an asymmetric alliance. The author also supports the hypothesis presented by Mylonas, where a host state is likely to exclude a non-core group when the state has revisionist aims and an enemy supports the non-core group.

Still, for such a concentrated work – a little under three hundred pages – this book provides a good deal of ground related to the adaptation of the Korean diaspora in Japan. As a kind of precursor (only a handful of books related to the Korean Zainichi have been published in western languages), its content provides an original approach into the impact of international alliances on the internal policy of the country under consideration. In spite of the clarity of the book and its valuable knowledge. I do have some minor remarks that I want to point out below.

Firstly, there is a lack of statistical data, we do not have any information about the leadership of Chonggryon (such as the conservative Han Dok-su) and Midan organisations. In spite of data provided on page 197, there is no information concerning for instance a listing of Korean schools in Japan, which may perturb the junior reader. I regret that the author also omitted to mention that Ko Yong-hui, the

mother of Kim Jong-un, the leader of North Korea, was born in Osaka. I also regret a lack of pictures, which is maybe due to the publisher's requirements. We do have a map of the Korean Peninsula (p. 75), but no social map of Japan, which could indicate where Korean Zainichi live in Japan. I also regret the lack of information concerning the location of (North) Korean companies in Japan and the economic cooperation between Japanese (such as Mitsubishi) and North Korean trade companies.

I also noted that the large bibliography doesn't include any books or publications in Korean, or any Zainichi Korean journals, such as the *Chosun Sinbo Ilbo*, no updated data related to the Naturalisation of Korean in Japan (p. 157), no information about the role of Junya Koizumi (the father of the former PM Junichiro Koizumi, the repatriation project of Koreans to North Korea or the book of Kang Chol-hwan, a member of a Zainichi Korean family. It's also not obvious to me, that both Chongryon and Mindan include people from both Koreas.

There are also some interesting facts which are not usually mentioned. For instance, Japanese financial assistance to South Korea after the 1997 financial crisis. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation signed a memorandum with Korean authorities and provided USD 3 bln of loans. On page 183 there is probably a typo mistake concerning the Pyongyang's trade with China (82%, and not 28% as stipulated).

In spite of the previously mentioned remarks, I definitely consider that this book is a wonderful addition to the field of Japanese Minorities studies. I would suggest the author make a second edition by updating data and discussing more about the situation of Chongryon members in the framework of the potential halting of the nuclear programme of North Korea. I would also suggest the researcher incorporate a chapter related to the notion of Zainichi Koreans in the North and South Korean press.

I also think that the author has prepared a brilliant book, and I would like to highly recommend it as one of the best ways to understand the situation of Zainichi Koreans in Japan.

Nicolas Levi*

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