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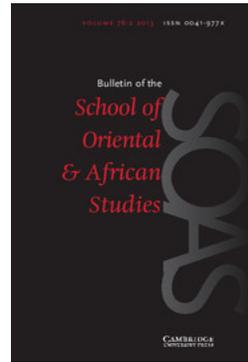
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**Heonik Kwon and Byung-Ho Chung: *North Korea: Beyond Charismatic Politics*. xii, 218 pp. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012. ISBN 978 0 7425 5679 9.**

Keith Howard

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was not encouraged to think very much about China at all, nor indeed very often, save perhaps during the ever darkening days of the 1930s, and then only as part of a deepening international mood of crisis. The general level of concern for China (as opposed to concern for the publishing nation's interests in China) is succinctly satirized by Israel Epstein in a parody of a 1930s report he gives in Stephen R. Mackinnon and Oris Friesen, *China Reporting: An Oral History of American Journalism in the 1930s and 1940s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 35, to illustrate the dictum: "The reporting was mainly about how what was happening in China affected foreigners".

Against this, we should perhaps also remember that China was not only encountered somewhat briefly at the breakfast table but also in the chapel and at Sunday school. Viewed from the vantage of press coverage Ariane Knüsel draws a distinction (p. 53, cf. pp. 65–7 on Switzerland) between an America much influenced by missionary opinion and a Britain where merchant and diplomatic views were more to the fore. Yet missionaries here just as much as elsewhere were very active in getting their views of China across through their own publications, which saw a very wide circulation. A brief survey of these reveals plenty of stock images of China – Great Walls, pagodas, even fishing cormorants, an image that goes back to shortly after the time of Marco Polo. But though the occasional missionary, such as the American Hampden Coit DuBose, employs dragon imagery, it was perhaps too threatening for those whose calling predisposed them to a degree of optimism about the prospects for converting China, and so another type of imagery tends to serve in spreading the news about their efforts there. All this is not to deny the value of the research contained in the volume under review, but simply to point out that the title of the book makes no claim to being a comprehensive study of China's image in America, Britain or Switzerland as a whole. What it does, however, is done extremely competently: it sets a good standard, and future researchers in this area would do well to pay due attention to its findings.

**T.H. Barrett**

SOAS, University of London

HEONIK KWON and BYUNG-HO CHUNG:

*North Korea: Beyond Charismatic Politics.*

xii, 218 pp. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012. ISBN 978 0 7425 5679 9.

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In many ways, this is an exceptional study that opens the curtain on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). Kwon and Chung utilize Max Weber's theory of charismatic politics, linking it to Clifford Geertz's observations about stage-managing the charisma of leadership. But, to Geertz's "theatre state" the authors add a notion of the "family state". This allows them to account for how three generations of the Kim family have maintained power without succumbing to the routinization of charisma that Weber considered inevitable over time. The "family state" is premised on a "barrel of the gun" (*ch'ongdae*) political theory: the gift of two guns to a teenage Kim Il Sung by his father in today's north-eastern China at the beginning of his anti-Japanese activity, and the gift of a single gun from Kim Il Sung to a pre-teenage Kim Jong Il during the Korean War. It also celebrates Kim's partisan group in Manchuria as the legitimate revolutionaries who brought North Korea into existence. This latter requires what Charles Armstrong refers to

as “centering the periphery” (“Centering the periphery: Manchurian exile(s) and the North Korean state”, *Korean Studies* 19/1–16, 1995): the partisans in Manchuria were one of a number of factions seeking an independent Korea, but they, rather than those active in China or further south in Korea, and rather than the millions who died in the fratricidal Korean War, are venerated at the National Cemetery. And this cemetery gives pride of place to the grave of Kim Jong Suk – Kim Il Sung’s wife and mother of his son and successor Kim Jong Il.

The opening chapter explores Kim Il Sung’s death in 1994. His loss, within the “family state”, was a national bereavement, juxtaposing the traditional Confucian virtues of filial piety (*hyo*) and loyalty to the ruler (*ch’ong*). Kim died as natural disasters wrecked the public food distribution system, and Kwon and Chung describe how the mourning period was extended to allow the logic of the family state to be recast now that the state could not provide basic sustenance: the “barrel of the gun” theory was fused to a military-first (*sŏn’gun*) policy that became central throughout the rule of Kim Jong Il. Arising at a time of crisis (though duly backdated in an effort to square the circle between family authority and military might), this always had an inbuilt contradiction, not least as scarce food was appropriated by the military. Chapter 3 builds an understanding of this policy, but curiously avoids mention of any deal the younger Kim made with the military in exchange for assuming power. Chapter 2, first, discusses the “theatre state”. This book arrives two years after Suk-young Kim charted how spectacle combined with everyday performance to hammer home the legacy of Kim Il Sung (*Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010). Kwon and Chung explore some of the same territory, finding in the performative a way to sideline economic development. They mainly restrict themselves to the early 1970s, and to two “revolutionary” operas, *The Flower-Selling Girl* and *The Sea of Blood*. Elsewhere, the 1970s was a time of détente, but not in North Korea, where ideologues developed an independent political theory – *juče* – while strengthening the authority of the chosen successor, Kim Jong Il. I note that North Korean publications refer merely to *The Flower Girl*, and wonder about the exact timeline: Nixon’s visit to China, the most significant move towards détente, came in 1972, after much of *juče* had been formalized (and after *The Sea of Blood* premiered).

Chapter 4 takes us to the National Cemetery, and to a 1984 renovation of it guided by Kim Jong Il. A discussion of “heroic maternal icons” cites a later (1999) publication from Pyongyang but sits apart from Suk-young Kim’s parallel discussion. Kwon and Chung place Kim Jong Suk as “the vital center of the first-generation revolutionary heritage”, but until the very end of their discussion they avoid any consideration of whether her elevation was little more than an effort to bolster the authority of her son as chosen successor. Next, chapter 5 explores gifts to the leaders that are exhibited in a nuclear bunker complex in Myohyang Mountain, interpreting these as preaching the Kim family’s importance throughout the world. While North Korea did develop rapidly through to the 1960s, it then moved on to a declining trajectory. Chapter 6, “The moral economy”, shows how the state came to be interpreted as a super-organic family in which reciprocity demanded absolute loyalty to ensure common survival, while all the time the political economy was failing. Kwon and Chung write as dynastic succession moved from Kim Jong Il to one of his sons, Kim Jong Un. They describe how in 2010 a scrupulously planned political spectacle set the succession in motion (although I note that a song about him appeared a year earlier and led to plenty of speculation).

To this point, much is convincing, with only the unorthodox romanizations marring this reader’s enjoyment. Finally, though, we are offered a set of blunt

conclusions. These contrast with much of the account we have read so far: North Korea must now circumvent its structural and moral challenges if it is to survive, move itself away from charismatic politics to engage with the world, and abandon its military-first policy to develop its economy; it must abandon the grotesque hagiography that continually shouts of proud successes and accept its tragic failures; it must accept foreign aid and investment; it must abandon its nuclear ambitions. Any and all of these are, frankly, quite an ask.

**Keith Howard**

SOAS, University of London

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GENERAL

LISE WINER:

*Dictionary of the English/Creole of Trinidad and Tobago.*

Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009. xiv, 1048 pp. \$85.

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In her introduction, the author states that this dictionary, compiled on historical principles, "includes only those local lexical items that differ from or are not otherwise part of modern standard British and North American English" (p. xiii). But "only" in the context of Trinidad and Tobago means a great many. While no figure is given for the total number of entries, I estimate that there are more than 12,000. These are set out in two columns on very large pages. Furthermore, most entries include well-chosen examples illustrating the use of headwords which Winer has carefully selected from newspapers, books, manuscripts, and oral sources over many years. In addition there are cross-references for words for which two or more spellings are in frequent use.

The large number of entries in this dictionary reflects the history of the territory during the past four centuries. The Spanish took Trinidad from its original Amerindian inhabitants in the late sixteenth century but not before their names for many species of flora and fauna had found their way into Spanish. In the eighteenth century, French settlers in other Caribbean islands were encouraged to move to Trinidad with their slaves. Many did so, resulting not only in the introduction of speakers of both French and the French Creole of the Antilles but also of African languages spoken by their slaves emanating from Senegambia to Angola. The British took the island in 1797, adding English and Caribbean English Creole to the linguistic mix. The ending of slavery in the 1830s led to an increasing demand for labour which resulted in further immigration from China, Africa, and above all from India. The latter immigrants were drawn mainly from north-east India and were speakers of varieties of Bhojpuri and related Indic languages, but a minority came from southern India and spoke Dravidian languages.

The wide range of potential sources of words in Caribbean Creoles, and in Trinidadian English Creole in particular, makes the tracing of etymologies a complicated matter. One such case is *kalalu* "a thick soup, made with green leaves . . . and ochro, seasoned with salted meat or crab" (p. 155). Winer follows Cassidy and Le Page (*Dictionary of Jamaican English*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,