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THE KOREAN COLLECTION IN THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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Background

Without knowing its history, it is hard to see where an institution really stands. Before describing the Korean collection in the Library of Congress, it is consequently important to describe the founding of the Korean Team and how its subsequent growth came about.

Even though the Library's Korean collection started relatively late, it is now the largest and most comprehensive collection outside of East Asia. The collection consists largely of contemporary works, but also has a number of valuable pre-nineteenth-century publications in their original format. As of 2006, the Library has over 264,000 volumes of monographs and some 6600 periodical titles. The current serial titles cover major magazines, government reports, and academic journals from both North and South Korea.

In addition, the Korean Team has over 2,500 reels of microfilms and 250 different newspapers dating back to the 1920s. The collection covers a wide range of topics, from the classics, history, literature and arts to social and natural sciences; some of them are also Korean diaspora publications. The Library's Korean collection has become a focal point for Korean affairs, as there has been a growing demand for information on Korea, especially surrounding topics like the development of the South Korean economy and technology along with the increasing numbers of Korean immigrants.

The Korean collection began with a small collection from Kwang-pom Soh according to the *Report of the Librarian of Congress and Report of the Superintendent of the Library Building and Grounds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1917*:

During the past year the Library acquired a small collection of Korean works formerly in the possession of the Korean Minister at Washington, the Hon. Soh Kwang-pom, who early distinguished himself in his native land for his proficiency in Chinese composition and was made assistant royal librarian when still a very young man.ⁱ

This collection included a series of 22 manuscript works about the organization of the various departments of the Korean Government, including a detailed account of its framework in the late 19th century. Among these printed books are: *Taemyongryul Chon* (대명률전 大明律典, Law of Korea until the close of the 19th century), *Taejon hoetong* (대전회통 大典會通, Institutes of the Korean Government, 5 vols.), and *Uian*(의안 議案, A project for the reorganization of the Korean Government, 1894).

When the Korean War broke out in 1950, the Korean Unit collection was established as a subsection of the Japanese Section, which was at that time part of the Library's Orientalia Division. Most of the Korean materials were in fact written in Japanese. However, the Korean Unit was the only location among all of the United States' government offices that collected materials about Korea. Hence, all requests related Korea were sent to the Korean Unit. The collection thus quickly developed over the following years and underwent organizational changes, integrating into the Chinese and Korean Section in 1964.

The Korean Section at the Library of Congress was established in 1990 because of the generous support of the International Cultural Society of Korea, which presented the Library with a gift of one million dollars on Congress's 200th anniversary in December 1989.

The Library began to acquire more contemporary Korean trade publications on a regular and systematic basis in 1955 through an approval plan with a Korean dealer. Because of an exchange agreement on September 24, 1966 between the Republic of Korea and the United States, the Library was able to acquire

government publications in economics, politics, local history, statistics, philosophy, literature, and other topics, which is one of the most significant strengths of the Korean collection.

Rare Materials

Dr. James S. Gale (奇一, 1863-1937) was the first Canadian missionary who went to Korea in 1888, eventually spending the next forty years there. Although Gale originally lived in Korea as a missionary, he is remembered more for his work as a translator. Gale translated many of Korea's literary classics into English and wrote numerous books on Korean history, literature and culture.

Martha Huntley writes in *Caring, growing, changing: a history of the Protestant mission in Korea* about the extremely difficult lives that Western missionaries faced:

The new missionaries were painfully aware of their helplessness in not knowing the language. The well educated, articulated, opinionated adults, they suddenly found themselves speechless. The greatest culture shock was to discover they were illiterate. To be ignorant and mute is difficult for anyone, but these people had come to preach the Gospel. ⁱⁱ

Some of them studied with a tutor five hours a day with lessons beginning at 5:30 a.m. and continuing until 7 p.m., and began again after supper because there were no language institutes, textbooks or English-Korean dictionaries.

However, Gale greatly improved their situation and published the first *English-Korean dictionary in 1897*ⁱⁱⁱ and *Korean Grammatical Forms*.^{iv} His dictionary was often given to recently arrived missionaries in Korea to help make their transition easier. By translating Korean works into English Gale was both exposing Koreans to Western works and also bringing Korea's long-standing culture and traditions to the West. Gale translated over fifty documents, including *Early use of moveable types in Chosen*, 1913, *Korea in transition 1909*, *Pilgrim's progress (천로역정 T'yollo yoktryong)* 1895, and *Korean sketches*, 1898. All of these pieces are currently a part of the Library of Congress' collection.

In 1927, the Library received a major portion of Gale's own library with 312 volumes of books, 33 rubbing materials and 120 volumes of Korean texts written during early Christian Korean history (specifically between 1895 and the 1920s). The Korean Team has the most outstanding and impressive collection of early Christian Korean publications outside of Korea. The collection spans from 1884 to 1927 and includes early Bibles, commentaries, catechisms, literature, and doctrine. Some of them were published earlier than previously discovered works on record.

The Korean Team houses some of these missionaries' works that are truly invaluable academic and artistic resources, especially the earlier editions of these works. For instance, in the year 1900 the first translation of the New Testament into Korean was completed; the Library has its first edition that was signed by H.G. Appenzeller, another pioneer of missionary efforts to the Korean peninsula.

Also, Gale helped the Library acquire a large numbers of Korean classics, including rare books from the Korean scholar Kim To-hui (To-heui).

During the past year a very valuable collection of Korean books was purchased from the estate of the late Korean scholar Kim To-heui, through the good offices of his friend Dr. James Gale, of Seoul, Korea, who has during the past few years secured many rare and valuable Korean works for the Library of Congress. ^v

The collection was primarily religious, literary or historical. Some of them are: *Mongmin simso (牧民心書)*, *Humhum sinso (欽欽新書)*, *Taejong hoet'ong (大典會通)*, *Chungsu muwollok (增修無冤錄)*, *Onhae (諺解)*, *Choya chibyo (朝野輯要)*, *Haso chip (河書集)*, and *T'aektang chip (澤堂集)*.

Gale purchased these old Korean books on behalf of Walter T. Swingle, chairman of the Library Committee, United States Department of Agriculture. Swingle was another remarkable figure, as he was a botanist who spent an entire lifetime traveling the Far East looking for plants that would be useful for America. For example, he brought the soybean from China and Egyptian cotton to Arizona. He also happened to pick up literally tens of thousands of books while journeying across East Asia, aggressively buying books for the Library from China, Japan, Korea, and other Asian countries for more than twenty years.^{vi}

The Korean Team has some 3,500 volumes of rare books in traditional format. In 1994, professor Chon Hey-bong (천혜봉千惠鳳) and three other professors published *Haeoe chonjok munhwajae chosa mongnok : Mi Uihoe Tosogwan sojang Han'gukpon mongnok* (海外典籍文化財調査目錄)^{vii} which listed the rare Korean materials held by the Library of Congress.

Korea made an important contribution to the technology of printing by developing movable cast metal type in the 1230s. It was in Korea that printing with movable metal type reached a high point in the 15th century. Some of the Korean rare materials of the Korean Team are fine examples of early printing with woodblock and metal movable type. Examples of rare woodblock-printed books include the *History of the Koryo Dynasty* (高麗史), printed in 1590, and the *Law Code of the Yi Dynasty* (經國大典), printed in 1630. Several outstanding examples of Korean printing employing metal movable type include the *Yulgok sonsaeng chonjok* (栗谷先生全書), collected writings of the renowned 16th-century Confucian scholar and statesman Yi I (李珥 이이) printed in 1744 and the *Kyewon p'ilgyong chip* (桂苑筆耕集), 1834 reprint of the collected works of the "father of Korean literature," Ch'oe Ch'i-won (崔致遠 최치원 857-915).

Also, the Korean Team has a strong collection of other rare materials. One example is "gray" materials, which were labeled "Minjuhwa undong collection (민주화 운동 collection)." These are publications that have been banned for ideological and political reasons, such as the works of authors who criticized the dictatorship of the Presidents of Korea, such as Pak Chong-hui (박정희 朴正熙). The collection also contains the primary sources and undercover publications as well as numerous statements written by students, student bodies, labor movements, and other social movements during the 1980s. One example is writings from the Kwangju massacre of May 1980, which was one of the most significant student movements in Korea. The Kwangju massacre caused an uproar and movement that doubted the legitimacy of the ruling government of Chon Tu-hwan (전두환 全斗煥). These materials contain the ideologies and implications of such movements on Korean history, politics, and society.

The Korean rare collection also includes the first editions of literary works by prominent Korean authors and Korean textbooks that survived the Korean War.

North Korean Materials

North Korea, or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), is one of the most secretive countries in the modern world. The Library of Congress Korean collection holds some 10,000 items from North Korea that are therefore vital to scholars and government officials seeking to understand and interpret the DPRK.

Scholars as well as librarians in the United States have tried to obtain Korean newspapers published either in the beginning stages of Korean liberation from Japanese occupation and during the Korean War. These pre-1950 publications and War publications are rare because many were destroyed during the Korean War. Fortunately, the Library obtained newspapers entitled *Haebang Ilbo* (해방일보) and *Choson Inminbo* (조선인민군). These are newspapers that were published by North Korean communists in Seoul during the Korean War, covering from September 9, 1945 to September 5, 1946. *Choson Inminbo* is one of the first papers published after the Japanese surrender on August 15, 1945, and carried in its first issue the headline "Welcome the Allied Forces. Arrive at 4 P. M. Today." It is an invaluable source of information that is difficult, if not impossible to find at other institutions.

One of the strengths of the Library of Congress is that it contains the biggest collection of North Korean serials published in particular from the 1940s-60s, even though Library of Congress' collection of recent publications from North Korea also adds increasing value. The Library of Congress' Korean collection thus provides users with greater access to old and new North Korean materials in the same place. Some of these valuable examples are: *Samcholli* (삼천리), *P'yonghwa was sahoejuui che munje* (평화와 사회주의 제문제), *Sonjonja* (선전자), *Nam choson munje* (남 조선 문제), *Tang kanbudul ege chunun chamgo charyo* (당간부들에게 주는 참고 자료), *Sonjon charyo* (선전 자료), and *Powi rul wihayo* (조국 보위를 위하여).

Korean Diaspora in the World

The Korean Team at the Library of Congress has put much effort into acquiring writings that have been published in Korean communities outside of Korea, such as the U.S., Japan, Manchuria, Russia, and elsewhere.

피와 눈물로써 써여진 우리들의 력사 = И слезами и кровью написанная наша история [History Written By Our Blood and Tears] describes 80 Soviet Korean leaders. In April 2005, Hak-pong Chang (장학봉) donated these records to the Korean Team, which he had collected from these Soviet Korean leaders' family for more than ten years. In the introduction, he writes that the Korean Ambassador of Uzbekistan in 1994 encouraged them to put their records together for future generations.

This is a collection of handwritten biographical sketches with portraits and pictures from Uzbekistan, describing these Soviet Korean leaders. The Soviet Koreans, called Koryo-in (고려인 or 고려 사람), were some of the most influential figures in the 1940s that eventually helped to establish the dictatorship of Kim Il Song in North Korea. They were sent to North Korea by the Soviet authorities and occupied various leadership positions during 1945-1960, such as the deputy Prime minister of the DPRK, commander of military units, teachers, as well as other professionals.

However, in the mid-1950s, Kim Il Sung (김일성) started to distance himself from the Soviets and began to arrest them. The first victim was Kim Ch'il-song (김철성), the chief of staff in the North Korean Navy. Soon, the Soviet Koreans became the target of arrest and ideological examination. Subsequently, these Soviet Koreans were forced to decide whether to leave Korea and return to the Soviet Union or risk getting arrested and perhaps facing execution or death in prison.

The history of the Soviet faction was very short, consisting of only about 15 years, but it was one of the most powerful and necessary instruments to the "Communization" of the Korean peninsula. With the *Biographies of Soviet Korean Leaders*,^{viii} the Library preserves their records that shed light on several questions regarding when, how, what, and who played a major role in the establishment of the North Korean state. The *Biographies of Soviet Korean Leaders* digital project is uploaded and can be accessed through the Asian Division Reading Room homepage.^{ix}

Korean Bibliography

The Library probably has the most comprehensive coverage of Western-language materials on Korea. There are approximately 9,000 English language items. The Korean Team completed an online Korean Bibliography in 1998. The *Korean Bibliography*^x is a comprehensive and user-friendly bibliographic tool for researchers and scholars interested in Korean studies. Since the average Library user may not be familiar with the Library of Congress subject headings, the topical term index was created to provide an easy-to-use database of English-language works to a wide audience within the Library and the world-wide community of scholars. The topical term index assigns writings labels based on the content of the book so as to provide users another way to search for texts if they are unsure of how to spell a particular name or title. Since it is an online bibliography, one can access this resource from anywhere through use of the Internet.

Korean Collection in other Divisions

The Korean Team of the Asian Division has sole custody of materials written in the Korean language. However, other materials pertaining to Korean studies are held in appropriate custodial units in the Library, such as the Geography and Map Division; the Prints and Photographs Division; the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division; and other area studies and special collections. One should consult with the appropriate specialist and/or website for in-depth information about another divisions.

Geography and Map Division ^{xi}

The Library of Congress has an extensive collection of maps of Korea. It includes many individual maps, including various thematic and city maps. The Library also has standard sets of topographic maps of Korea at various scales. For instance, it has the modern topographic maps at a scale of 1:50,000 made by the Japanese from 1914-1919 and the more recent sets made by the United States Army Map Service.

Furthermore, the Library has possibly the most outstanding and impressive collection of traditional and historical Korean maps outside of Korea in its Geography and Map Division. For example, the Library's collection contains 178 separate maps of the various geographic regions within Korea published prior to 1800. These maps are in 17 atlases and 12 loose sheet maps, all of which are housed in the Geography and Map Division Vault.

One of the examples is the Shannon McCune Collection. Shannon McCune, who was born in Korea on April 6, 1913, was the son of Presbyterian missionary parents and received part of his elementary and high school education in Korea. Later in his life, he was a visiting Fulbright research professor at Soong-jon University, Korea, from 1975 to 1976. In the 1980s, Shannon donated his collection of old Korean atlases and maps that are from the 19th century to the Library. These collections include both manuscript copies and woodblock impressions; woodblock impressions are generally more uncommon and valuable than manuscript copies. This collection also includes *Sonyokto* (선역도 鮮域圖, McCune # 8, 176-), which is relevant to an ongoing territorial dispute between Korea and Japan. Because the collection ranges in date from circa 1760 to 1896, many have become brittle due to age.

Consequently, in April 2007, the Library of Congress signed an agreement with the National Library of Korea (NLK) on a collaborative project involving the preservation of LC's rich and rare Korea-related maps and atlas holdings in its Geography and Map Division. The National Library of Korea has agreed to support the conservation of these maps and atlases. After treatment, the Library will digitally scan the selected maps and atlas and provide free Internet access to these electronic versions via the Library's website.

Prints and Photographs Division ^{xii}

The Prints and Photographs Division maintains custody of individual still photographs, posters, slides, and cartoon drawings.

Unique Korean photographs may be found in this Division, including photographs of historical events, city gates, bridges, and harbors of Chemulpo and Pusan from the early 1900s and many others. It also includes the reproduction of U.S. Army photographs between 1951 and 1952.

Researchers can also utilize *The U.S. News and World Report Magazine Photograph Collection*.^{xiii} This collection consists of almost 1.2 million original 35mm and 2 1/4 inch negatives, and 45,000 contact sheets donated by the U.S. News & World Report, Inc. The collection is primarily photographs taken by staff of the U.S. News & World Report Magazine between 1952 and 1986 depicting local, national, and international news topics.

Additionally, the Prints and Photographs Division contains the World's Transportation Commission Photograph Collection from 1894-1896. *Around the World in the 1890's*

<<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wtc/wtchome.html>> provides some 20 Korean photographs by American photographer William Henry Jackson (1843-1942). In addition to local inhabitants, Jackson photographed city views, street, and harbor scenes. However, in some collections, only thumbnail images display to those searching outside of the Library of Congress to protect the copyrights of individuals and/or organizations.

Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division ^{xiv}

The Library of Congress began collecting motion pictures in 1893 when Thomas Edison and his brilliant assistant W.K.L. Dickson submitted the Edison Kinetoscopic Records for copyright permission. In 1942, recognizing the importance of motion pictures and the need to preserve them as a historical record, the Library began the collection of the films themselves.

Today the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division contains a wide range of films on Korea, including TV news and documents programming TV entertainments, newsreels, U.S Army films, theatrical documentaries, North Korea's documentary films and videos, and more, with most of the material from the 1950s. The vast majority of the collection is copyright deposits.

For example, a user may want to watch *Battle of Chemulpo Bay*, which was produced in 1904 by Thomas A. Edison Inc. It is a historical re-enactment of a naval battle in Chemulpo Bay, which is off of the coast of Korea during the Russo-Japanese war. It shows a Japanese ship damaging a Russian vessel and sinking another Russian vessel. This film can be viewed online as part of the Library's American Memory Collection <<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/finder.html>>.

Federal Research Division ^{xv}

The Federal Research Division produces the widely used *Country Studies/Area Handbook*. ^{xvi} Its original purpose was to focus primarily on more unfamiliar areas of the world or regions that U.S. forces might be deployed; the series is not all-inclusive, however. Currently 102 countries and regions are covered. The users may find a description and analysis of the historical setting and social, economic, political, and national security systems of South and North Korea.

The Federal Research Division also has developed databases on the *US-Russia Joint Commission Veteran Interview Database* ^{xvii} accessible to the public on the Internet. These documents were obtained from archives in the former Soviet Union that pertain to Americans missing-in-action and unaccounted-for personnel from the Korean War, the Cold War, and the Vietnam. Here users can find reports, testimonies, statements, depositions, and documents from Korean War veterans of the former USSR and Eastern Europe.

Conclusion

The Library of Congress still has so many hidden treasures in the collection. Shannon McCune in *An annotated catalogue of old Korean atlases and maps in the Library of Congress; A selected and annotated bibliography on old maps and atlases of Korea* states that:

There is nothing, however, that surpasses that direct viewing of the maps and atlases, so that cartophiles are urged to visit the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress. Just feeling the silk-like mulberry bark paper on which many of these maps are drawn or printed is an aesthetic pleasure. ^{xviii}

One needs only to come to the Library of Congress in person to search and discover its value that will spark and enlighten one's thirst for knowledge.

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