Note from the Editor

In this issue we present what is probably the most eclectic mix of papers so far, covering a wide range of fields, from history to lexicography, literature, law, and anthropology. Also included are two special essays: one is a translation of an article on Donghak by a North Korean scholar, the other an extended review of a work on geography. As usual, the logic of ordering the articles is chronological, starting with the article that covers the earliest historical moment and then moving up to the present.

We open with an article by Andrew Logie on issues surrounding the Hongshan culture in Northern China, which serves as a timely reminder of the relativity of chronological frameworks. Although the Hongshan culture is thought to have existed between 4500 and 3000 BC, it has a very contemporary resonance because many South Korean historians of what the author terms the "inner fringe" have tried to connect Hongshan with the beginnings of a Korean civilization. Although this trend started in the 1980s, the author points to the mid-2000s as the start of a "Hongshan turn," when it became a mainstay of pseudo-historic and semi-historic accounts that tried to link it to ancient Korean states or their precursors.

The next article, by Byungsul Jung, revisits the persecution of the early Korean Catholic church. It focuses especially on the so-called Jinsan incident of 1791, when Yun Jichung and Gwon Sangyeon burnt the ancestral tablets because they believed ancestor worship to be incommensurate with their Catholic belief. The author shows how this incident marks a change in King Jeongjo's attitude to what he considered heretical beliefs; contrary to previous scholarship that emphasizes his pragmatic and conciliatory attitude towards Catholicism, the author uncovers evidence that he was intent on eradicating the church, and further strengthens this argument by showing how Jeongjo and his ministers reinterpreted the law to build a sound legal case to deal with this unprecedented challenge.

The third article, by Deokyoung Park, is a detailed analysis of the illustrations

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in the *Sinjajeon* of 1915. This "New character dictionary" was compiled by the Gwangmunhoe, an organization dedicated to the enlightenment of the Korean people. Although its illustrations are predominantly of ritual objects connected to the royal and imperial court rituals of Korea, through painstaking comparison with similar illustrations in ritual manuals and other dictionaries, the author shows that the illustrations were very deliberately conceived to not only preserve but also restore ancient royal court culture so as to instill pride in their culture and disseminate knowledge of it among the colonized population.

Equally important in preserving the court culture of the Joseon dynasty was the Yiwangjik aakbu. Succeeding the Royal Music Institute of Joseon, it was struggling to survive during the colonial period. By looking at its program of public concerts between 1932 and 1945 Heeyoung Choi shows how it managed to adapt to the changing expectations of a new public imbued with Western standards of performance culture while at the same time preserving the Joseon court music.

The next two articles deal with Korean literature. In her analysis of editorials on Korean literature that appeared in the *Manseon ilbo* between 1937 and 1942, Lehyla Heward shows how Korean writers based in Manchuria sought to use this transnational space to advocate Koreans as an autonomous group within Manchukuo. An important motif in these editorials is the need to raise the standard of Korean writing so as not to lag behind writing from the Korean heartland but also to keep up with standards of writing in Chinese and Japanese.

Dennis Wuerthner's article offers a close reading of two adaptations of Korean classics by the novelist Choe Inhun, published in 1962 and 1963 respectively: Kim Manjung's *Guunmong* and Kim Siseup's *Geumo sinhwa*. But although his works carry the same titles as their predecessors, they unsettle readers' expectations by their marked departure from the original in terms of plot. Wuerthner argues that Choe Inhun was mainly mobilizing these literary models for their association with narratives of dissent towards the oppressive realities of the present.

Hannes Mosler's article takes as its starting point the fact that the 1987 version of the South Korean Constitution marks the last time that it was amended. In comparison with other countries, this is quite a long period of time to leave the constitution unamended. This is all the more surprising given the fact that the last version of the constitution was drafted while South Korea was still under the authoritarian regime of Chun Doo Hwan, even though the process of democratization had then already started. The author explains the remarkable resilience of the 1987 Constitution through the political culture of South Korea, where the highly exclusive political power structures tend to

inhibit the conciliation needed to amend the constitution.

The last two articles are primarily based on fieldwork research. Suzanne Peyrard and Valérie Gelézeau visited "smart city" Songdo several times between 2014 and 2020 to ascertain how and if the local people have internalized the "smart city" marketing discourse and what it means to them. Also, the authors analyze how the concept of smart city has evolved and how the city itself can be seen as a "spatial fix," the concrete embodiment of capitalism's need for new investment to prevent over-accumulation.

Finally, Jihye Kim moves beyond the peninsula to investigate how second-generation Koreans in Brazil tend to drift away from their ethnic churches. Whereas the churches provide an important sense of community for immigrants, their children tend to be better integrated and regard church participation as burdensome. Despite their integration, they form part of a kind of hybrid culture between first-generation Koreans and Brazilians, in which they shape a unique Korean Brazilian culture with their coethnics.

In our irregular rubric "materials in translation," this time we publish the translation of a paper presented by Professor Hak Hui Ro (Kim Il Sung University) at the International Society for Korean Studies Conference in Prague, 2019. The paper offers a unique window into how North Korean scholars interpret the historical role of the Donghak movement. I would like to thank Professor Eun-Jeung Lee and Dr. Vladimir Glomb, both of the Freie Universität Berlin, for their assistance in making this possible. Before the book notes section, there is also an extensive review, by Adam Bohnet, of the recently published translation of Yi Junghwan's *Taengniji* undertaken by Inshil Choe Yoon.

The careful reader will have noticed that regardless of the Romanization system used by the authors, in this column I have applied the so-called Revised Romanization system, the official system used in South Korea since 2000. Although at times heavily contested, the system is used more and more commonly, especially by younger generations of scholars, while fewer and fewer are truly conversant with the intricacies of the McCune-Reischauer system. As a result, we will use the Revised Romanization as our preferred system, but authors who wish to use MR are still welcome to submit their papers in this Romanization system.

Finally, it is my pleasure to welcome on board Professor Sang Hwan Seong, the current director of the International Center for Korean Studies at Kyujanggak. As a linguist and specialist in German language and literature, he will lend his expertise and networks in the fields of linguistics, language studies, and Korean Studies in Germany. Also, it is important to acknowledge the

assistance and support of the many people who helped to produce this volume, notably the translators, copy-editors, and administrative support staff.

Sem Vermeersch
Editor-in-chief