

[Articles]

Australia, Korea and the Korean Question in the United Nations, 1946-1991

Pages: 1–26

John Synott

Abstract: One previously unrecognised feature of the history of the political relationship between Australia and Korea is the role played by Australia as a member of the United Nations Organization in respect to the so-called Korea Question. Drawing on source documents from UN Resolutions and Australian Archives this article examines the changing positions of Australia as the Korea Question developed in the UN General Assembly. This spanned a period from the beginnings of the UN Organization until the time when both Koreas were admitted as members in 1991. The article proposes the Australian positions as responses to changing domestic and international political contexts.

Democratic Consolidation and the Debate on Constitutional Reform in South Korea

Pages: 27–46

Heike Hermanns

Abstract: The debate about constitutional change in Korea is often little more as a political manoeuvre rather than genuine concern about long-term effects and shows the lack of democratic consolidation. This paper identifies political attitudes and behaviour as key obstacles to democratic consolidation and suggests that rather than changing the constitution, the opportunities of electoral law changes could be utilised to improve the political system in Korea.

Epenthetic [i] in Optimality Theory

Pages: 47–58

Duk-Soo Park

Abstract: In this paper, the [i]-and-zero alternation across the verb/adjective stem boundary in Korean is described as an i Epenthesis phenomenon within the framework of Optimality Theory. Here, I claim that the function of the epenthetic vowel [i] is to block two regressive weakening processes, namely Obstruent-Nasalisation and Alveolar Stop-Spirantisation, so as to maintain the morpheme

identity of stem. This fact can be well described and explained by Optimality Theory, using a set of ranked Faithfulness constraints.

Simple Calculation and Its Implication for Korean Reunification

Pages: 59–74

Sung Min Mun & Joon-Mo Yang

Abstract: In the ongoing debates and strategies on how best to deal with North Korea, the means of achieving Korean reunification and the cost of achieving it are very important factors. Unfortunately, one-sided views on the cost of Korean reunification have prevailed for a decade. This has resulted in an ambiguous strategic position being adopted by the administration of the Republic of Korea. This article presents a transitional programme and a re-calculation of the consequent unification cost. It is hoped this will change the popular view that North Korea's sudden collapse would be a tragedy and that the Korean government should adopt a strategy that favours “words for words and actions for actions” along the road to Korean reunification.

Chosonjok between China and Korea: The Zhonghua Nationalism, De-territorialised Nationalism, and Transnationalism

Pages: 75–102

Changzoo Song

Abstract: As the leading transnational lifestyle between China and South Korea, Chosonjok has gained much attention from the governments of China and South Korea. While the aim of Chinese Zhonghua nationalism is to hold onto the loyalties of its national minorities, South Korean ‘de-territorialised nationalism’ purports to connect Korean diasporas of the world, making the status of Chosonjok precarious. Chosonjok has nonetheless withstood well the conflicting interests of the two nation-states while developing transnational identities.

[Korean Studies Updates]

The Role of Pungsu (Geomancy) in Korean Culture [The Keynote Address Presented at the 2007 Korean Studies Association of Australasia Biennial Conference]

Pages: 103–118

Hong-Key Yoon

Abstract: Pungsu (fengshui in Chinese) is often known as geomancy in the West, and has been understood by some scholars as superstition, the rudiments of natural science of China, or a quasi-religious and pseudo-scientific system. However, it is an

ancient Chinese system of divining locations that cannot easily be classified or labelled using a Western category. It is not a clear-cut superstition, religion or science, but an art comprised of all three. The influence of geomantic ideas on Korean culture is so profound that it is almost impossible to understand the people-land relationships in Korea without appreciating the nature of geomancy and its role in Korean culture. Ever since this idea was introduced to Korea, it has been an important part of the Korean way of thinking in dealing with the environment. Its impact is clearly visible in Korean settlement landscapes, grave landscapes, the practice of religious beliefs, and even in Korean literature and paintings.

Education and Research on Korean Studies in Malaysia

Pages: 119–136

Md. Nasrudin Md. Akhir and Tan Soo Kee

Abstract: This paper discusses the initiatives taken by higher institutions of learning, especially the University of Malaya (UM) and other public universities, in promoting the development of Korean Studies in Malaysia. This is followed by an analysis of the research and the future challenges faced by Korean Studies, as well as of proposals to improve its development in Malaysia.

Korean Culture Studies at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City: Theoretical Foundations

[A Research and Teaching Note]

Pages: 137–146

Tran Ngoc Them

Abstract: This paper aims to review the core features of the theoretical basis proposed by the Research Group in Korean Culture studies at the USSH-HCM. A valuable comparison of the cultures of Korea and Vietnam can be made by examining the historical and geographical factors that have shaped the formation of cultural traits in each country. From this it can be found that while Korea has a culture in which secular values tend to dominate, the culture of Vietnam is based more on tranquility and spirituality. From its origins in three sources, Korean culture has produced seven characteristic traits typical of its people.

[Book Review]

Review of The Culture of Fengshui in Korea by Hong-Key Yoon

Pages: 147–150

John Jorgensen