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### Korean Re-Unification: Promise and Perils

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Rev. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon stated their basic philosophy of how the Korean peninsula will be re-united and what that will mean for the world in a series of speeches delivered in 2000 titled, "North-South Unification and World Unification Will Be Accomplished through True Love."<sup>[1]</sup> Rev. Moon delivered the speech on the occasion of his eightieth birthday and in "Rallies for the Unification of North and South Korea" held in twenty-one cities throughout the Republic of Korea. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon delivered the same message in Japan. They stated as a core principle, "The starting point on the path to heaven is within the enemy country." Applying this principle to Korean re-unification, they declared,

South Koreans must emerge who love North Korea more than their country. Also, North Koreans must emerge who love South Korea more than their country... There has to be a heart of truly wanting to live together... The movement for the unification of North and South Korea begins when both sides have such a heart toward the other: "I truly want to live with them. I do not want to die unless with them. I do not want to live unless with them."<sup>[2]</sup>

As they expressed it, "Those blessed with the ties of true love and true hearts are accorded the privilege of joining the realm of unification." However, for them, the "realm of unification"<sup>[3]</sup> extended far beyond Korea. Unifying the Korean peninsula would be not only "the final act of bringing the global Cold War to a conclusion" but also "the blueprint for the unification of the world."<sup>[4]</sup>

Rev. Moon referenced the "providential significance" of the Korean peninsula in countless speeches. In his understanding,

The trials and tribulations of the Korean people do not just have to do with them as a people; they are also providential. Therefore, God is eager for this people to overcome them. It can be said that all the strands of world history meet on the Korean peninsula. East and West, North and South, spirit and matter, idealism and materialism—the entire inheritance of world history converges there in a confrontation fraught with confusion and chaos. The maelstrom on this peninsula is like the contractions of a woman in labor; she is carrying a new age in her womb.<sup>[5]</sup>

Rev. Moon referred to the new age as the Pacific Rim Era. He maintained that the development of human civilization has completed a circuit of the entire globe and arrived at the Pacific sphere.<sup>[6]</sup> He taught that Korea, as a peninsular nation, is in a position to provide the platform for oceanic and continental civilizations to fuse together and develop into a new civilization. Thus, for him, Korean re-unification will be the result of not only human effort but also "global fortune."<sup>[7]</sup>

This article attempts to connect Rev. and Dr. Moon's vision of Korean re-unification and its significance with realities on the ground. The first section highlights the promise of a unified Korea. It attempts to align economic, technological, transportation, cultural and geo-political conditions with the vision of Korea as a driver of global development. The second section of the paper considers the perils of the two Koreas failing to unify or, at minimum, to establish cooperative relations. It elaborates how the continuing division of Korea will have seriously detrimental and destabilizing, even catastrophic effects both regionally and internationally.

The concluding section of the article connects the promise and perils of Korean reunification to the Unification vision of a “Heavenly Korea.”

## The Promise

This section examines a variety of national and world-level trends: projections of the economic future of a united Korea; South Korea as a world leader in technology and technological innovation; the Korean peninsula’s access to global transportation networks; the surge in popularity of Korean culture around the globe; and Korea’s geo-political links with Russia, China, Japan and the United States.

### *Economy*

The most optimistic appraisal of Korea’s economic future as a unified nation was a 2009 Global Economics Paper, “A United Korea? Reassessing North Korea Risks,” published by Goldman-Sachs, the American multinational investment bank and financial services company headquartered in New York City.<sup>[8]</sup> The study noted that North Korea’s planned economy was “near collapse,” but contends that “North Korea has strong untapped potential, which could be unleashed once meaningful economic reforms start and investment flows in.” (p. 1) In particular, the paper emphasizes “synergies between South Korean capital and technology, and North Korean natural resources and labor.”(p. 9) It points out, for example, that North Korea has large deposits of minerals valued at 140 times its GDP while South Korea “has virtually no mineral resources” and “imports 97% of the energy and mineral resources [it] uses.” In fact, according to the report, “Most of the six strategic minerals for South Korea (bituminous coal, uranium, iron, copper, steel and nickel) are abundant in North Korea.” (p. 10) Apart from natural resources, the study refers to North Korea’s “abundant and competitive labor force.” It notes,

- More than one third of North Korea’s population (37%) lives in rural areas, as was the case in South Korea in the late 1970s, providing an ample pool for the industrial workforce;
- With closer inter-Korean integration, the labor force could increase substantially given the current large military population (nearly 1.3 million or 16% of males between the ages of 15 and 64);
- Pre-college education is compulsory (up to the age of 16) and is provided by the state;
- Experience from the Kaesong Industrial Complex suggests that North Korean workers have a strong work ethic and a good potential for productivity enhancement; and
- North Korea’s demographics are relatively young and the population is growing roughly twice as fast as in South Korea. (pp. 9, 11)

Based on these findings, the Goldman-Sachs report projected North Korea’s “growth potential... at around 7%-8% per annum should North Korea pursue economic reforms and economic integration with South Korea.” (p. 13)

The paper’s most striking conclusion pertained to the “potential size of a united Korea in the long term”:

We project that a united Korea could overtake France, Germany and possibly Japan in 30-40 years in terms of GDP in USD terms, should the growth potential of North Korea be realized. This projection would put the size of a united Korea in 2050 firmly on a par with, or in excess of, that of most G-7 countries, except for the US. (p. 3)

The study assumes a peaceful and gradual economic integration between North and South, “similar to the pattern followed in China–Hong Kong [i.e., two economic and political systems coexisting in a country with limited migration between them] rather than an instant German-style unification.” (p. 1) It argues that “the cost of the integration of South and North Korea could be reduced to an affordable level, if backed by appropriate policies... even under the unlikely scenario of a sudden collapse of the North Korean economy.” (pp. 1, 3)

In the years since the Goldman-Sachs report, North Korea has developed a flourishing underground economy and the state has relaxed control over spontaneous markets. In 2017, the *New York Times* reported, “Scores of marketplaces have opened in cities across the country” and “A growing class of merchants and entrepreneurs is thriving under the protection of ruling party officials.”<sup>[9]</sup> This trend accelerated after the great famine, what North Korea refers to as the “Arduous March” of the 1990s. “Since 2010, the number of government-approved markets in North Korea has doubled to 440” and according to South Korea intelligence sources, “At least 40 percent of the population in North Korea is now engaged in some form of private enterprise, a level comparable to that of Hungary and Poland shortly after the fall of the Soviet bloc.”<sup>[10]</sup> State factories have more autonomy over what they produce, and families in collective farms have individual plots for produce they can keep or sell. A new class of moneylenders and financiers known as donju, referred to in the South as “red capitalists,” has emerged to facilitate construction projects and other enterprises. All of this is consistent with Kim Jong-un’s commitment to develop the economy and pledge that North Koreans will “never have to tighten their belts again.” Over time, this will smooth Korea’s transition to re-unification.

### *Technology and Technological Innovation*

South Korea is already a world leader in technology and technological innovation. In 2017, it had the fastest average internet connection speed in the world at 28.6 Mb/s, and is ranked as one of the world's most wired countries with virtually every South Korean household having broadband access. In 2010, the number of mobile phones operating in South Korea exceeded the population, indicating the "penetration rate" had reached the 100 percent level. South Korea has been the top-ranked country in The Bloomberg Innovation Index for the past five years.<sup>[11]</sup> It also is the top-ranked country in the International Innovation Index.<sup>[12]</sup> These indexes measure such criteria as research and development spending, concentration of high-tech companies, research personnel, patent activities and education. South Korea ranked second in the *U.S. News and World Report 2018* ranking of "most forward-looking countries."<sup>[13]</sup>

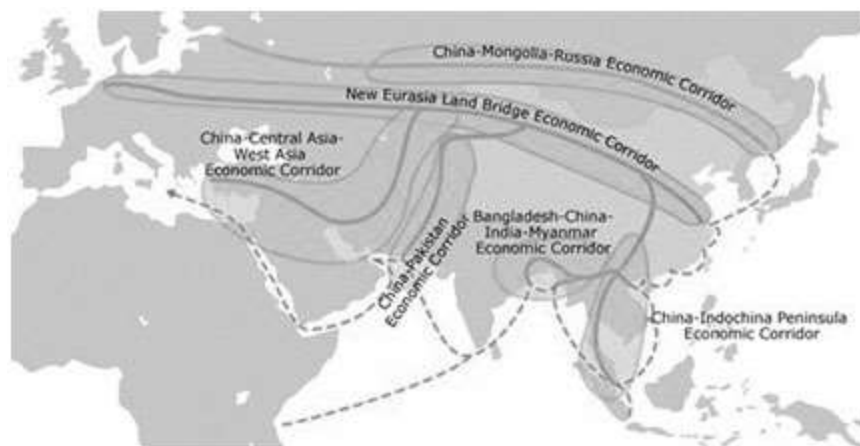


### *Conceptual Drawing of the Songdo International Business District*

Having attained high marks, particularly in the realm of information and communications technology, South Korea is beginning to focus on producing technology rooted in social needs, not just economic potential. One innovative project, consistent with True Parents' concern for the environment, is the International Business District (IBD) in Songdo City, an experiment in urban living that seeks to eliminate the need for cars. Prioritizing green spaces, clean air, and efficient management of resources, all apartment buildings and businesses are located within 12 minutes of a bus or subway stop. A pneumatic tube system sucks the trash from chutes in residential buildings to a central sorting facility in seconds, eliminated the need for garbage trucks. Greenhouse gas emissions are a third of comparably sized cities.<sup>[14]</sup>

### *Transportation Infrastructure*

While technology and technological innovation are important, the world's transportation infrastructure is what will shape the significant geopolitical realignments of the 21st century. As Rev. Moon wrote in his autobiography, *As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen*, "When a road is built, it changes the course of history... the world can physically be bound as one. The road will make it so."<sup>[15]</sup> There has been tremendous acceleration of global transportation networks since the end of the Cold War, and a unified Korea will be poised to take advantage of progress already made. The most important development has been the re-birth of a New Silk Road, consisting of land infrastructure (rail, roads, tunnels, bridges) linking China to Central Asia and even Western Europe.<sup>[16]</sup> In 2013, China announced a "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI). It includes a land-based "Silk Road Economic Belt" and an ocean-based "Maritime Silk Road." BRI is one of the largest infrastructure and investment projects in history, covering more than 68 countries, including 65% of the world's population and 40% of the global GDP as of 2017.<sup>[17]</sup>



### *China's Belt and Road Initiative, Showing Six Economic Corridors*

China's BRI transportation infrastructure does not include North Korea, South Korea, or Japan. This may be due to the Chinese government's desire to maintain the status quo of a divided Korea.<sup>[18]</sup> However, a united Korea is a necessary component of meaningful Eurasian integration.



*Proposed Inter-Korean Railway System*

South Korea's Moon Jae-in recognizes the centrality of transportation links. At the Inter-Korea Summit on April 27, 2018, he handed North Korea's Kim Jong-un a thumb drive containing a "New Economic Map of the Korean Peninsula." The map is based on a plan to modernize North Korea's antiquated railroads and create an inter-Korean railway system. According to one analyst, the rail system will be "a key piece in the geopolitical puzzle to connect North Korea to the world." It will link to Russia's Trans-Siberian Railroad and be an "eastern extension" of China's rail system, "creating an overland connection between... Korea and the prosperous Chinese cities across the Yellow Sea from the Korean Peninsula, including Beijing and Shanghai."

It also may "motivate Japan to finally begin working on the Korea-Japan undersea tunnel."<sup>[19]</sup> Rev. Moon, of course, called for the undersea tunnel in 1981 and envisioned an even more global transportation network than China's BRI in proposing a Bering Strait crossing linking the Eastern and Western hemispheres and the creation of a World Peace Highway in 2005.<sup>[20]</sup>

Northeast Asia, as a dominant economic region, represents a quarter of the world's GNP and is expected to be one of the leading economic blocs in the 21st century along with the European Union and North America. Linking Korea and Japan will establish the basis for a BESETO (Beijing–Seoul–Tokyo) transportation corridor connecting six megacities (Shanghai, Tianjin, Beijing, Seoul, Osaka and Tokyo), each with a population of more than 10 million.<sup>[21]</sup> This will parallel or even exceed the achievement of Europe at the opposite end of the Eurasian continent.

### *Culture*

One of the remarkable developments of the early 21st century has been the surge in popularity of Korean culture around the world. Referred to as the "Korean wave," or Hallyu, Korea's cultural influence is the strongest in China, Japan and Southeast Asia but also has spread to India, the Middle East, Central Asia, Iran, Israel, Turkey, and Russia, even the Americas and Europe. It includes massively popular Korean TV dramas, K-Pop music (the Korean artist Psy's "Gangnam Style" music video was the first YouTube video to reach one billion views), and a variety of cultural products including clothes, food, cosmetics, and computer games. South Korea's tourism industry also benefited as a result of interest in K-dramas and Korean culture generally. According to social scientists, this interest is not trivial but an example of "soft power," i.e., the influence "states can exert simply by being popular and well-liked."<sup>[22]</sup>

In *The Birth of Korean Cool: How One Nation Is Conquering the World through Pop Culture*, Euny Hong identifies several factors that help account for Korean cultural dominance, particularly in Asia. She argues that Korea has a key advantage in Asia because it has little history of "aggressive colonialism," unlike Japan or China. She also points out that Korea's "innate cultural conservatism enables it to promote its popular culture quickly and easily across a range of cultural backdrops." Lacking the more extreme sexuality of American music videos and dramas, K-Pop retains an element of innocence and K-dramas explore family issues, love and filial piety in an age of changing technology and values, rendering them more acceptable to Asian, Middle East and African audiences. Finally, Hong says that Korea's past history of "han" ("rage against the cruelty of fate") and shame ("at the country's historical poverty, at a history of colonial subjugation"), has helped shape contemporary Korea as "a superachieving, frighteningly ambitious nation."<sup>[23]</sup> That trait, which another commentator referred to as "an unwavering determination to be the best of the best,"<sup>[24]</sup> suggests that Korea's cultural influence will continue to grow.

### *Politics*

As a divided nation, Korea has been a vortex of global confrontation as the interests of great powers collided on the peninsula. As a unified nation, Korea will be in a position not only to prevent conflict among the great powers but also to assert leadership.

Currently, the great powers are at loggerheads. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is an effort to "draw the whole Eurasian continent into its sphere of influence."<sup>[25]</sup> The United States pushed the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) in an effort to contain China. Neither strategy appears to be working. China has faced a good deal of resistance, particularly from India, which has made it clear that its interest is "all about connecting... to strengthen its own position – and weaken China's."<sup>[26]</sup> On the other hand, following the

United States' withdrawal, TPP is floundering. The advantage a unified Korea will have is relationships with both global superpowers but identification with neither.

A unified Korea will fit the profile of being a “pivot” state, i.e., a nation that is able “to build profitable relationships with multiple major powers without becoming overly reliant on any one of them.”<sup>[27]</sup> President Moon Jae-in appears to recognize this in developing a “New Northern Policy,” proposing “nine bridges” or joint activities with Russia and a “New Southern Policy” of cultivating relationships with ASEAN nations.<sup>[28]</sup> A united Korea will have the opportunity to be “a hub state of Asia, bridging the Eurasian continent and the seas,”<sup>[29]</sup> fostering genuinely multilateral relations and prosperity.

All of this depends on North and South Korea ending hostilities and formally signing a peace treaty ending the Korean War, denuclearizing the Korean peninsula, and developing a formula for eventual reunification. Moon Jae-in and Kim Jong-un affirmed these principles in the April 27, 2018 “Panmunjeom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula.” Yet, previous leaders affirmed similar principles, only to see commitments broken and promises unfulfilled.<sup>[30]</sup> Should the two Koreas summon the political will to breakthrough in their relationship, a unified Korea will not only emerge as a constructive force in the world, but its achievement in attaining peace will serve as a model in resolving other intractable conflicts. Some have proposed constructing a Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) Peace Park, an Asian UN Headquarters Office in the DMZ or a multinational city near the mutual borders of Korea, Russia and China as ways of dramatizing and cementing this legacy. These are fine ideas, but they should not serve to minimize the daunting challenges that remain nor the consequences of failure.

## The Perils

The previous section reviewed positive reasons for the Koreas to unite. This section considers the perils of remaining divided. Perils covered include a population crisis in South Korea, economic adversity, isolation from global transportation networks, and the possibility of war.

### *Population Crisis*

The previous section referred to North Korea's “abundant and competitive” labor force. This stands in stark contrast to South Korea, where the labor force is shrinking. This was cited as one of the positive synergies between the two Koreas, if they unite. But on its own, the demographic situation in the South is dire. In 2017, South Korea recorded its lowest fertility rate ever, at 1.05 births per woman.<sup>[31]</sup> In fact, South Korea has been “the lowest fertility level country... for sixteen years in a row.”<sup>[32]</sup> The reasons for this are many:

Couples do not want to have a large family because of rising costs of living, including housing and education. South Koreans have the world's longest working hours, so they do not have time for a family or private life. At the same time there is also a high unemployment rate among young people. Women do not want to have children early in their lives because of the career, unavailability of maternity-leave and little participation of men in child raising and housework. On average, women have their first child at the age of 31.<sup>[33]</sup>

Whatever the causes, the effects are striking. A 2018 report noted, “In 1980, there were 5.7 million students in elementary schools in South Korea. Today there are three million. That's not population decline. That's population collapse.” According to that report,

South Korea is about to get much, much smaller, posing huge challenges for its economy...

With one of the lowest birth rates in the world, the republic is about to lose a large chunk of its population. According to Statistics Korea, the current population of 50 million will start to decline sometime between 2020 and 2030; by 2060, it will have plummeted to somewhere between 34 million and 44 million.

By then, South Korea will be a country full of old people. Half of the population will be over 60, while only a fifth will be under 30. There will be few workers available to pay taxes to support health care for the elderly, or to buy the cars and houses and other goods that drive an economy.<sup>[34]</sup>

Other developed countries with birth rates insufficient to sustain their populations “look to immigration to supplement the native born who are not being born.”<sup>[35]</sup> However, South Korea is reluctant to admit foreigners. That exacerbates the problem. Minus meaningful immigration or reunification with the North, some say, “the declining trend cannot be reversed.”<sup>[36]</sup>

### *Economic Uncertainty*

Apart from South Korea's population crisis, Korea in its divided state faces several economic perils. South Korea is the fourth largest economy in Asia (after China, Japan and India) and the eleventh largest economy in the world. It rose from being one of the poorest countries in the world to a developed, high-income country in a single generation based on an export economy. However, South Korea's dependence on exports (46% of its GDP) is dangerously higher than the United States (13 percent), Japan (18 percent) or China (22 percent), according to 2015 figures.

In a 2016 article, "South Korea is Poised for Economic Disaster," Justin Fendos notes, "The problem with a heavy dependence on exports is susceptibility to global competition." He points out that market share in other countries is vulnerable to "changing tastes, new competitors, and undercutting imitations that offer a similar product at a lower price." He observes that in recent years, "Korean prominence has been significantly diminished... due to the emergence of Chinese companies who have caught up in expertise, now able to offer comparable products at a lower price." A related problem is the "overall lack of diversity" of Korean exports. Fendos notes, "About 48 percent of all Korean exports consist of electronics and related components while 31 percent are transportation goods (cars, boats, and related parts)." Lacking sufficient diversification, global competition or a shift in market demand will cause South Korea's economy to spin into "a downward spiral."<sup>[37]</sup>

Although South Korea is a world leader in technology and technological innovation, it has been described as a "fast follower with great secondary innovations" rather than primary innovations."<sup>[38]</sup> In other words, its "comparative advantage" has been in "making existing products more efficient and cheaper, and not in the development of entirely new products."

Part of this is due to the government providing funding on a short-term basis for application or software development that can be done quickly rather than "than on things that require long-term reflection and more fundamental basic research."<sup>[39]</sup> In addition, "South Korea has been leading in a narrow range of technologies centered on ICT" (information and computer technology) that will likely reach a "saturation point."<sup>[40]</sup> Finally, due to an over-reliance on products and manufacturing, South Korea lags behind comparable economies in the domestic and international services sector. In a 2010 survey of overall service-industry efficiency, South Korea ranked a dismal 17th out of 18 OECD countries analyzed.<sup>[41]</sup>

These concerns are symptomatic of the larger problem of South Korea in its divided state: *technology in pursuit of profit over people*. Previous administrations, particularly the conservative ones, supported "big corporations and large exporters" (the chaebols), believing in "a trickle-down theory in which economic growth led by big players naturally leads to distribution of increased wealth to ordinary people." However, this did not occur. South Korea raised itself from the depths but with a widening income and wealth gap between rich and poor. In recent years, unemployment resulted from automation and young people unwilling to pursue fields other than ICT. South Korea also became a nation of workaholics.

The Moon Jae-in administration is pursuing an alternative agenda that takes into account not only "profitability" but also "social value." While stressing "innovative growth," the newly-elected president advocated technological development in the service of a "people-centered economy."<sup>[42]</sup> The government is putting emphasis on job creation, smaller companies and a "fair economy." Its "income-led growth" philosophy aims for higher wages, which will result in service sector growth as households have more money to spend.

In effect, South Korea is executing a dress rehearsal for the diversified economy required for reunification and the expanded domestic market that comes with it. On the other hand, continued failure to adapt its technology to the needs of its people will lead to diminished economic growth, rising unemployment and income inequality. Economic integration with North Korea will require time and investment. However, the benefits will outweigh costs. Reunification will be a stimulus rather than a detriment to South Korea's economy.

What is true for the South is truer for the North. North Korea has made marginal improvements though state-sanctioned and spontaneous marketplaces. However, it remains among the world's least developed economies. For North Korea to improve its decrepit transportation and electrical infrastructure and to cease diverting excessive amounts of resources for military spending, the two Koreas need to unite. This is the best option for North Korea to advance its economy and attain prosperity. The alternative is for North Korea to rely on China and risk becoming a semi-permanent tributary state in a return to the "Sinocentric universe that prevailed for a thousand years or more in the region."<sup>[43]</sup>

### *Isolation from Global Transportation Networks*

A previous section of this article referenced the tremendous acceleration of global transportation networks since the end of the Cold War and that a unified Korea will be poised to take advantage of progress made. However, it also noted that the two Koreas and Japan were left out of China's Belt and Road Initiative's (BRI) envisioned transportation infrastructure. Despite Rev. Moon's contention that peninsulas are platforms for oceanic and continental civilizations to fuse together and develop into a new civilization, South Korea remains "landlocked" by North Korea. As one analyst notes, "With North Korea preventing highways, trains, and other forms of ground transportation from passing through, South Korea has been limited to air and sea options for dealing with global trade."<sup>[44]</sup> This adds significant expense, hinders regional development and blocks meaningful Eurasian integration.

The lack of rail, tunnel and highway access between Japan, Korea and China is the most vital missing link in the world's regional transportation infrastructure.<sup>[45]</sup> Korean unification will enable implementation of this

link, which will enhance the cohesion and competitiveness of Northeast Asia. This promise is imperiled by Korea's inability to unite. Failure to link up the two Koreas' transportation networks will perpetuate polarization and risk economic isolation for both Koreas. Despite their potential as a logistical and distribution hub, the Koreas run the risk of being bypassed if they do not proceed aggressively to solidify their connection.



*Initiative to Connect Japan and Siberia by Train and Pipeline, Bypassing Korea*

Failure to connect to the New Silk Highway land-based infrastructure of rail and pipelines may result in the Koreas being squeezed out by India and China in the competition for Middle Eastern and Central Asian oil and natural gas. South Korean planners also need to take seriously the Russian Federation's stated intention to construct tunnels between its mainland and Sakhalin Island and between Sakhalin Island and Hokkaidō, Japan—a considerably shorter distance than the Korea-Japan Tunnel. This would allow Russia and Japan to bypass South Korea and threaten its strategic prominence as a gateway to the mainland.



*Proposed Undersea Tunnels Bypassing North Korea*

North Korea needs to be wary of discussions between China and South Korea about a South Korea-China Undersea Tunnel traversing the Yellow Sea, which would bypass the North and render it increasingly irrelevant.

*The Possibility of War*

After a period of high tension, leaders of both Koreas committed themselves to “Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula” at the Inter-Korea-Summit on April 27, 2018. They “solemnly declared before the 80 million Korean people and the whole world that there will be no more war on the Korean Peninsula and thus a new era of peace has begun.” However, as noted, previous leaders have made similar pledges only to see commitments broken and promises unfulfilled. In fact, both sides have been conducting military exercises in preparation for war since 1953.

North Korea has an estimated 8,000 big guns embedded in hardened artillery sites just north of the DMZ, forty miles from Seoul. It has 700,000 ground forces, 2,000 tanks, 300 aircraft, over 400 surface warships and about 50 submarines with 100 miles of the DMZ. The South has in place a “Korean Massive Punishment and Retaliation Plan” which includes decapitation of top North Korean leadership. The United States has some 30,000 military personnel stationed in Korea, 40,000 in Japan where the U.S. Seventh Fleet is headquartered, and squadrons of long-range bombers in Guam. U.S. President Donald Trump stated North Korea threats to the U.S. “will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen.” For its part, North Korea has vowed to turn Seoul into “a sea of fire.”

Whatever the provocation, whether due to miscalculation or deliberate intent, no one can rule out the possibility of a second Korean War so long as North and South remain divided. The consequences would be catastrophic. Some estimates project casualties in the larger Seoul metropolitan area alone “may surpass 100,000 within 48 hours... even without the use of North Korean weapons of mass destruction.” The U.S. Department of Defense “assessed that a Second Korean War could produce 200,000-300,000 South Korean and U.S. military casualties within the first 90 days, in addition to hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths.”<sup>[46]</sup> The U.S. Congressional Research Service estimates that North Korea could hit the South Korean capital “with an astonishing 10,000 rockets per minute, and that such a barrage could kill more than 300,000 South Koreans in the opening days of the conflict.”<sup>[47]</sup> Use of chemical or biological agents, of which North Korea is believed to have 2,500-5,000 metric tons, will drive the death and casualty total upwards exponentially, as would nuclear weapons. As one analyst put it, “A new war on the Korean Peninsula wouldn't be as bad as you think. It would be much, much worse.”<sup>[48]</sup>

Few doubt that the outcome of war will be the defeat of North Korea. However, that would not necessarily mean reunification of the peninsula. Some analysts suggest that the primary objective of a North Korean invasion would be to capture and hold Seoul for as long as possible. This would not only be an “important propaganda victory” but would involve the South Korean army and U.S. forces in a “military quagmire.”<sup>[49]</sup> It is also likely that China will intervene, not to protect North Korea as a “supposed ally,” but “to protect its own interests.” Some experts believe,

China would quickly send hundreds of thousands of troops into North Korea to seize control of the country’s nuclear sites and prevent Kim from using the weapons. Chinese and North Korean troops would not be working together against a common enemy; they’d be trying to kill each other.<sup>[50]</sup>

According to this scenario,

Chinese troops would only need to advance 60 miles into North Korea to take control of all of the country’s highest-priority nuclear sites and two-thirds of its highest-priority missile sites. Given that enormous geographic advantage, Beijing’s troops would almost certainly arrive before the US ones do.<sup>[51]</sup>

Apart from the “complicated, and really dangerous” situation of Chinese and U.S. Special Forces confronting one another at North Korean nuclear facilities, it is certain that China will “be trying to stabilize postwar Korea on its own terms,” not those of the United States or South Korea.<sup>[52]</sup> This could perpetuate division.

## **Toward a Heavenly Korea**

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon utilizes the term “Heavenly Korea” when referring to Korea’s national destiny. Specifically, she envisions a nation that accepts the Unification Marriage Blessing and family ideal. At one level, this is to be signified by the nation’s president conducting or overseeing a holy blessing ceremony and the multiplication of marriage blessings at the grassroots level conducted by innumerable “tribal messiahs.”<sup>[53]</sup> However, there is a question as to how the Unification Marriage Blessing will transform Korean national identity and public policy. This is a crucial question. I suggest it will do so by fostering multiculturalism and transnational patriotism. I will conclude by expanding on each of these dynamics.

### *Multiculturalism*

As noted, Rev. Moon taught that Korea, as a peninsular nation, is in a position to provide the platform for oceanic and continental civilizations to fuse together and develop into a new civilization. However, Korea’s national consciousness, North and South, has tended to be insular. Possibly due to its history of being oppressed by great powers, Korea closed itself off as a “hermit kingdom.” The North manifests this in its national ideology of Juche, or self-sufficiency. The South, though far more integrated with the world’s economy, nevertheless retains with the North a strong commitment to ethnic and cultural homogeneity based upon the narrative of being a “pure race” of people descended from a single ancestor.<sup>[54]</sup>

This is evident in South Korea’s restrictive immigration policies. It admits migrant workers doing so-called “3-D work” (dirty, dangerous and difficult) but even educated young Koreans have been “wary of letting them become citizens, lest they dilute the nation’s identity.”<sup>[55]</sup> This has changed somewhat under the impress of South Korea’s population crisis. The government has supported “marriage migrants,” mostly Chinese and Southeast Asian women who marry Korean men.

According to one account,

An estimated third of all children born in 2020 (1.67 million) are expected to be of part Korean and part other Asian descent (“Kosian”), composing 3.3 percent of the total population. By 2020 and 2030 respectively, an estimated 5 percent and 10 percent of the South Korean population will be composed of foreign-born and immigrant families.<sup>[56]</sup>

Some see South Korea changing from a “mono-ethnic to a multi-ethnic nation.”<sup>[57]</sup>

If the Unification Marriage Blessing movement takes hold in Korea, these figures will accelerate. Rev. Moon made no secret of his preference for “Exchange Marriage,” i.e., marriages between persons of different races, cultures and nationalities, and especially those from former enemy nations. He undoubtedly would encourage North Korean-South Korean unions, as well as Korean-Japanese, Korean-American, Korean-European, Korean-Filipino, and Korean-African marriages like the ones he presided over during his life. He also made it clear that he intended to set up international villages and living arrangements on church property in South Korea.



The surge in popularity of South Korean culture around the world has demonstrated the breadth of its appeal, and Korean artists have shown themselves capable of blending ingredients, including languages from multiple cultures to create new hybrid forms. If, as Rev. Moon argued, “all the strands of world history meet on the Korean peninsula,” there is no reason why Korea would not be a hospitable place to the world’s people. Studies suggest that “sustained bursts of growth and innovation tend to occur in places buffeted by cultural crosscurrents, invigorated by fresh energy, talents and perspectives.”<sup>[58]</sup> If that is true, then a unified Korea might inspire a new global renaissance.

#### *Transnational Patriotism*

Connected to his vision of inter-cultural, inter-racial and international unification, Rev. Moon called upon Korea to embrace “transnational patriotism.” As he put it,

As long as the nation is divided, its people should unite and struggle to restore their one sovereignty. But their task does not end with the recovery of sovereignty. Once it is achieved, the nation has to advance a global vision. Unless the Korean people go through the path of struggle to recover the world, willing even to sacrifice their hard-fought sovereignty, the unified world of peace will not come...

If Korea is to be a nation that the world welcomes, the Koreans must become a people who willingly take the lead by shouldering the cross of the world... Once unified as a nation... [Korea] will not seek to exploit the world. Rather, it will be a true nation, one that sacrifices for the world.<sup>[59]</sup>

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon echoes Rev. Moon’s words in continually referencing the needs of the world’s 7.5 billion people and of the environment. In her keynote address before 80,000 participants at a Global Rally for the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula” at Seoul Olympic Stadium on November 11, 2017, she issued a challenge to her fellow Koreans: “I will say this to the Korean people: We have received Heaven’s blessing. We must live lives in which we can share that blessing. What must we do for the global providence?”<sup>[60]</sup>

As a divided nation, Korea had limited opportunities to exercise global leadership. South Korean President Lee Myung-bak (2008-13) put forward a “Global Korea” policy based on the idea that “International relations of the 21st century... are too complex to rely solely on major powers” and “middle powers” such as the Republic of Korea “need to carry out proactive diplomacy” in order to achieve “a stable and prosperous global system.”<sup>[61]</sup> His successor, Park Geun-hye (2013-17) advocated a policy of national, regional and global “trustpolitik” and announced to the U.S. Congress her intention to create an international park in the DMZ, “a zone of peace bringing together not just Koreans separated by a military line, but also the citizens of the world.”<sup>[62]</sup>

Neither of these initiatives achieved much traction due to continual breakdowns in the North-South relationship. As one commentator noted, “There are already enough visions, master plans, roadmaps, and proposals... what is needed is a breakthrough in the stalled inter-Korean relationship.”<sup>[63]</sup> It is to be hoped that the current efforts of Moon Jae-in, Kim Jong-un and Donald Trump will achieve that breakthrough. If so, a unified Korea, hopefully a “heavenly” Korea, will emerge as a major new player on the world stage.

## Notes

<sup>[1]</sup> Rev. Moon first delivered the speech on February 10, 2000, on the occasion of his 80th birthday and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon’s 57th birthday. He subsequently delivered it in many of the rallies for the Unification of North and South Korea held in 21 cities throughout the Republic of Korea. Afterwards, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon delivered the message in Japan.

<sup>[2]</sup> Sun Myung Moon, “A Heart that Truly Wants to Live Together in Harmony.” Excerpt from “World Unification and North-South Unification Will Be Accomplished by True Love,” February 10, 2000. [www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon00/SunMyungMoon-000210b.htm](http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon00/SunMyungMoon-000210b.htm).

<sup>[3]</sup> [www.tparents.org/Moon-Books/SunMyungMoon-Csg/CSG-13-06-01.htm](http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Books/SunMyungMoon-Csg/CSG-13-06-01.htm).

<sup>[4]</sup> Ibid

<sup>[5]</sup> Sun Myung Moon, “Korean Unification and World Peace,” Cheon Seong Gyeong. [www.tparents.org/Moon-Books/CSG14/CSG14-10.pdf](http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Books/CSG14/CSG14-10.pdf)

<sup>[6]</sup> Sun Myung Moon, “A Providential View of the Pacific Rim Era in Light of God’s Will,”

<sup>[7]</sup> Moon, “Korean Unification and World Peace.”

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[13] Sintia Radu, "Innovation with a Human Face." U.S. News and World Report, February 23, 2018. [www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2018-02-23/south-korea-alters-its-strategy-to-drive-and-create-innovation](http://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2018-02-23/south-korea-alters-its-strategy-to-drive-and-create-innovation)

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[15] Sun Myung Moon, As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen (Washington, D.C.: The Washington Times Foundation, 2009), p. 340.

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[51] *Ibid.*

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] Rev. Moon coined the term "tribal messiah" in referring to Unification Church members who return to their hometowns to bless their relatives and contacts. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon has called upon tribal messiahs to bless 430 couples and for each of those 430 couples to bless 430 couples.

[54] Korea's myth of origin is based on the Dangun (or Tan'gun) legend. As the progenitor of the Korean race, he is believed to be descended from the Lord of Heaven's son and a she-bear and to have founded the first Korean kingdom, Old Choson, or Gojoseon.

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