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In Memoriam
Thomas Hosuck Kang (1918-2014)

Frank Joseph Shulman

Bibliographer, Editor and Consultant for Reference Publications in Asian Studies
Former Head and Curator of the East Asia and Gordon W. Prange Collections, University of
Maryland at College Park Libraries

Dr. Thomas Hosuck Kang, a professional librarian, scholar and specialist on Confucianism, passed away on August 24, 2014, in Hyattsville, Maryland. Born on November 24, 1918, in the town of Miryang, Kyôngsang-namdo (the southeastern most province of Korea), he went to Seoul in the mid-1930s and earned a first-class teacher's certificate at Keijo Junior Teacher's College (Keijō Shihan Gakkō) in 1940. Over the next eighteen years, he taught in Japanese-language elementary schools in Korea (1940-1945) as well as at such Korean-language secondary schools as Namson Girls School (1945-1948), Miryang Agricultural High School (1949-1950), Kyongnam Girls High School (1953-1956), and Pusan Girls High School (1957-1958). He also served as a Korean-language instructor to officers of the United Nations Command in his hometown during the Korean War (1950-1953). Before leaving for the United States in 1958, Thomas Kang studied for the degrees of B.A. in Politics and Economics (1955) at Dong-A University in Pusan and M.A. in Political Science (1957) at Pusan National University. After his arrival in the Washington, D.C. area, where he lived for close to sixty years, he took courses towards his doctorate in International Relations and Government at Georgetown University (1959-1961), and earned an M.A. in Information and Library Science (1963) at the Catholic University of America, following which he worked for three years (1963-1965) as the director of a branch library of the Prince George's County library system in Maryland. In 1967, he earned an M.A. in International Studies at American University, and in 1971 the degree of Ph.D. in International Studies at that university's School of International Service. He also became a U.S. citizen that same year.

At Catholic University, Thomas Kang wrote a 115 page master's thesis entitled "U.S. Government Publications on Japan: A Bibliography Covering 1945-1962". His 328 page doctoral dissertation at American University, directed by Professor Michael Lindsay, in turn was entitled "The Making of Confucian Societies in Tokugawa Japan and Yi Korea: A Comparative Analysis of the Behavior Patterns in Accepting the Foreign Ideology, Neo-Confucianism". In it he compared the dynamics of the acculturation of Confucian political culture—namely, Zhu Xi-ism—in Japan and Korea with the aim of establishing how it was received, officially adopted, and disseminated; described how Zhu Xian ideology affected other ideologies, social mobility, and the integration of society as a whole; contrasted the authorities' attitudes towards the ideology of the Chinese Neo-Confucian philosopher, Zhu Xi (1130-1200), and the Zhu Xian ideologists' attitude towards the authorities; and studied the acceptance of Confucian ceremonial symbols as formulated in Zhu Xi's model.

Fluent in Korean, Japanese and Chinese, Thomas Kang worked as a cataloger in the newly established East Asia Collection of the McKeldin Library at the University of Maryland at College Park between 1965 and 1967 and as its acting head in 1968. Between December 1968 and October 1980, he served as a Senior East Asian Information Specialist in the Orientalia Division (now known as the Asian Division) of the Library of Congress. From the early 1980s through 2010, he returned to the University of Maryland and played a central role—first as a part-time staff member and then as a retired volunteer—in the rapid development of the library's Korean-language holdings by assisting in the selection, acquisition and cataloging of books, reference works and journals in both the humanities and the social sciences and by providing expert reference service on Korea for the campus community.

An active scholar and a member of the Association for Asian Studies (beginning in 1964), throughout much of his professional career, Thomas Kang presented papers at conferences convened by the Association for Asian Studies, the Association of Korean Christian Scholars in the United States, the Global Awareness Society, and the Korean Political Science Association as well as at the International Conference on the T'oegye School of Neo-Confucianism (sponsored by the Korean Institute of Harvard University), the 12th International Conference on the Modern World and Confucianism and T'oegye Studies held in Moscow, and the International Conference on Confucian Studies in Shandong, China (to name just a few of the conferences in which he participated). On numerous occasions, he delivered lectures at various universities in both South Korea and the United States. Among his many publications, in turn, were:

"A Bibliographical Survey on Confucian Studies in Western Languages: Retrospect and Prospect". *Synthesis Philosophica* (Zagreb, Yugoslavia) 4, no.2 (1989): 699-711.

"Changes in the North Korean Personality from Confucian to Communist". In *The Politics of North Korea*, edited by Jae Kyu Park and Jung Gun Kim (Seoul: Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University, 1979): 61-110.

"Confucian Publications in Western Languages". *Korea Journal* 12, no.7 (July 1972): 24-32.

"Confucian Society under Democracy in South Korea and under Communism in North Korea". In *Whither Korea? Views of Korean Christian Scholars in North America*, edited by Wonmo Dong and Harold Hakwon Sunoo (Dallas, Texas: Association of Korean Christian Scholars in North Korea, 1975): 32-49.

Confucian Studies in the West, 1662-1990. Washington, D.C.: Confucian Publications, 1997. 106p. (Confucian research and reference publications, 1).

Confucius and Confucianism: Questions and Answers. Washington, D.C.: Confucian Publications, 1997 xxx, 246p. (Confucian research and reference publications, 2).

"Korean Literature and Bibliography (One Chapter of the Oriental literature and bibliography including China, Japan, Korea)". In *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, edited by Allen Kent. Volume 21 (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1977): 176-240.

"North Korean Captured Records at the Washington National Records Center, Suitland, Maryland". *Committee on East Asian Libraries Bulletin* no.58 (February 1979): 30-37.

"The Role of Confucian Leadership and Ideology in the Political Development of Korea, 1864-1910". *Journal of Korean Affairs* 3, no.1 (April 1973): 21-27.

"The Changing Nature of Korean Confucian Personality under Japanese Rule". *Korea Journal* 17, no.3 (March 1977): 22-36; and In *Korea's Response to Japan: The Colonial Period, 1910-1945*, edited by C.I. Eugene Kim and Doretha E. Mortimore (Kalamazoo: Center for Korean Studies, Western Michigan University, 1977): 293-315.

"The Thorny Road of Confucian Religion Mission to the West". *Journal of Global Awareness* (1994?): 70-79.

Why the North Koreans Behave as They Do. Washington, D.C.: Center for Dao-Confucianism, 1994. vi, 129p.

While working at the Library of Congress, he conducted a survey of Confucian studies in the West and began the compilation, eventually as a database, of an extensive, wide-ranging bibliography of writings about Confucianism in some fifteen Western languages on which he worked for many years. He also drafted a system for the Romanization of Korean Chinese characters (completed in 1979). Both of these remain in manuscript format.

An enthusiastic promoter of Confucianism, Thomas Kang founded a Center for Confucian Science in Washington, D.C. in 1990 (it was the first Confucian church and mission in the United States established as a nonprofit organization); accepted an invitation from the Supreme Council for Confucian Religion in Indonesia (MATAKIN) to teach Confucian theology to Confucian Litang (church) members and Muslim students in Indonesia in 1999 and again in 2000; and participated in the celebrations of the 2550th birthday of Confucius that were held in Beijing and Hong Kong.

Thomas Kang's many contributions to the University of Maryland Libraries were formally recognized in August 2011, when Minglang Zhou, the director of the Center for East Asian Studies at that time, expressed his sincere appreciation on behalf of the university for his efforts to put the library's East Asia Collection on a "sound footing on which it grew for nearly half a century". He is also remembered by a number of his former colleagues at Maryland as "a dedicated and respected scholar", a "warm-hearted and thoughtful" person, an accomplished calligrapher, and an individual who loved Chinese and Japanese as well as Korean culture.