New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu: Transformation, Myth and Gender in Korean Landscape

By Victoria Ten (Jeon Yeon Hwa)
and Robert Winstanley-Chesters

New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu: Transformation, Myth and Gender in Korean Landscape

By **Victoria Ten (Jeon Yeon Hwa)** and **Robert Winstanley-Chesters**

Edited by **Alla Burman**

Artwork by **Lee Sumi**

Table of Contents

Abstract

Mountain worship has always been one of the central features of Korean cultural landscape. While specific traditions of mountain culture have been utilized by North Korea's leadership for the purpose of promotion of the state ideology, in South Korea mountain culture has acquired different forms. We argue that contemporary South Korean ki suryŏn (氣 修練) practices for perfection of mind and body constitute such manifestation of mountain-related culture. The ancient tradition of mountain gods (山神, sanshin) is a source from which the legendary figures of New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu emerge. We study origination and development of Paektu-related myths of South and North Korea, focusing on two divinities. The first goddess is Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ (天仙女, the Woman of Heaven) from the contemporary legend of GiCheon (氣天, Kich'ŏn), one of the ki suryŏn training methods. Our second goddess is Kim Chŏng-suk, the first wife of Kim Il-sŏng, founder of North Korea. In order to study simultaneous processes of origination and development of Mt. Paektu-related myths of South and North Korea, we consider sources from different fields of knowledge, such as folklore, art, philosophy and religion, politics, literary criticism, political science and environmental science. We apply an interdisciplinary approach to two seemingly incompatible processes of mythmaking of contemporary South and North Korea. The two countries, divided geographically, politically, economically, have for many centuries been one nation and one people, one language and one culture. This commonality has not disappeared into the depth of history, but comes to the cultural surface even in this most difficult contemporary time.

Prefatory Note

The book uses the McCune Reischauer romanization strategy created in 1937 by George McCune of the University of California, Berkeley and Edwin Reischauer of Harvard University. For the names of Korean authors, if they publish in English, we use their names as spelt in English, if they have published in Korean, we romanize their names according to

McCune Reischauer. For authors with Korean names, we cite the surname before the given name in the body of the text. We refer to the landscape of our interest as “Mt. Paektu”, and romanize all other texts, places and names of persons from North and South Korea in the McCune Reischauer format. On occasion we use the original Chinese, Korean Hancha, Korean Hangŭl/Chosŏngŭl or Japanese characters if their meaning is not easily translated. We refer to North and South Korea also as Northern and Southern Korea throughout the book. We use the Chicago Manual of Style (16th Volume) for our referencing, footnoting, and style. We use American spellings of the English language throughout the book.

Chapter One: Introduction

New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu is a book about transformations. It continues the exploration of the various manifestations of the traditional East Asian goddesses done, for example, by T'ang (618–907) poets such as Chang Chiu-ling (Schafer 1980, 1).1 However in the book New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu the images of the goddesses are transformed not by ancient poets but by contemporary residents of North and South Korea.2 We examine the processes by which ancient goddesses rise from archaic layers of culture and come into being and action in modern time and space. New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu are constructed in modern South and North Korea as models for emulation. Our first contemporary heroine is a Woman of Heaven from South Korean mythology, the second is a real heroine Kim Chŏng-suk, who became a "revolutionary immortal" in North Korean mythography. These goddesses of today might look and dress differently, but their connection to older traditions are still visible. These goddesses in the pages of our book connect intimately to famous Mt. Paektu, which in our times has increased in importance and conceptual stature.

Mt. Paektu, considered an ancestral mountain during the Koryŏ (918 – 1392) and Chosŏn (1392 – 1910) dynasties, began to gain further cultural and political currency in the Korea of the late 18th century (Kang Sŏk-hwa 2011), eventually becoming a symbol of Korean nation in the 20th century.3 The Korean Peninsula is now divided into two sovereign bodies, split by a geographic and political rupture across its middle, far to the south of Mt. Paektu. This division

[1] Shaman Mountain comes close to the sky,
A misted scene with a stretch of blue sparkle.
Here it was that the King of Ch'u dreamed,
Dreamed that he won the soul of the Divine Woman

The Divine Woman has long since gone away;
Clouds and rain are gloomy, dark – and empty.
Here is only the wail of the monkeys of Pa –
No note of sorrow is to be heard
(Chang Chiu-ling, "Wu shan kao," CTC, 47, 565, referenced in Schafer 1980, 106)

[2] Ideas which led to the composition of this book have been publicized earlier in an article "New Goddesses at Paektu Mountain: Two contemporary Korean myths" (Winstanley-Chesters and Ten 2016).

[3] The discussion on Mt. Paektu in Chapter One-Introduction and Chapter Two of our book relies on some elements from chapters 1 and 7 of the Doctoral Dissertation titled *Body and Ki in GiCheon: Practices of Self-Cultivation in Contemporary Korea*, defended by Victoria Ten in 2017 at Leiden University.

continues to be a source of intense pain and political destabilisation within East Asia. For a long time, the political structures that have grown up on either side, far from working towards unification, were put to the use of contesting each other, attempting to negate or nullify the authority of the other. Mt. Paektu's geographic position is at the northern border of the peninsula, for the most part within the territory of North Korea, a wilderness far from the centres of power. Given this one might expect the mountain's place within the contemporary culture and history of the peninsula to be diminished. However, any visitor to either of the Korean nations will report the increasing importance of the Paektu landscape to both. The picture of Mt. Paektu is present on the walls of North Korean political and institutional buildings, on billboards on the side of the COEX shopping mall in Kangnam, central Seoul, and on the mosaics at the stations of Seoul metro system in South Korea.[4]

Mt. Paektu slopes are complex, energetic, lively spaces which allow for the manifestation of emerging mythologies which reconfigure Korean cultural traditions. The heroines of our book embody the transformation from mortal into immortal in contemporary Korean context. They represent the enmeshing of immortals with the social and natural landscape of Korea. The goddess Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ (天仙女, the Woman of Heaven) comes from the contemporary legend of GiCheon (氣天, Kich'ŏn), one of the ki suryŏn (氣修練) practices. Ki suryŏn means "training related to ki – life energy." These training methods are re-invented in modernity on the basis of ancient Asian traditions, similarly to Chinese qigong and Indian yoga.[5] In the GiCheon legend Bodhidharma, the key figure of Chan Buddhism and the founder of the Shaolin temple, seeks Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ at Mt. Paektu, and asks her to spar with him.[6] She wins, and Bodhidharma begs her to take him as a student. His wish is granted, but only after he willingly cuts away his own arm. We discuss this dramatic event in Chapter Seven.

Our new goddess Kim Chŏng-suk, a heroine from the North Korean mythologies, is reinvented by North Korean politics and transformed from child of peasant sharecroppers to guerrilla hero, revolutionary model and mother of the nation. Kim Chŏng-suk was the first wife of Kim Il-sŏng, founder of North Korea and its eternal Great Leader. She was the mother of Kim Chŏng-

[4] We have explored this idea in our AKSE (Association for Korean Studies Europe) 2017 panel presentation Mr. Paektu in North and South Korea – a Living Tradition. See also Ten 2017b.
[5] These Korean practices are described in greater detail in Chapter Four.
[6] Bodhidharma has supposedly come from India to China around 480 AD. Bodhidharma is a popular hero of Chinese Buddhist lore (Shahar 2008, 13) and is equally one of the important figures for Korean Buddhism. Chinese character Chan (禪) is pronounced as Zen in Japanese and as Sŏn in Korean.

il, The Dear Leader, the nation's second figurehead, and the grandmother of Kim Chŏng-ŭn, the current Supreme Leader of North Korea. Chapters Five and Six of this book are dedicated to Kim Chŏng-suk. The image of Kim Chŏng-suk has not attracted much scholarly attention up to the present day.7 In fact, our book would be the first monograph where Kim is one of the two main protagonists. However, the current study approaches Kim Chŏng-suk less as focal point or central narrative subject, but more as an example, an illustration for something else. The analysis of our book holds Kim Chŏng-suk and her story to be the reappearance in contemporary consciousness of an image of an ancient goddess.

While the visibility and significance of a revolutionary heroine such as Kim Chŏng-suk within North Korean political culture is unquestionable, her comparison with the Woman of Heaven from GiCheon mythology might seem a strange choice of a subject. Yet, we suggest that mountain worship has always been one of the central features of Korean cultural landscape. While specific traditions of mountain culture have been utilized by North Korea's leadership for the purpose of promotion of the state ideology, in South Korea mountain culture has acquired different forms. We argue that contemporary South Korean ki suryŏn practices for perfection of mind and body constitute such manifestation of mountain-related culture. GiCheon and Kouksundo (國仙道, Kuksŏndo, Korean Immortality Way) training methods, originating in 1970s, are among the first South Korean ki suryŏn groups (U Hye-ran 2006b, 77, on Kouksundo). GiCheon influenced many later ki suryŏn groups, as Chapter Four discusses. The character 仙 (sŏn, immortals, or immortality) is often a part of the names of organizations related to GiCheon and ki suryŏn.

Religious or spiritual practices embrace, interpret and utilize notions of gender, thus forming gender roles in a given society (Kendall 1987). Our book examines these processes in Northern and Southern Korea thus raising questions of femininity and masculinity and the approach we adopt in relation to these notions. In contemporary feminist scholarship gender is theorized as a complex set of practices, logics and institutions (Ju Hui and Jihye Chun 2014,

[7] Kim Chŏng-suk appears very briefly in a number of works on North Korea, North Korean politics, the Kim family dynasty and the notion of 'Paektusan Generals.' Dae-Sook Suh's, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader, 1995* has perhaps the most comprehensive recounting of her place within the family story. Morgan Clippinger's "*Kim Chŏng-il in the North Korean Mass Media: A Study of Semi-Esoteric Communication*," 1981, considers her transformation in North Korean media and publications. Suzy Kim's '*Mothers and Maidens: Gendered Formation of Revolutionary Heroes in North Korea*' 2014, reviews the place of mothers and motherhood in North Korean mythology. Kim Chŏng-suk most frequently appears in the voluminous production of North Korean academia and historical publications.

248).[8] Suzy Kim identifies North Korean references to motherly love in the context of revolutionary discourse as radical selflessness in the interest of the collective (Suzy Kim 2014). As the narratives of our book clarify again, Kim Chŏng-suk is clearly represented as selfless. Selflessness is one of the main traits of her officially constructed image, as we relate in Chapters Five and Six. Yet, we suggest that the idea of motherhood in North Korean ideology stretches further than selflessness. Motherhood is one of the attributes of ancient goddesses. Our book attempts to identify elements of ancient connotations of divine femininity which resurface in contemporary times in new mythological forms. Chapter Seven describes our second goddess, the Woman of Heaven, who is not at all self-sacrificing, but demands bloody sacrifices from others in her honor, insisting on her dignity and perfection. The New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu emerge in both Koreas as models for emulation. These new images are feminine, but are applied across genders, inspiring, or attempting to inspire women and men alike.[9]

Ki suryŏn and the mythology of North Korea are both contemporary invented traditions. The term "invented tradition" echoes the famous study The Invention of Tradition by E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger ([1983] 1992). Invented traditions - the focus of our study - connect intimately with the concept of imagined communities developed by Benedict Anderson (1983). It is not by chance that these two monumental works, one on the invented traditions, the other one on imagined communities, were published the same year, 1983. Similar to other communities, Korea was forced to imagine itself anew in the modern world and then re-imagine itself again as two countries after the division of the nation. Because of this division, Koreans were compelled to imagine themselves as two separate communities, divided and in opposition yet deeply related to each other. These processes thus produce new invented traditions. Kwon and Chung in their work on the form and process of North Korean politics flag up in particular the invented traditions of North Korea (Kwon and Chung 2012, 63).

Our book is certainly not a work of history or historiography in the pure sense. While we touch on historical themes as they are imagined in the two particular new traditions, the narratives we encounter do not claim to be historical. This book does not study the sources as a historian might. We select a limited number of sources as our primary material, keeping in mind that invented traditions invent also their sources. The invented sources often utilize standard motifs

[8] See also Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter*; Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*; Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman, "Doing Gender", referenced in Ju Hui and Jihye Chun 2014, note 17.

[9] Suzy Kim talks about the feminine revolutionary models, particularly the model of devoted mother, which are applied across genders (Suzy Kim 2014, 261).

in numerous variations. North Korea has produced a vast variety of different kinds of literature, extrapolating, extending or embellishing its core mythologies. What it considers to be primary sources are few and far between. As to the sources of South Korean invented tradition, GiCheon, there are several books produced at the end of the 20th century that contain the myths transmitted orally since the 1970s.10 The authors of the book New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu do not limit themselves to analysis of these core narratives. We analyse the stories, but also the places where the narratives are set. We review how Mt. Paektu itself functions in the legends, and how the landscape of the mountain impacts on the writing of the narrative. The writers behind the stories, North Korean authorities and South Korean GiCheon practitioners, already have a vision and understanding of the mountain in their mind. This landscape exists in the collective mind set within particular political and spiritual culture. These stories are deeply connected to Korean nationalism and spiritual power of Mt. Paektu, seeking to do justice to the place. We review our material through the lens of theoretical approaches sourced from several academic disciplines, including the notions of invented tradition, political charisma, subtle bodies and the technologies of self.

Textual sources mentioned in the previous paragraph are in fact only a small part of the materials we had to study. The approach of this book is interdisciplinary. It is the most difficult endeavour, as we had to study materials from different fields of knowledge. Our research is innovative, as never before has an attempt been undertaken to apply interdisciplinary approach to so seemingly incompatible processes as the mythmaking of contemporary Southern and Northern Korea. The two countries, divided geographically, politically, economically, have for many centuries been one nation and one people, one language and one culture. This commonality has not disappeared into the depth of history, but comes to the cultural surface in the present. Myths encountered within New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu grow from common roots, common heritage of the past, which find their expression in the image of Mt. Paektu, respected, venerated and revivified today by Koreans across the peninsula. Mt. Paektu itself is a living tradition in a state of being continuously invented and re-invented, a unique cultural phenomenon developing in the two seemingly different societies (Winstanley-Chesters and Ten 2016, Ten 2017b). In order to study simultaneous processes of origination and development of Paektu-related myths of South and North Korea, we had to study sources from different fields of knowledge, such as folklore, art, philosophy and religion, politics, literary

[10] Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun 1998; Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000.

criticism, political science and environmental science. Our book is a work of an energised and curious interdisciplinary nature. It presents a useful and functional strategy to explore invented traditions whose roots are so wide, deep and powerful. Such breadth of study cannot exclude possible mistakes, missteps or the insufficient highlighting of some scientific aspects. Yet, our approach is new, so we hope that readers will be indulgent to the shortcomings of our work.

The study of invented tradition may seem slippery or too diffuse for the academic historian. However, any tradition is in a sense invented at some point, being an assemblage of the history and the myth-making, the real and the imagined. The traditions our goddesses represent certainly fit this model. Neither author is a historian, nor a folklorist or specialist in mythology. One is a critical geographer with a focus on the intersection between topography and political culture in North Korea, the other is an anthropologist who is personally committed to GiCheon practice and at the same time carries out academic research on contemporary South Korean methods of self-cultivation.

After this book's agenda, key characters, approach to academic disciplines and sources were introduced, we will review the theoretical frames we apply in our investigation. The book is primarily focused on transformation of our goddesses within the landscape of Mt. Paektu. Therefore, we first address the theoretical literature which supports our analysis of self-transformation, including the work of Michel Foucault (1988). Secondly, we focus on scientific materials on landscapes and mountain practices, including the approaches developed by Denis Cosgrove (2001), Noel Castree (2000), Erik Swyngedouw (1997), Jane Bennett (2015) and Sarah Whatmore (2005). This subset also includes traditions important for Korean mountain topographies and their place within the wider cultural matrix, as explained by David Mason (1999).

Transformation and Technologies of the self

Transformation of the character or the landscape is often made manifest by techniques, practices and strategies deployed by the characters within the text itself. The authors of this book use "Technologies of Self" as a key concept for understanding the transformation of the protagonists in the narratives. The concept of the technologies of self was developed by a French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984). Foucault examined the relationship between the ideas humans had about their own existence and the specific historical and cultural circumstances that shaped this existence. In recent years connections are drawn between

Foucault and the philosophy of technology, because Foucault analysed also concrete technologies used for exercising disciplinary power, such as the Panopticon11 (Foucault 1975, Dorrestijn 2012, 45, 47). In his later years, the interest of Foucault shifted toward the technologies individuals apply upon themselves consciously and voluntarily. He talks about the technologies of self which "permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (Foucault 1988, 18). The earlier work of Foucault constitutes the history of contemporary subjectivity – how come we perceive ourselves today in particular ways, and what historical and cultural factors shaped our contemporary selves. The later work of Foucault focuses on subjectivation – an active attempt of the subject to fashion and transform herself.

This later work investigates what kind of subject people wished to become in Greek Antiquity and the concrete practices utilized for this purpose. Foucault claims that the subject is not universally given, but emerges in the process of self-constitution (Dorrestijn 2012, 54, 58, 109). Constitution of the self occurs under the conditions applied upon the self by the outside world, but also follows a conscious will of the self. Examining historical and social conditions that shaped our selves, understanding the dynamics of self-formation which has already occurred, opens the way toward greater influence upon the future formation of the self in a given context. To study how the old self came into being allows us to better shape the new self in the world (Ten 2017a). Foucault suggests reconsidering the history of philosophy from the standpoint of self-transformation (Dorrestijn 2012, 112). How various philosophical doctrines shaped the self? How various philosophical doctrines were the result of technological developments in a given era? How people attempted to shape themselves and others through the use of the doctrines and the technical utensils? Not just the history of philosophy, but the history of human kind in general can be studied from the perspective of transformation of the self. Our book therefore constitutes a case study of concrete technologies of the self applied in contemporary times in South and North Korea. The two heroines we describe are paragons of perfection toward which the ordinary people are expected and instructed to aspire. The two goddesses, their images, stories and doctrines that stand behind them, are also themselves instruments executing the transformation in the readers or listeners of the legends. The processes of this

[11] The Panopticon is a disciplinary system in a form of a central observation tower placed within a circle of prison cells. A guard can see every cell and inmate from the tower, but the inmates can't see into the tower.

transformation are the subject of our study. What are these new ideal selves, the goals and ideals of the transformative process? How and why does the transformative process work? What is the background against which the process of transformation unfolds?

The concept of technologies of the self has multiple meanings. It includes the sense of "practices of the self", but also of "technical utensils". In a way, any new invention of humanity constituted such a utensil: paper, ink-brush, TV and computer all shaped our ways of being and our selves. Technical objects are directly connected to the practices of governing and fashioning oneself (Dorrestijn 2012, 109). The texts and images analysed in our book constitute such technical utensils, employed in North Korean propaganda and South Korean mind-body practices. Foucault draws connections between practices of self-transformation and the practices of truth. These practices require commitment, involvement and cooperation (Dorrestijn 2012, 113). Our book discusses various ways and techniques of the production and construction of a certain mythic reality. The mythic reality shows in texts, books, images and practices. This reality is not always perceived as complete truth but there is no doubt that it still influences the mode of thought, feeling and action.

Michel Foucault's notion of technologies of self (Foucault 1988), has been highly important for the authors. The New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu embody the process of change, projecting the transformation further in space and time. GiCheon is a practice of self-transformation, relying on personal efforts to generate change. The repertoire of practices which are at the heart of GiCheon are overtly technologies of self as articulated by Foucault. The violent events of the GiCheon legend discussed later in this book, stress the dramatic nature of the personal transformation required and expected in GiCheon. Bodhidharma, the Woman of Heaven and their interaction in the legend are examples of such transformation. This book asserts that within the North Korean narratives of Kim Chŏng-suk we find manifestation of similar techniques of self-transformation. In Northern and Southern technologies of self violence and combative energy are deployed in the service of self-transformation. Kim Chŏng-suk and her followers passed through the process of change by acts of aggression and violence enacted by them and undertaken upon them. We as authors do not judge these narratives from South and North negatively for their content, but hold them to exist within a continuum of practices which provide the energies and functionalities for the transformation of the self.[12]

[12] Victoria Ten first applied the concept of Technologies of the Self to GiCheon in her work of 2015 and 2017 (Ten 2015, 2017a). Ten notes that also Sonia Ryang has engaged and implemented this notion in her analysis of practices of "writing and reading novels" in North Korea (Ten 2017a, 25-26; Ryang 2002, 23, 25-26).

Violence in recent political history and theory has been well considered in the controversial work of Hannah Arendt. Writing in the mid 20th century, "a century of violence," Arendt considered violence, including Bakunin's aggressive anarchism, Bolshevik insurgencies, and the chaos of the Khmer Rouge, as an "intoxicating spell" (1970, 67), dangerous and uncontrollable. Radical challenge to the status quo of consumption and production often involves political violence in its most dark and destructive form. There is a long tradition of associating the transformative power of violence with politics, religion and the practices of self-perfection. The proponents of this point of view assume that this transformative power allows access to more powerful planes of knowledge, education and experience. Such dramatic transformations might appear to contrast with subtle body practices described later in this book. Yet we suggest that these practices often include violent or dramatic events and narratives.

Mountain Practices

We now move to the mountain, another important element in the transformative process vital to the narratives of New Goddesses. In our view, mountain topography is not a passive historical canvas for stories to unfold onto, but active and energetic participant. Our work relies upon the ground-breaking research of David Mason in his book Spirit of the Mountains (1999), one of the first works dedicated to Korean mountain gods. The ancient tradition of mountain gods described by Mason is a cultural source from which the legendary figures of our two goddesses emerge. Sanshin (山神, mountain gods and goddesses) are personifications of spiritual and topographic power of the mountain.13 These spiritual beings have complex and flexible relations with their local topography and the communities residing there. Some spirits of some mountains were once humans entrusted with responsibility for particular mountain shrines, who have become absorbed into the landscape which they once served. Sanshin are male and female. It may be that some of keepers and custodians of their terrain will one day themselves become sanshin. The sanshin tradition is therefore dynamic, active and generative, producing a landscape of divinities.

[13] The authors romanize this term as *sanshin* instead of *sansin* after consulting with David Mason. David Mason first introduced this concept in the English language a few decades ago romanized as *sanshin*, and accordingly the authors of this book respect his right to define its spelling (Mason, 1999). However, when this term forms a part of another word, we romanize it according to McCune Reischauer (*sansingak*, 山神閣 or *samsingak*, 三神閣 .

The notion of the mountain as something potentially in motion, undergoing change, speaks to another key Korean tradition of Paektu-taegan (白頭大幹). Paektu-taegan is the mountain-system of connected ranges that runs most of the length of the Korean Peninsula, from Mt. Paektu on the northern border with China down to Mt. Chiri near the south coast. In Korean tradition Paektu-taegan is rather more than rock formations or tectonic outcomes. East Asian mountains, just as other things and beings in the universe, are considered to be the conduit for the transfer of ki energy, the life force. Paektu-taegan is a spine down which energy flows through the peninsula. Then the ki energy is dispensed over the entire nation through various sub-ranges. At the places where this energy manifests outwards, shrines and temples are established, which are often dedicated to sanshin (Mason 2011).

In this respect the great book "T'aengniji (擇里志)" ([1750?] 1998 and 2019) by Yi Chung-hwan (李重煥 1690-1756?) is of critical importance.14 It is a work of geographical synthesis rooted in p'ungsu chiri sŏl (風水地理說, theory on wind, water and land configuration).15 Yi Chung-hwan in the 18th century sought to connect these more ancient ideas of energy flow with developing rationalities and the social and material needs of an emerging Korean state. "T'aengniji" is described as the first work of Korean human geography and has been an important text for Korean topography, geography and nationalism (Chesnokova 2013).

"T'aengniji" and the ideas of ki flowing through the Korean Peninsula might be considered to be a technology of relation between ancient Korean tradition and the landscape. The mountains of Paektu-taegan serve as an example of the interaction between ki flow and the landscape that Koreans are familiar with. Relation between ki energy and the landscape connects to national identity in a way similar to relation between personhood and the processes of her life. They are like the mind and body of a nation. Yi Chung-hwan articulated a theory on the basis of which an authentic life might be undertaken in true relation with the topography of the land: how to find the right place for living, what needs to be in that place in terms of space and materials to build a house, availability of food. T'aengniji is written and rewritten by contemporary Korean authors according to the needs and developments of Korean national sensibility (Chesnokova

[14] The original date of publication of T'aengniji is unclear. Yoon Inshil Choe (1996) suggests Yi Chung-hwan wrote it between 1750 and 1751. It was first partially translated into English and published in 1998 by Wild Peony Press, Sydney. The same translator has recently published a full translation into English of T'aengniji, published in 2019 by the University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu as "*A Place to Live: A New Translation of Yi Chung-hwan's T'aengniji, the Korean Classic for Choosing Settlements*." Nataliya Chesnokova is currently working on the translation of T'aengniji into Russian.

[15] In Chinese, 風水 is pronounced as *feng shui*.

2015); Paektu-taegan is transformed and reimagined in the present. These two key concepts support and underpin a complex web of other mountain practices and processes. Mountains are key players at the intersection of political and cultural narrative, they are participants in human history. The concepts such as Paektu-taegan and writings such as T'aengniji embed mountains in the cultural context of the Korean peninsula.

Overall, we find the notion of a mountain to be inherently slippery and diffuse, almost as much as the physical presence of a mountain appears monolithic and concrete. There is little consensus across cultures and historical periods as to what a height or shape a mountain must be.16 There are many examples of what Denis Cosgrove described as "High Places" (Cosgrove 2008) now brought low by time and cultural perception. Mountains and "High Places" can also be thought of through the other work of Denis Cosgrove (1984) and scholars such as Noel Castree (2001) on the symbolic, social or political construction of nature and landscape. Following Henri Lefebvre's assertion that space and spatiality are themselves social and political products (1991), Cosgrove developed a conception of landscape and nature as symbolic, first through his analysis of the spatial organisation of Italian renaissance landscapes and later in studying the formation of the American West.17 Castree viewed the function and utility of this symbolism in culture, politics and society with the eye of a critical geographer. Castree's analysis of landscape asserts that terrains and nature are themselves constructed by the societies and politics that inhabit them, marking them with symbolic power. Thus, mountain places can construct political symbols and are themselves constructed by human ideologies. Erik Swyngedouw suggests that these constructed places become through the processes of scale and scaling, "the embodiment of social relations of empowerment and disempowerment and the arena where they operate" (1997). Swyngedouw understands scaling as the reimagining and rewriting of politics on different categories of social and cultural landscape. The notion of scaling has already been used to understand North Korean culture. Scaling in this context means that political ambition and agendas from one level of politics, the national or governmental level, are enacted at other levels. National scale agendas are rescaled into the regional, county level, or the village or household private level. For example, every year North Korea has a tree planting campaign directed at increasing the national level of forest cover,

[16] Such as Scottish traditions of naming areas over 3000 feet a "Munro" and those between 2500 and 3000 feet a "Corbett." When it comes to temporalities, summits, described as mountains or peaks in medieval Europe, or in Australia prior to European colonisation, are seen as nothing of the sort in the contemporary era.

[17] In geography space refers to the material landscape and topography, while spatiality indicates internal cultural relationships of individuals and communities with the landscape.

which embeds political ideas of productive and scientific forestry. At a local or regional level party committees take the productive ideas of forestry and rescale them into smaller forestry projects, such as beautification of parks. At the family or household level there are campaigns to grow fruit trees in private gardens. Thus, families and private citizens rescale national agendas into their own living and personal spaces (Winstanley-Chesters 2015).

In studying natures and landscapes in this manner we further rely on the work of Jane Bennett (2010) and Sarah Whatmore (2005) on the generation of 'vibrant' or political matter. Bennett's work seeks to deconstruct the boundaries of human privilege over notions of agency through considering animals, plants, bacteria, viruses, metals, and tectonic energy as actors in themselves, able to intervene or play roles in human politics. Instead of a politics controlled at the level of the human individual or human collective, these actors develop a distributed, inter and hyper personal politics which connects, contests and produces other forms of politics and agency (Bennett 2010). These active, vibrant materials and objects become political because of the role they play as stores of value, elements of exchange, items to be sought. In their exchange, seeking and obtaining, they can transform political structures and infrastructures, be transformed by them and alter the cultural and social forms and landscapes in which humans live (Lorimer 2007). Notions of vibrant materiality and lively non-human actors can also connect to conceptions of political charisma, very active in North Korea. The energy and charisma of human politics are projected onto the trees in North Korean narratives and history. During the guerrilla struggles of Kim Chŏng-suk for example, political slogans were carved onto the trees, and they thus become carriers of this political charisma. The trees become supportive in the narratives of struggle by providing places to hide, by absorbing the shots of Japanese directed at the Korean independence fighters and activists (Biography 2005, 263).

As the authors of this book develop their ideas of what landscapes, lively matters, "mountain" and mountain practices are, they hold the work of Bernard Debarbieux and Gilles Rudaz in mind. Debarbieux and Rudaz explore the notion of mountain and mountain history, examining the tensions in relations between culture, history and topography (Debarbieux and Rudaz 2015). Debarbieux and Rudaz speak not just to the topography itself, but also to the human and non-human dwellers of these spaces, the dwellers of the mountains. This is vitally important to our work on Mt. Paektu where the two goddesses exist in both chronological and cosmological time. When we observe the transformation of the two goddesses in mountains, we conclude that mountains themselves undergo transformation by participating in the narrative: in Southern legend Mt. Paektu opens in response to the prayer of Bodhidharma. Mountains

become transformable by interaction with the process of mythology creation: in case of North Korea, monuments and memorials are erected on Mt. Paektu, infrastructures are built, thus contributing to state ideology and education.

Chapter Outline

Before giving an outline of the chapters, we will explain the logic behind the ordering of this book. Our book explores the concept of transformation of the self, landscape and physical topography. The two goddesses of this book are transformed by their interaction with the physical terrain of Mt. Paektu. The readers at some point in their lives will have walked up mountains. The heart quickens as one struggles up the slopes; the perspective expands at the summit; one feels relief and satisfaction upon having safely returned to the mountain foot from where the ascent began. The logic of this book mirrors or echoes the logic of a mountain ascent, hoping to transform the mind and body of the reader along the way. The book thus travels upwards through the foothills of context in Chapter One: Introduction, bringing in Mt. Paektu in Chapter Two. What is the meaning of Mt. Paektu in the cultural context of the Korean Peninsula? In Chapter Three we study the cultural terrain of mountain spirits in that land, before proceeding to Chapters Four and Five whence the two mythologies of our book derive. Chapter Four reviews the notions of ki suryŏn and GiCheon. The North Korean ideology and historical narrative are discussed in the beginning of Chapter Five. Near the summit of the book the stories of the two goddesses are explored in Chapters Five, Six and Seven. In this transformative moment the readers reach the peak; the power of mythology unfolds in front of their eyes. Then the reader begins the descent, down to Chapter Eight and Conclusion.

In Chapter Two, following Chapter One the Introduction, we delve into the cultural history of Mt. Paektu, the landscape where two goddesses play out their transformations. We examine the importance of Mt. Paektu on a Korean peninsula and consider the evolution of Paektu as a modern tradition currently under construction. This chapter examines the literary productions which relate to the mountain, their connection with the history of the peninsula and the role of Tan'gun mythology for Mt. Paektu. Then we investigate the projection of images of this sacred landscape into the everyday Korean present. The image of Mt. Paektu is everywhere, from enormous mosaic reliefs on the walls of the Kim Il-sŏng mausoleum in the North to small

vitrines containing plastic models of the mountain among the corridors of the Seoul metro system in the South.

Mt. Paektu is vitally important for contemporary Korean culture. We suggest that New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu from Northern and Southern Korean mythology can be considered as contemporary immortals. In order to prove our argument, a highlight of key points in the culture of alchemy and immortality is necessary, and Chapter Three does just that. In Chapter Three we study how sanshin and mountain immortals manifest in contemporary Korea. Mountain immortals are embedded in East Asian culture of alchemy and immortality, which they carry and embody. We review a few vital principles of alchemy, including a motif of a mountain as a human body, briefly outlining the history of these principles. The alchemical motifs manifest visually on traditional East Asian paintings of sacred mountains, and we discuss a few examples of such pictures. Yet ancient alchemic motifs survived not only on pictures of sacred mountains, but also in oral lore, including poetry and myth. This mythology includes also contemporary legends, and one of them is a GiCheon legend about Bodhidharma and the Woman of Heaven. Chapter Three outlines the cultural soil upon which this legend has grown, while the legend itself is further discussed in Chapter Seven.

In Chapter Four we discuss GiCheon as a psycho-physical practice of South Korea. GiCheon is one example of ki suryŏn (氣修練, training related to ki – "life energy") practices. Ki suryŏn has become an important element of a popular culture; in a nutshell we explain how it functions in contemporary society. GiCheon claims an ancient, mythical past embedded within Korean topography, extracting spiritual value from mountain traditions. In many ways GiCheon is a product of South Korean spiritual boom of the 1970s when the developmental policies of Park Chung-hee (박정희, Pak Chŏng-hŭi) reconfigured the culture. We outline the history of GiCheon since the 1970s, summarizing the influence it had on a South Korean society. GiCheon authority is rooted in the mountains; GiCheon practice relates to the human body effecting transformation through an engagement with pain. We highlight the meaning of this pain in theory and practice, and its connection with asceticism. The pain of GiCheon is produced by particular training stances held for periods of time up to thirty minutes or one hour. These training forms are described in Chapter Four.

Chapter Five focuses on the early years of Kim Chŏng-suk moving north across the dividing line at the 38th parallel. This chapter describes another moment of rupture in the history of Korea: the early years of Japanese colonialism. After the fall of the ancient governmental status

quo of the Yi dynasty (1392-1907), Korean culture was challenged by the imperatives of colonial power from Tokyo. Much resistance to the new regime occurred within the boundaries of the colony, but much else occurred in the diaspora. The family of Kim Chŏng-suk took an active part in an anti-colonial struggle. We study the North Korean historiography recounting Kim Chŏng-suk's early years and analyse how these narratives transform this young village girl into a revolutionary. A complex web of violence, politics and education in this story serve to reconfigure the young Kim Chŏng-suk. It leads her to revelatory moments developing her political awareness; it further sets up her later importance to North Korean history.

Chapter Six starts with the difficult childhood of Kim Chŏng-suk, traveling with her to the landscapes of Mt. Paektu. The crossing of rivers and wandering in charged landscapes takes Kim Chŏng-suk into the special transformative time, in the terrain of Mt. Paektu. In a network of violence and topography Kim Chŏng-suk becomes almost super-human, able to withstand intense pain, subject herself to enormous deprivations. Proximity to the mountain serves to allow her transformation into an immortal. Kim's commemoration as an immortal in Pyongyang's Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery today lies at a huge conceptual distance from her childhood in Hoeryŏng.

Chapter Seven turns to the goddess from Southern Korea. Deep within the imagined history of GiCheon resides Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ, the Woman of Heaven, in a sense a projection of a sanshin tradition. We analyse the mythology of the Woman of Heaven and her encounter with a traveling Bodhidharma. In a transaction of brutal violence, Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ inspires Bodhidharma to commit an intense act of self-transformation which not only changes the physical body of Bodhidharma, but also alters the topography of the mountain. We discuss the role this transformation plays within the framework of GiCheon practice. Finally, we consider the motifs of Korean nationalism, the physical triumph of the Woman of Heaven representing Korean culture, over Bodhidharma who represents Chinese tradition. Chapter Seven leads the reader from the mythic space of Mt. Paektu to more contemporary social terrains of the Korean nation today.

In Chapter Eight we consider how the transformative possibilities function in mountain mythologies on the Korean peninsula. The previous chapters of the book delved deeply into the transformative power of the New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu; Chapter Eight considers other mountain practices in the west, mostly Europe, and in East Asia, mostly Korea and Japan. We outline the history and contemporary manifestation of social practices in mountain spaces. We

review the landscapes of hiking in Korea and Japan. Finally, we consider modern ascetics in Korea, particularly their efforts to contest new bureaucratic, economic and technological pressures in the upland spaces.

Chapter Nine constitutes a conclusion where we relate the results of our research of the dramatic landscapes, practices and persons the reader has encountered on the pages of this book. We hope that with this outline in mind readers can now satisfactorily engage with the narratives, becomings and transformations of our New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu.

Chapter Two: Mountain Paektu

As we have suggested in the introductory chapter, both the Northern and Southern Korean legends discussed within this book occur at Mt. Paektu: a wild and charismatic terrain. For many years the mountain has been an important site to inspire writing and research. The extensive analysis of English language geographers and adventurers such as James, Campbell, Cavendish and Goold-Adams started at the turn of the 19th century (James 1888; Campbell 1892; Cavendish and Goold-Adams 1894). English language scholarship focused on Korean mountains including Mt. Paektu has revived in more recent years. Some works which analyze mountainous spaces in fiction (Yu Jong-ho 1994), the place of mountains in agricultural and industrial production (Sorensen 1988) as well as mountainous spiritual spaces (Shepherd 2010; Kim Duk-muk 2004; Keum Jang-tae 1994; Mason 1999) have been produced. For a number of contemporary scholars such as Mason (1999, 2011), Pak Kye-ri (2011), Ryu and Won (2013), Dax (2014), significant subjects of interest included hiking, tourist industries, as well as the cultural space mountains occupy in Korean society in general. Our book engages Korean mountains as terrain through which contemporary mythologies are brought into being, brought into happening. Simultaneously, this mountainous background serves as the active, vibrant central image of the mythos itself. It feeds and creates its narratives, is constructed and re-created by and within them.

Mt. Paektu is a fundamentally important cultural icon in contemporary Korea, both North and South. In North Korea's historiographies the mountain is postulated as vital to the struggle for independence from Japanese colonialism and as the birthplace of Kim Chŏng-il, its second leader; his signature is inscribed on the mountain in twenty-meter-high letters. In North Korean government and institutional offices, on one wall hang the portraits of Kim Il-sŏng and Kim Chŏng-il, while the other one almost inevitably holds a picture of Mt. Paektu. We can see Mt. Paektu on the front page of calendars printed in North Korea as well as in South Korea murals and models which feature Mt. Paektu decorate subway stations, including the Seoul City Hall station. Paintings of Mt. Paektu are also frequently seen in South Korean governmental offices, in the lobbies of universities, buildings important to business and trade as well in restaurants and cafes. They are found in offices of some Buddhist temples, and in shrines dedicated to mountain gods (David Mason, personal communication). In the North and in the South Mt.

Paektu is often seen on the photographs, figures in the poems, novels and films (Yi Yŏng-hun 2006, 35).

At first glance North and South Korea appear radically different societies, possessed of opposing forms of government and economic structures. The first is an autocratic regime with a socialist past, the second is a hub of capitalism and global power focused on consumption. However, a deeper analysis of contemporary thought and daily practices of the two societies reveals the commonality of conceptual motifs. This commonality, originating in the cultural roots and shared past of a pre-divided Korea, actively unfolds in the present, taking embodied, actualized forms. Our book explores cultural, spiritual and political production which exemplifies this commonality of motif. The narratives of female power take place on Mt. Paektu, which becomes a cultural stage where participants act. However, this cultural stage is itself created by these narratives. We explore the mountain's place in past and contemporary traditions as well as in the different streams of academic literature. We suggest that Mt. Paektu is a living tradition currently under construction within Korean culture. Chang Wŏn-sŏk argues that Mt. Paektu, together with other cultural icons, became a symbol of both North and South Korea (2010, 378). The mountain thus serves as exemplar of cultural, spiritual and political processes, connected to the narratives this book is centred around. Images of the mountain appear daily to the eyes of citizens both in the North and the South within offices and stations, shopping centres and important buildings, just as in mass-media. This chapter will explore the context for such images and their production, consider what recollections and emotions might be generated by them and how the terrain of Mt. Paektu might produce a fertile and welcoming space for these traditions and narratives.[18]

Mt. Paektu History and Mythology

"…Paektu San or White Head Mountain, lies seven or eight days journey to the west of Hoiryeng in Manchu territory. The mountain is in three tiers, is 200 li, or 60 miles, high, and the circuit of its base covers 1000 li, or 300 miles. On the summit there is a lake 800 li, or 250

[18] Humans produce social and political landscape and write it onto the topographical landscape. In the past geographers considered this creation as a one-way street. Current thinking sees topographical landscape as directly participating in the production of social and political landscape which is a two-way street.

miles, in circumference, whence flow the three rivers Yalu, Sungari and Tumen' – Making every allowance for the usual exaggeration in such matters, this notice clearly referred to a very uncommon sort of mountain!" (Charles Campbell 1892, 141).

Charles Campbell was one of the first European writers to encounter the topography of Mt. Paektu. Campbell's journey has commonalities with several adventurers, travellers and opportunists who used the end of Korea's geo-political isolation, the passing of a number of "unequal treaties" and the pressing of colonialism on East Asia in the second half of the 19th century. In tandem with this reflection of Korean spiritual mountain traditions, the productions and mythologizing discussed in this book echo some of the destructive, violent power of the Korean historical record, in ways which remind the explosive tectonic past of Mt. Paektu. Korea's history between the 1860s and the mid-20th century was certainly challenging and disrupting. The arrival of western powers and economic interests following the opening of the Japanese mainland with the General Sherman Incident of July 1866, and the United States June 1871 campaign against forts at Kanghwa, radically disturbed the status quo of Korean politics and social organisation under the Yi dynasty (1392-1910).19 The Yi dynasty and the sovereign entity Chosŏn would not survive the interests of colonial and western powers. The last years of the 19th and first years of the 20th centuries were violent to the bureaucracies of the peninsula, generating radical reconfigurations of government institutions, and transformations of social organisation – including the abolition of slavery and the patterns of social hierarchy such as the yangban class, following the Kabo Reforms (갑오 개혁) of 1894-1896.20

This was the nation encountered by Campbell, alongside others such as Isabella Bishop-Bird and Georgina Kemp, amid radical change but full of cultural manifestations of more ancient traditions seldom seen or understood by outsiders' eyes. Campbell's report to the Royal Geographical Society of London, on his return from the visit to the Korean Peninsula in 1892, contains some intriguing descriptions of landscape and its cultural use. However, Campbell's

[19] The General Sherman Incident refers to an event in July 1866, when an armed merchant marine steamer rented from a British company, under the command of Captain Page of the United States Navy, sought to visit Chosŏn, in order to negotiate trade relations. While much of the minutiae of the incident is disputed, it is established that the General Sherman not being invited, was attacked, ran aground, destroyed by fire and the crew eventually killed. The 1871 Kanghwa Campaign of June-July 1871 was a more formal invasion, in part spurred by the General Sherman incident. The United States Navy sent 500 sailors and 100 marines on five warships, which attacked the Kanghwa citadel and five other forts nearby, killing nearly 250 Korean soldiers.

[20] The Kabo Reforms followed the chaos of the Tonghak Peasant Rebellion of 1894 and the Chinese and Japanese interventions of the First Sino-Japanese War. Between 1894 and 1896, the government of Chosŏn, under pressure from Japan, was required to reorganize its bureaucracy and government institutions, downgrade diplomatic and political relations with China, abolish the *yangban* and social class stratification system, reform the criminal justice system, abolish monopolies, liberalize trade policy and abolish slavery.

visit to Mt. Paektu brought him into contact with a mountain which was conceptualised as an extraordinary hyperreal space, enormous in both geographical and cultural terms. While Mt. Paektu is a very large mountain, it certainly is not 60 miles high or 300 miles across, nor is the summit, Lake Chŏn, 250 miles in circumference. Campbell, given his invitation to talk at the renowned Royal Geographical Society, was not possessed of a tendency to exaggeration or overstatement, so what might possibly explain his conception of this mountain in such an enormous scale? Perhaps an explanation of Mt. Paektu's monolithic scale in Charles Campbell's report can be found in those cultural, spiritual traditions which surrounded this mountain at a time and whose influence can still be found across the peninsula.

The legends around Mt. Paektu depict it as a place of struggle and divine presence. The divine presence in Mt. Paektu's mythology is often feminine, manifested as adventures of the Goddess of Mt. Paektu, or recounting the descent of heavenly maidens to the mountain's lake to play (Chang Na 2012, 10-12; Cho Hyun-soul 2010). Cho Hyun-soul studies the historical development of Paektu mythology, and its re-interpretation in contemporary era for nationalistic purposes (2010). Yi Yŏng-hun considers new folkloric legends of Mt. Paektu generated in the 20th century together with the development of Mt. Paektu as a national symbol in the context of re-formulation of Korean history of the 20th century. The vision of Korean history previous to the 20th century centered on Neo-Confucianism and was part of the sojunghwa sasang (小中華思想, Korea as a small China worldview). Understanding of Mt. Paektu as important to Korean tradition was part of this worldview, as evidenced from the travelogues of Korean intellectuals composed in the 18th century (Yi Yŏng-hun 2006, 25-28). In 1712, some of the landscape of Mt. Paektu became included in Chosŏn territory. A stone stele marking the border between Chosŏn and China, Paektusan chŏnggyebi (白頭山定界碑, Paektu mountain border marker), was established, so Koreans started visiting the mountain. Yet, special permission from the Chosŏn authorities was required for such visits, which were therefore rare (Pak Ch'an-sŭng 2013, 32).

This moment in 1712 can be conceptualised as a distinctly national event. Recent writing by Nianshen Song suggests that in 1712 Mt. Paektu and its territory became rooted in supranational developments (Nianshen Song, 2017). Qing China had encountered new cartographic techniques including the measurement of topography, through interaction with the Jesuits who came to China in the 18th century. The inclusion of Mt. Paektu in Chosŏn territory in 1712 was a product of these interactions. Mukedeng, a Manchu official, with permission of Emperor Kangxi, together with officials from Chosŏn, set out to use these new cartographic

practices at Mt. Paektu, to counteract Russian claims on the area (Nianshen Song 2017). Nianshen Song recounts how, following a series of previous mapping mistakes, the hydrology of Mt. Paektu was misunderstood, and the boundaries drawn by the survey were thus incorrect. Song asserts that the Chosŏn officials in the surveying party were content to allow Mukedeng to place the border stele in a position that ceded the caldera and Lake Chŏn to China. This decision was taken in order to avoid the Qing being able to see the populations of Korean settlers on the southern flank of the mountain. These settlers should not have been settled there by past treaty with Qing China (Nianshen Song 2017). A contemporary scholar Jo Yoong-hee utilises the field reports of the British explorer Charles Campbell to suggest that at the outset of his travels Campbell focused on Mt. Kŭmgang. Mt. Paektu was for him something of an afterthought, which developed in importance as his journey continued (Jo Yoong-hee 2008).

The article by Pak Ch'ang-sŭng titled "Paektusan ŭi 'minjok yŏngsan' ŭro ŭi p'yosanghwa" (백두산의 '민족 영산'으로의 표상화, Depicting Mt. Paektu as a "national sacred mountain") describes the process by which Mt. Paektu came to prominence today as a symbol of Korean unification. Pak Ch'ang-sŭng starts his discussion by noting the 2010 South Korean publication Paektusan: hyŏnjae wa mirae rŭl marhanda (백두산: 현재와 미래를 말한다, Mt. Paektu – Speaking the Present and the Future, authored by Kim Chŏng-bae, Yi Sŏ-haeng and others). This book is something of a landmark in the development of Mt. Paektu as a living tradition of South Korea. As Pak Ch'ang-sŭng summarizes, the development of the image of Mt. Paektu during the Koryŏ and Chosŏn dynasties was analysed by Song Yong-tŏk (2007) and Kang Sŏk-hwa (2011). The development of Paektu image in the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century was analysed by Andre Schmid (2007) and Chang Wŏn-sŏk (2010). Pak Ch'ang-sŭng himself focuses on the development of Mt. Paektu as a national symbol in South Korea since 1980s (Pak Ch'an-sŭng 2013, 11).

In 1908, Korean nationalist historiographer and independence activist Sin Ch'ae-ho asserted that a mythical Mt. T'aebaek, depicted in Samguk Yusa (三國遺事, Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms) as a birthplace of Tan'gun, legendary founder of the first Korean kingdom Kojosŏn, was not Mt. Myohyang, but Mt. Paektu (Pak Ch'an-sŭng 2013, 23). We will summarize this important legend in a following paragraph.

The legend says that Heavenly King Hwanung, son of the god Hwanin, wished to descend from Heaven and live in the world of human beings. So Hwanin sent his son Hwanung to Mount T'abaek, to settle there and to help human beings. The Heavenly King Hwanung descended to

a spot under a tree by the Holy Altar, atop Mt. T'aebaek, with three thousand followers. He called that place the City of God. Together with his ministers, Hwanung took charge of agriculture, allotted lifespans, illness, punishment, good and evil, and brought culture to his people. At that time a bear and a tiger living in the same cave prayed to Hwanung to transform them into human beings. The king gave them sacred mugworts and garlic, and instructed them to shun the sunlight for one hundred days. Both animals ate the spices and avoided the sun, but the tiger was unable to observe the taboo, and remained a tiger, while the bear became a woman. Unable to find a husband, she prayed under the altar tree for a child. Hwanung metamorphosed himself, lay with her and begot a son called Tan'gun.21

With the rise of Korean nationalism in the 20th century, Tan'gun was re-formulated as the father of all Korean people, rather than the founder of the first Korean state. The theory that Mt. T'aebaek, the birthplace of Tan'gun, is actually Mt. Paektu, and not Mt. Myohyang, was very quickly spread by a religious movement Tan'gunkyo (檀君敎, Tan'gun religion), which one year later changed its name to Taejongkyo (大倧敎).22 In the 1920s and 1930s Korean newspapers started referring to Mt. Paektu as yŏngsan (靈山, sacred mountain), reflecting and confirming its soaring significance in popular consciousness. Korean nationalists, including famous Cho'e Namsŏn, created and supported this new status of Mt. Paektu, in order to strengthen the spirit of Korean nation in the struggle against the Japanese occupation of Korea. Cho'e Nam-sŏn compares Mt. Paektu to father and mother and describes it as wellspring of Eastern culture in his renowned Paektusan Kŭnch'amgi (白頭山 覲參記, Record on Visiting Mt. Paektu), published in 1926 in the newspaper Donga Ilbo (동아일보), 89th edition. This essay was released the following year as a separate book (Pak Ch'an-sŭng 2013, 26-29; Yi Yŏng-hun 2006, 28-29).

Following Korea's division in 1948, access for southerners to the mountain was blocked. Since the re-opening of China in the mid-1980s, South Korean citizens were again able to visit the Chinese side of Mt. Paektu, and numbers of visitors from the south steadily increased. In the 1980s South Korean newspapers started referring to Mt. Paektu as to the "national sacred mountain" (uri minjŏk ŭi yŏngsan in Paektusan, minjŏk ŭi yŏngsan) (Pak Ch'an-sŭng 2013,

[21] We have summarized the Tan'gun legend on the basis of its translation in *Sources of Korean Tradition* Volume I, edited by Peter H. Lee and Wm. Theodore de Barry (1997, 5-6).

[22] Tan'gunkyo (literally 'the religion of Tan'gun') is one of the new religions of Korea, originating in the beginning of 20th century and connected to independence struggle. Under the conditions of occupation of Korea by Imperial Japan, the name was later changed into Taejongkyo, in order to obscure the nationalistic character of the religion.

30). Mt. Paektu is situated on the border between North Korea and China and is reachable now only through China. Therefore, it became represented in popular imagination not just as a place where Korean nation originated in the past, but as a symbol of the present division of Korea, giving at the same time a hope for future unification (Pak Ch'an-sŭng 2013, 31).

Nations require historical and semi-mythic narratives to underpin their political structure. Benedict Andersen understands this as imagined communities who create nation states in the Westphalian model (1983). These historical and mythic narratives require symbolic content from the past of the community. In case of Korea, these symbols include King Sejong, the Hangul alphabet, the Turtle ships, Admiral Yi Sunsin and of course Mt. Paektu.23 Mt. Paektu is not only one such symbolic mountain in North Korea. Mt. Kumgang, historically referred to as the "diamond mountain", now on the border between Northern and Southern Korea, beyond its traditional place in the nation's spiritual history, is used as a landscape of national unification. Mt. Chilbo in North Hamgyong province of North Korea is known as the home of a particularly powerful and tasty variety of mushrooms. For Pyongyang it is symbolic of places lost to South Korea by the nation's division. Fungus from Mt. Chilbo has been strategically used in inter-Korean diplomacy. A bureaucratic tradition has developed around the fungus at moments of connection between the institutions of the two Koreas: the mushrooms were given as presents by North Korean officials to South Korean bureaucrats. These are examples of invented traditions utilized by imagined communities. Mt. Paektu and other symbolic places have become mountains anew in the sense Debarbieux and Rudaz (2015) would understand it.

Pak Kye-ri considers Mt. Paektu as a newly invented tradition of North Korean art (2011). During the second half of the twentieth century, glorification of Mt. Paektu has intensified within the literary, artistic and cultural production of North Korea (Berthelier 2014). Various anthologies of Paektu legends were published (see for example Chi Hŭng-kil 2004, Ch'oe

[23] These historical moments are vital to Korean national history. King Sejong (1418-1450) was the fourth King of the Chosŏn dynasty. Sejong is renowned for embedding Neo-Confucian principles in the structures of state governance, undertaking military campaigns, encouraging settlements in the North of the peninsula which would later become Manchuria, revising the calendar, promoting scientific and technological development. King Sejong is most famous for inventing and implementing the Korean script known as Han'gul (or Chosŏn'gul in North Korea), a series of consonents based on the shape of the mouth when pronouncing them, and vowels symbolic of humanity, earth and the cosmos. These are used to create morphemes set into syllabic blocks. This writing system replaced for the most part Classical Chinese and was used to promote and develop literacy. Admiral Yi Sun-sin (이순신, 1545-1598) is the most famours Korean military figure in pre-modern Korean history. During the Imjin War of 1592-1598 Admiral Yi developed an adapted version of the Turtle Ship (거북선, *Kŏbuksŏn*), an armored battleship designed for close quarters combat at sea, equipped with cannon, spikes and grappling hooks. These ships enabled Korean forces to achieve a number of strategic victories during the war and destroy several Japanese battleships. Statues of both King Sejong and Turtle Ships now occupy prominent sites in Kwangwhamun Square in central Seoul.

Sŏng-jin 2006).24 Even landscapes depicting Mt. Paektu without people at all are used in North Korea for the instilling revolutionary sentiments in viewers and citizens, fulfilling the socialist role of art as "educative" (Pak Kye-ri 2011, Kim Il-sŏng 1964). The popularity of Mt. Paektu for South Koreans is rising as well, as evidenced by their frequent touristic pilgrimage to its Chinese side, and along the Paektu-taegan trail (Kendall 2009, 316; Mason 2011). The envisioning of Mt. Paektu in the contemporary mythology of both Koreas relates to the dream of unification by addressing common cultural roots and even shared motifs. When we compare two so different systems as Northern and Southern Korea, we follow the direction advocated by Koen de Ceuster: we try to notice the different as well as the similar aspects of their culture, taking into account recent political and social contexts (De Ceuster 2013, 159). There is no doubt that the North Korean lore of Kim Chŏng-suk came into being for the purposes of state consolidation of power and ideological education of the people. We argue, however, that this does not undermine its creative impetus and inherent connection with ancient Korean mountain tradition, which both legends discussed in this book expand and continue.

Mt. Paektu is often discussed in contemporary South Korean scholarship (Cho Hyun-soul 2010, 35, 37), the discussion setting forth the significance of the mountain in modern era. In contemporary times Mt. Paektu connotes the independence and rebellion motifs in both Southern and Northern Korea (Yi Yŏng-hun 2006, 31). In spite of the cultural or political importance of these stories, the current study does not aspire to provide a comprehensive review of Paektu-related culture in North and South Korea. Instead of a "horizontal" coverage of Mt. Paektu culture in different areas of life, such as literature, film, art, history etc., our research is "vertical". Narrowing our scope to Paektu-related contemporary mythology only, we focus on two particular legends. We thus take two particular points on the broad terrain of Mt. Paektu culture, and perform an exercise of analytical narrative archaeology at these two points. We focus on two female heroes depicted in contemporary Mt. Paektu ethos, one from Northern and other from Southern Korea, considering their significance in political, social and personal terrains.

As a living tradition currently under construction, Mt. Paektu became in a way a space of dialog and communication between North and South Korea. South Korean scholars follow the production of North Korean contemporary Mt. Paektu ethos with great attention, sometimes reflecting on it critically (Pak Kye-ri 2011), sometimes constructing arguments similar in their

[24] We thank Benoit Berthelier for directing our attention to these works.

contents to the Northern tradition. One example is the historical investigation of Mt. Paektu image as symbolic of anti-Japanese struggle, carried out by the scholars of South Korea (Yi Sŏ-haeng 2010, 113-118). The contemporary Mt. Paektu ethos is growing and developing from both sides of 38th parallel, forming, in a way, one body of a contemporary tradition. The books discussing the mountain currently published in South and North Korea embody this contemporary tradition. One example is previously mentioned Paektusan: hyŏnje wa mirae rŭl marhanda by Kim Chŏng-bae, Yi Sŏ-haeng and others, published in the South in 2010. Compared with Yet chido ro pon Paektusan (옛 지도로 본 백두산, Mt. Paektu seen through the prism of ancient maps, composed by Kim Ŭn-t'aek, Yun Sin-yŏng and Chu Ŭn-sun) published in North Korea in 2014, and with Mt. Paektu Sacred to Revolution, published in Pyongyang in 1989, it shows the similarity of the narrative structure. Northern and Southern texts rely on similar Korean historical sources, such as Samguk Yusa and Samguk Sagi (三國史記, History of the Three Kingdoms). These Northern and Southern texts connect Mt. Paektu to the origin myth of Tan'gun and trace the significance of the mountain in Koguryŏ (37 BC – 668 AD), Koryŏ, and Chosŏn (Kim Chŏng-bae, Yi Sŏ-haeng et al 2010; Kim Ŭn-t'aek et al 2014). Both Northern and Southern sources mention that a deity referred to as Nation Protecting Paektu Mountain God was worshiped in Koryŏ in the 12th century. He was enshrined as number one in the P'al sŏngdang (八聖堂, Shrine for Eight Saints).25 The books Paektusan: hyŏnje wa mirae rŭl marhanda published in the South (Kim Chŏng-bae, Yi Sŏ-haeng 2010) and Mt. Paektu Sacred to Revolution, published in the North, abound with picturesque views of the mountain's landscape, including the lake Chŏn. These books describe geography, climate, flora and fauna of Mt. Paektu.

If the purpose of Cho'e Nam-sŏn and of other nationalists was to create and strengthen the image of Paektu as a cultural icon round which the people could unite (Yi Yŏng-hun 2006, 30), then their enterprise succeeded beyond their wildest expectations. Although these Korean nationalists could not and have not foreseen the division of Korean nation into two different countries, their vision of Mt. Paektu has greatly contributed to creating a connection point between North and South Korea, a symbol of so hoped for unification.

[25] P'al sŏngdang was dedicated to Eight Saints, each of them associated with a mountain god, a Daoist deity and a Buddha or a Bodhisattva. Hoguk Paektu Ak (護國白頭嶽, Nation Protecting Paektu Mountain God) was associated with T'aebaek Sŏnin (太白仙人, T'aebaek Immortal) and Siltŏk Munsusari Posal (實德 文殊師利菩薩, Virtuous Munsusari Bodhisattva) (Cho Pŏp-chong 2010, 47; Kim Ŭn-t'aek et al 2014, 232).

Mt. Paektu and Tan'gun Traditions in North Korea

How does Mt. Paektu operate within contemporary North Korean tradition? How might historiographies of Tan'gun and ancient Korean kingship function in the current North Korean context? This is a nation with a focus on the elimination of class difference, rejecting feudal practices. In the late 1940s and the 1950s Pyongyang initially sought technical support and ideological inspiration from the Soviet Union (Cumings 1981). Kim Il-sŏng's engagement of political, military and technical support deeply versed in Marxist analysis led to a rejection of past Korean historical or cultural traditions. The young North Korea was to be an intellectual space of materialist dialectics where a historiography of phases of development governed economics and controlled the modes of production (Cumings 1981). There was not a great deal of space within this framework for kings or kingship, especially not the mystical narratives of the Tan'gun or sanshin. The historical heroes of North Korea were to be the revolutionary guerrillas who had fought the Japanese alongside Kim Il-sŏng. They were reframed in the narrative to become historical foot soldiers and precursors to North Korean socialism through involvement in the Tonghak uprisings, the General Sherman incident and the Righteous Armies of 1909-1912 (Lim Jae-Cheon 2015).

Any reading of North Korean texts will bring an awareness in the reader that the content of these texts, including historical ones, can change and adapt over time. The importance of particular characters or events can rise and fall, others may appear, and some may disappear. A good example from more contemporary history is the role of Kim Il-sŏng's mother, Kang Pan-sŏk, in presenting a useful female role model or archetype in North Korean literary and political culture (Suzy Kim 2013). Before the 1970s and 1980s, Kang Pan-sŏk was a very important figure in North Korea history, eulogised by hagiographies of Kim Il-sŏng, events in her life part of institutional commemoration. As Kim Il-sŏng's son, Kim Chŏng-il, grew up to become the heir apparent to North Korean governance, the importance of Kang Pan-sŏk and the frequency with which her name would appear began to diminish, just as that of Kim Chŏng-suk, Kim Chŏng-il's mother, began to rise. In contemporary North Korea, Kim Chŏng-suk is a figure of extraordinary importance, allowing transfer of a revolutionary sensibility from one generation to the next, and providing a role model to the citizens (Winstanley-Chesters and Ten 2016). Kim Chŏng-suk and her family's transformation into a revolutionary trinity and dynastic

power at the heart of North Korean politics is offensive to orthodox Socialist or Marxist politics. There is no place for a mighty family who transmit power through a process of hereditary transition in a democracy of the proletariat, in control of the mode of production, free from superstition or feudal domination. Theoretically, North Korea has sought to reconfigure its political structure through the adoption of a radical form of determinism ("Man is the master of all things") at the expense of Marxist materialist approaches. Yet historical precedent and historiography provided a deeper problem (Park Han S 2012). It was necessary to build North Korea's authority and legitimacy on something more than nascent Korean nationalism, resistance to the Japanese and revolutionary commitment. The important history of Mt. Paektu and Tan'gun was utilized for this purpose.

The mythology of the birth of Tan'gun and the emergence of Korean kingship and nationhood is deeply connected to Korean topography. The peninsula's mountainous geography related to the spiritual pre-history of the Korean nation includes specific mountains which play vital roles within the mythological narrative. The possibility that the birthplace of the mythical founder of Korean nation, Tan'gun, came to be on Mt. Paektu, now the sovereign territory of North Korea, could have proved difficult for Pyongyang's politics and ideology because the notions of Korean kingship, aristocracy and hierarchical social order contradict Marxist ideology. However, claiming connection to an authentic Korean national pre-history came to be vitally important for asserting North Korea's legitimacy. Tan'gun and the events leading up to his birth and the geography in which they occur are mythic, but they are currently considered not to pose a threat for North Korea's ideology. This mythography is especially important for North Korea's authenticity as a nation. The narratives of Tan'gun are distant in history yet they can be used in the production of effective and real geographies today. During the first decades of North Korean regime the historical narrative did not mention Tan'gun at all. One example is the 1977 publication of the Chosŏn T'ongsa or "Comprehensive History of Korea" which does not include the mythology of the Tan'gun. However, in September 1993 North Korea announced their discovery of the Tan'gun's tomb (Smith 2015). Archaeologists in North Korea claimed to have extracted eighty-six bones from an ancient tomb along with a crown and other royal accoutrements, supposed to belong to Tan'gun and his wife. Extraordinarily, the bones were claimed to be some 5,000 years old, pushing the existing historical narrative for the Korean nation some seven centuries back in time.

While Kim Il-sŏng, the "Tan'gun" of North Korea, would himself die the year after the discovery of the tomb, his son and grandson have made much of the mélange of traditions

surrounding pre-histories of the North Korean nation. What this harnessing of ancient characters has done, is allow a deeper frame for North Korea's history to be mined for authority and legitimacy by its politics. With the physical sites of the Tan'gun's birth and death under its sovereignty, Pyongyang has been free to reconfigure its own political mythography. Commemorative architecture has been constructed on Mt. Paektu within the framework provided by more ancient mythologies. According to recent interpretations, the power of the Tan'gun myth is rooted in the topography of Mt. Paektu. The topography of Mt. Paektu is mobilized in contemporary times to support revolutionary ideology of North Korea. Kim Chŏng-suk is one the symbols anchoring this ideology. Pyongyang repurposes the power of Tan'gun for the needs of its own political mythology and re-projects it back upon the topography of Mt. Paektu.

Chapter Three: Mountain Gods and Immortals

The subject of the present book is contemporary Northern and Southern Korean mythology which has common roots. The content of this common mythology is mountain transformation from a mortal into an immortal, using a variety of techniques and processes. Contemporary mythological images of the Woman of Heaven from South Korean GiCheon discipline and Kim Chŏng-suk from North Korean political legend, grow from the ancient East Asian culture of immortality. They embody ideas of self-transformation, and furthermore instruct and inspire contemporaries to excel in self-perfection. The present chapter will outline the cultural background from which these images and ideas spring. Accordingly, the chapter will address notions of immortality and immortals developed in alchemical practice, painting and religious cults. For the purpose of our study, it is important to distinguish between two kinds of immortals in the Korean context. The first are sanshin (山神), Korean mountain gods. The second are sinsŏn (神仙, Chinese shenxian), divine immortals, or sŏn (仙, Korean sŏn, Chinese xian), immortals. We will start our discussion with sinsŏn, introducing sanshin in later section of this chapter.

In East Asian culture, motifs of immortality and of never-ending transmutation of life go as far back in history as the culture itself. The sinsŏn, an important figure in East Asian Daoism and practices of inner alchemy (內丹, Korean naedan, Chinese neidan) and nourishing life (養生, Korean yangsaeng, Chinese yangsheng), is a category within a hierarchy of celestial beings. Sinsŏn embody immortality, often a goal of these practices. Immortality, in this context, indicates a process of personal purification and enhanced perception of reality, resulting from physical, moral-spiritual and cognitive development (Miura 2008a; Kirkland 2008; Kirkland 1991). Early descriptions of the immortals (仙, Korean sŏn, Chinese xian) are found in the Shiji (史記, Records of the Historian), produced around the first century BC. Early immortals were sometimes depicted as clothed in feathers, they could ascend to Heaven by moving their arms as wings. Occasionally, immortals took on a form of a bird, or assumed a scaly body and a snake's head, hence their connection to dragons. In East Asian culture a dragon is a paragon of mutability of form (Miura 2008b, 1092; Schafer 1980, 22). An image of a dragon is widely utilized in the alchemical texts, and on the paintings the curves and twists of a dragon represent

the endless flow and transmutation of life. These twists and curls represent the movement of ki energy, which is visualized in circles, spirals and waves (Munakata 1991, 36-41).

Sŏndo Culture in Contemporary Korea

While mountains and upland landscapes are vital for East Asian culture and spirituality in general, this is particularly true for Korean culture. The cult of mountain gods (山神, sanshin) has existed in Korea since ancient times. When Daoism came to Korea from China, in the Three Kingdoms period (57 BC - 668 AD), Chinese concepts of sinsŏn merged with the concepts of Korean sanshin. Today the depictions of female and male sanshin and sinsŏn are found in shrines dedicated to mountain gods which are parts of Buddhist temple complexes, usually called sansingak (山神閣), or samsingak (三神閣). They are also worshiped in separate shrines called sansindang (山神堂), which are not parts of Buddhist temples (Mason 1999, 97). Most of sanshin are male, but there are also depictions of female sanshin, such as, for example, female sanshin images in Ssangkyesa (雙磎寺) and Daewŏnsa (大源寺) Buddhist temples at Mt. Chiri (Chirisan). Sinsŏn are often painted on outer walls of Buddhist temples, or as accompanying sanshin. Sinsŏn are sometimes called pisŏn (飛仙, flying immortals) or sŏnnyŏ (仙女, immortal women) (Mason 1999, 37-38, 55, 81). Also the term sŏnin (仙人, immortal person) can be used.

Despite the fact that sanshin and sinsŏn sometimes coexist and merge on the paintings and in other cultural spaces such as the GiCheon legends, they are parts of different systems. Sanshin cult is alive in Korea in many forms, for example Korean shamans pray to sanshin as they are included in a shamanic pantheon of gods and spirits, and separate ceremonies are widely held for sanshin. While sanshin is a very old and deeply rooted Korean folk culture, sinsŏn tradition, usually identified as Daoist, was mostly favoured by the upper classes of Korean society, particularly during its introduction in Paekche (18 BC - 660 AD) and Silla (57 BC - 935 AD) dynasties. In Koryŏ and Chosŏn sinsŏn culture became gradually popularized, manifesting in such new religions as Ch'ŏndogyo in the 19th century (Na Kwŏn-su 2012).[26]

[26] Ch'ŏndogyo (天道教) is one of contemporary Korean new religions. It orginates with Tonghak (東學), a religio-ideological movement ultimately connected to Peasants Wars of late 19th century Korea.

The Chinese character sŏn (仙, immortality), traditionally associated with Chinese Daoism, has acquired a new nationalistic meaning in contemporary South Korea. In modern times references to old Korean cults of mountain worship go under the name of sŏndo (仙道, the way of immortality). Sŏndo constitute a merging of sanshin and sinsŏn cultures, which is embodied in the figure of Tan'gun, the legendary founder of the Korean nation. Sŏndo posits Tan'gun as central to sŏndo, despite the fact that the text of Samguk Yusa (三國遺事, Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms) calls him sanshin, and not sinsŏn.

Sŏndo culture has grown and developed since the 1980s, and it is postulated by its propagators to be an ancient and original Korean religion. New books on sŏndo are continuously published in South Korea, see for example Han'guk sŏndo wa hyŏndae tanhak (한국 선도와 현대 단학, Korean sŏndo and contemporary tanhak) by Yi Sŭng-ho published in 2015, or Han'guk sŏndo ŭi yŏksa wa munhwa (History and culture of Korean sŏndo) by Sŏndo munhwa yŏn'guwŏn (Research Institute of Sŏndo Culture), published in 2006.27 They perpetuate and develop ideas of sŏn and sinsŏn, supporting their presence in the public consciousness. The proponents of sŏndo view ki suryŏn as a manifestation of sŏndo, and they usually refer to it as sŏndo suryŏn (仙道修練, learning the way of immortality) (Sŏndo munhwa yŏn'guwŏn eds. 2006, 741; Yi Sŭng-ho 2015, 262).

Korean cults of mountain worship are indeed ancient. Therefore, sŏndo can be defined as a newly invented name for an already existing cultural and historical phenomenon. Alternatively, it can be argued that sŏndo is a newly invented tradition, which having grown out of ancient cults, is taken up and developed in modernity. This reinvention of tradition can be addressed as rescaling, a concept clarified in the Introduction. This rescaling of the reinvented traditions impacts not only on the cults of mountain worship, but on the mountains themselves. The mountains are transformed by the mountain cults, in a way similar to mountains being transformed by culture in general, as discussed by Debarbieux and Rudaz (2015). Old Korean cults of mountain worship are rescaled into the present, made legible, useful and functional. In its contemporary nationalistic meaning, sŏndo is a relatively new term. But the proponents of sŏndo in South Korea today project it backwards to Silla, Koguryŏ and Paekche (Sŏndo munhwa yŏn'guwŏn 2006). They also view new Korean religions originating in the late 19th

[27] *Tanhak* 丹學 means the study of *tan* (丹), we clarify the meaning of *tan* later in the text of this chapter.

and early 20th centuries, such as Ch'ŏndogyo, Chŭngsangyo and Wŏn Buddhism, as expressions of sŏndo (Na Kwŏn-su 2012).28

Korean cults of mountain worship were instrumental for the development of modern Korean nationalism in the end of 19th and the beginning of 20th centuries. When discussing the history of sŏndo as a term, its supporters point out its connection to what Koreans scholars Sin Ch'ae-ho (申采浩, 1880-1936), Chŏng In-bo (鄭寅普, 1893-1950) and An Chae-hong (安在鴻, 1891-1965) called sŏn'gyo (仙教, the teaching of immortality). Scholars Hyŏn Sang-yun (玄相允,1893-?) called it sindo (神道, the way of spirits); Yi Nŭng-hwa (李能和, 1869-1943) called it sin'gyo (神教, the teaching of spirits); and Ch'oe Nam-sŏn (崔南善, 1890-1957) called it kosindo (古神道, old way of spirits) (Na Kwŏn-su 2012, 411, note. 2).

Sŏndo culture is directly related to the cultural and social phenomenon of chaeya sahak (在野史學, oppositional history). The views of chaeya sahak are spread wide by its defenders, popular nationalist historians, and are accepted by many citizens of South Korea. Chaeya historians propagate the interpretation of Tan'gun myth which came up early in the 20th century, when Tan'gun was redefined as the ancestor of the Korean people rather than the founder of the first Korean state. The conflict between the advocates of chaeya sahak found at the time outside the academia, and the defenders of kangdan sahak (講壇史學, academic history), professional academic historians, escalated in the 1978, focused on the depictions of Tan'gun and Kojosŏn (古朝鮮, ?-108 BC) in school history textbooks. The proponents of chaeya sahak accused kangdan sahak scholars of promoting a colonial view of Korean history, instilled by Japanese scholars during the occupation. Kangdan sahak scholars called chaeya sahak followers non-professional and accused them of falsifying historical records. The main points of disagreements between the two groups relate to Tan'gun, the sphere of his operations in historical/mythological time and geographical space, and the reliability of various sources related to Tan'gun. Chaeya sahak see Tan'gun as a real historical figure, while kangdan sahak consider him as a mythological character (Chŏng Kyŏng-hŭi 2015, 155). Here again the power

[28] Chŭngsangyo (甑山教) is one of new religions of Korea, it is focused on spiritual renewal and the veneration of Kang Il-sun (1871-1909), a milleniarian, messianic figure who combined elements of Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism and traditional Korean shamanism. Wŏn Buddhism (*wŏnpulgy*o 圓佛教) is a Korean branch of Buddhism emerging in the early and mid 20th century, which sought to simplify, modernise and make more accessible the practices of Buddhism.

and authority of Tan'gun are rescaled from the past into the present, being utilized in a contemporary ideological debate.

Some contemporary scholars estimate chaeya sahak as a new mythology, which attempts to strengthen Korean national identity. Kang Tong-gu sees history and mythology as two sides of the same coin (2000). He notes that in recent decades the conflict between chaeya sahak and kangdan sahak has lost some of its acuteness. Some claims of chaeya sahak were incorporated into the official version of Korean history, as demonstrated in contemporary history textbooks for schoolchildren (Kang Tong-gu 2000, 14). Chaeya sahak has been equally popularised through sŏndo culture and ki suryŏn, of which GiCheon is one example.

Sanshin of Korea

The revival or re-invention of traditions of mountain immortality within the spiritual culture of Korea includes not only sinsŏn (immortals), but also sanshin (Korean mountains gods), who are equally important in the GiCheon legend on the Woman of Heaven examined in this book.[29] Sanshin are much more central to Korean culture than sinsŏn. Sanshin can be male or female, one or more per mountain, integral with it, alternatively either manifesting it or being manifested by it (Mason 1999, 34-37). Sanshin are usually described in the legends as benevolent spirits. They help virtuous people and filial sons and daughters. Sanshin are also depicted as supporting historical figures and simple people in times of trouble, sometimes for no reason at all (Yim Chae-hae and Pak Chong-sŏng 2005, 385).

The number and the size of sanshin paintings in South Korea has increased in recent decades (David Mason, personal communication). David Mason stresses that mountain worship is evolving new roles in twenty first century Korea (1999, 14-15), as evidenced by the growing body of research on the ancient and contemporary sanshin cults and practices. Korean academic scholarship discusses sanshin in the context of sanshin sinang (山神信仰, religious beliefs in mountain gods) and sansinje (山神祭, festive sacrifice to mountain gods). A traditional ceremony of sansinje is performed in many Korean villages on a regular basis, in spring or

[29] Th legend on the Woman of Heaven constitutes the rescaling of *sanshin* spiritual power into the present, when the legend is lived again by the practitioners performing GiCheon stances in the mountains of Korea.

autumn. Sansinje is also performed in connection to burial, erecting a gravestone, hunting and gathering ginseng on the mountain (Yim Chae-hae and Pak Chong-sŏng 2005, 381).

Mountain worship became systematized under the Silla dynasty (57 BC – 935 AD). Ch'oe Chin-gu, in his article on five mountains and Buddhist beliefs in mountain spirits, examines both the conflicts between sanshin sinang and Buddhism and their subsequent fusion. His article analyses Silla rituals of mountain worship described in both the Samguk Sagi (三國史記, History of the Three Kingdoms) and Samguk Yusa (三國遺事, Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms) (Ch'oe Chin-gu 2013). Other South Korean scholars engage in historical analysis of the formation of sanshin mythology by examining, for example, the developments and changes in sansinje ritual since the nineteenth century in Tonghaeri, Kongju. The orally transmitted legends explain this ritual as originating in sacrificial offerings to tigers in order to prevent them from attacking humans (Kang Sŏng-bok 2011). Similar research was conducted on the worship ceremonies for the mountain god of Mt. T'aehwa (Kang Sŏng-bok, Pak Chong-ik 2010), and the transformation of sansinje in honor of the spirit of Musŏng mountain since the seventeenth century (Pak Chong-ik 2009).

In a number of further works Korean scholars examine the deification of historical figures and their gradual transformation into sanshin (Yi Kyŏng-yŏp 2000). An interesting example of this practice is the transformation of King Tanjong (端宗,1452–1455) into the sanshin of Mt. T'aebaek. This process started in the fifteen century, culminating in 1955 with the installation of a tablet at Mt. T'aebaek declaring a "memorial to the Great King Tanjong of T'aebaek mountain, Chosŏn kingdom". This happened in spite of King Tanjong having died and been buried elsewhere (Kim Kang-san 2006). The cult of this ex-king and now contemporary god is examined in Korean academia as Tanjong sinang (端宗信仰, religious beliefs in Tanjong). It is a popular folk cult in Yŏngwŏl county of Kangwŏn Province. Hŏ Yong-ho, for example, analyses the private mystic experiences of Tanjong sinang adherents, comparing them with the experience officially prescribed by this cult (2009).

The examination of ancient and contemporary mountain worship in Korea includes the studies of the rites (Kim Chŏng-ha 2007), sanshin paintings (Kim Yŏng-ja 2005), and various types of sanshin legends and their structure (Kim Sŏn-p'ung 2003). One example is the study on the Mountain Goddess Tajagu Grandmother, worshiped in Chungnyŏng, Yongbuwŏn-ri, Taegang-myŏn, Tanyang-gun. According to the legend, this Goddess Grandmother defeated thieves operating on a mountain pass (Ch'oe Un-sik 2004). Interestingly, Tajagu Grandmother and

other Mountain Goddesses are often depicted as protecting the country during war or an uprising, and bringing victory. However, other legends feature the same Mountain Goddesses as supporting the enemy, thus causing defeat in a military conflict (Kwŏn T'ae-hyo 1998).

The relevance of sanshin for contemporary Korean society reaches beyond the ritual sphere of regular offerings to local deities. In Korea mountains are traditionally regarded as a place where humans and gods meet, an idea accepted by adherents of different religions. For example, some Korean Christian researchers of sanshin suggest that a few pastors acquired spiritual powers through mountain prayer. These spiritual powers are expressed as leadership skills within the Christian community, conclude these Christian scholars (Yi Yo-han 1987). The sanshin tradition is thus rescaled into Christian practice, one example of how the sanshin are deeply integrated with the landscapes allowing for their legends to be reinvented again and again.

Sanshin worship today is connected to a number of contemporary projects, such as the Noksaek Han'guk (녹색 한국, Green Korea) environmental movement, and nation-branding (Mason 2012), and the South Korean hiking culture discussed further in Chapter Eight. The ideas of sanshin and sinsŏn are revived within the mind-body traditions of ki suryŏn and GiCheon constructed in the South, as discussed in Chapters Four and Seven, and in the charismatic narrations and political mythology of the North, as discussed in Chapters Five and Six, thus constituting a part of contemporary Korean mountain culture and mythology, and supporting the reimaging of the mountain landscapes.

The Southern legend of Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and Northern narratives of Kim Chŏng-suk link the concept of the mountains to that of femininity. In a similar vein to other practices of inner alchemy (Schipper 1993), GiCheon ideology gives a certain "preference" to females. Scholars concur that the sanshin were held to be female in ancient times, and have mostly transformed, changing their gender into male under the prevailing patriarchal norms during the last half-millennium (Mason 1999, 37). Nevertheless, female mountain spirits are still actively worshiped in South Korea today, sustaining old traditions and evolving new ones. One example is Mt. Unje northeast of Kyŏngju. Today many female pilgrims frequent this Korean mountain to pray to the Unje Yŏsanshin (雲帝 女山神, Unje Mountain Goddess), the wife of the second Silla king (Lee and de Bary eds. 1997, 51). Other examples of contemporary female-oriented Korean myths include the developing cult of "Mago, the Mother Goddess of the Korean people" advanced by adherents of the mind-body movement Dahn World. Mago (麻姑, Chinese Magu), one of the most important female immortals in China, was allegedly born

under Emperor Ming of the Han (57-75 AD), and her cult in the regions of Anhui and Jiangsu had an active following until at least the 13th century (Despeux, Kohn 2003: 94-96). She became a Mountain Goddess from Korean folktales and is promoted in Dahn World mythology into a "mother of all humans", living in the "highest spot on the face of the earth" (Baker 2007b, 511-513). The image of Mago is becoming linked in recent years with a generalized conception of female sanshin, an association even spreading beyond Dahn World circles (David Mason, personal communication July 2014).30 Another important female sanshin is Sŏndo Sŏngmo (仙桃聖母, Immortal Peaches Holy Mother), the goddess of Sŏndo mountain west of Kyŏngju. According to the legend recorded in Samguk Yusa, she gave birth to Pak Hyŏkkŏse (박혁거세), the first king of Silla. Later she become a promoter of Buddhism (Mason 1999, 38).

East Asian Alchemy

Shifting and transmuting images of sanshin, sinsŏn and their veneration relate to another East Asian cultural phenomenon, namely alchemy. The purpose of alchemy is the achievement of immortality, which is considered possible after grasping the principles of life's origin and transformation. East Asian and European civilizations share "operational (external)" and "spiritual (internal)" alchemical practices and principles. European alchemical knowledge arises from ancient Greek and Arabic alchemy, which, there is evidence to suggest, developed under East Asian influences (Smith 2014, 126). Alchemical practices can also be considered through the lens of new materialism as articulated by Bennett (2012). In a view of the world based on Cartesian dualism the mind is considered active, the body is considered passive; humans are viewed as political; nature is viewed as acted upon. According to the theory of the new materialism, material environment is vibrant and energetic; it has an independent agency. In alchemy metals and minerals are distinctly lively, they interact and transform. If the declared endeavor of external alchemy is the creation of an elixir that turns any metal into gold and gives eternal life, internal alchemy achieves perfection and immortality through transformative process in the body and mind of the adept. In practice, external and internal alchemy often intersect and merge.

[30] See also Kwŏn T'ae-hyo 1998.

Ge Hong (283-343), an early Daoist thinker, discussed the art of immortality in his famous work Baopuzi (抱朴子, [Book of the] Master Who Embraces Simplicity), the locus classicus dedicated to internal and external alchemy. As he describes in his Baopuzi, meditation and purification have to be carried out before preparing the elixir. After the elixir is ready, gold is used to verify its perfection. The elixir is proved to be effective when it can transform metals into gold. The perfected elixir which can turn metals into gold is ready to be absorbed by the adept, and it will turn a human into an immortal (Kim Daeyeol 2000, 145). Meditation and purification before the preparation of the elixir pertain to internal alchemy, while the process of testing the elixir on metals can be classified as external alchemy. Formulated this way, the process of preparation and absorption of the elixir of immortality manifests both internal and external alchemical processes, and the boundary between them is not clearly set.

The quest for immortality and the cult of immortals are rooted in East Asian culture and its autochthone religions. Immortality is achieved through the assimilation of that which is eternal, and is based on the life ordering principle. There are different ideas of living immortality: to ascend to heaven alone or together with the family, to live long and secretly away from people in the mountains or at the sea, or to live among the people. In order to preserve life, one has to avoid sensory and psychophysical perturbations, so high position, power, responsibilities, glory and richness are considered obstacles for the path of immortality (Daeyeol Kim 2000, 23, 43, 48, 50). Yet, at certain historical periods pursuits of immortality were quite popular with the Chinese aristocracy, not contradicting, but co-existing with high positions in the society. Pavilions and halls of immortals in the mountains depicted on the paintings often resemble an imperial palace, and immortals are dressed like high governmental officials (Munakata 1991, 130).

One of the routes towards immortality consisted in finding an immortal and getting from her or him a secret recipe for obtaining immortality. During the Han dynasty the quest for immortality came to include not only finding an immortal, but also learning the discipline with the master in order to brew an immortality elixir (Daeyeol Kim 2000, 46-47). This quest for immortality was thus becoming a practice, a way of life.

Absorbing the elixir could grant the alchemist magical abilities, such as an ability to make the immortals come, get up into the air and fly, avoid bad spirits, weapons or unhappiness, cure illnesses, regain youth, and for older people to be able to bear children. Other potential abilities of an immortal included stopping epidemics, exorcising demons, avoiding poisonous snakes,

and resisting armed attacks. There are diverse methods to achieve immortality including virtuous actions, good conduct, ritual acts, medical, gymnastic and alchemic practices. Ge Hong emphasizes the possibility to acquire immortality through work and study (Ibid 36, 48, 65).

In East Asian alchemy, nature includes atmospheric and astrological phenomena, as well as human life and social relations. For alchemists, nature manifests the practical application of life principles. Observing and imitating nature contributes to grasping these principles and creates an ability to apply them to one's own body. The purpose of alchemy is to transform substance, revealing and utilizing its particular kind of energy. The means of the transmutation depend on the life force (氣, ki) which is manifested and employed in a specific cosmic or organic space-time. The models of alchemic transmutation come from observing metamorphosis in nature, animal pregnancy, days and seasons of vegetal development and metabolism, as well as the transformation of minerals and metals (Ibid 189, 193).

The time necessary for the change in nature is too long for an alchemist, as for stones and metals maturation takes millions of years. But as the alchemist's human existence is limited, they attempt to accelerate the time necessary for transformation of elements. This is a classic example of downscaling of the cosmic processes by replicating them in a miniature. An alchemic melting pot in external alchemy, or a mind-body of the alchemist in internal alchemy, are conceived of as small models of the cosmos. These models unite time and space according to the function of the life principle, this is how they become a "cosmic kitchen". The time depends on maturation, the process of becoming. Becoming on the ground – planets and animals – and underground – minerals and metals – is stimulated and achieved by the time, the sun cycles of day and night, summer and winter. Similarly, the transformation of the ingredients in the melting pot with the help of the flame, and formation of the elixir nourished and matured by the fire, has to be attuned to cosmic time. The duration of the heating and control of the fire are deliberately chosen and determined for their significance relative to the cosmic cycles (Ibid 193-194, 209).

The elixir was composed of extracts of minerals, metals, vegetable and animal parts. Gold and cinnabar, representing permanency and transformation, often formed part of the elixir. First, it was observed that geologically gold can be found beneath cinnabar, following that, an idea that cinnabar can transform into gold was developed. Cinnabar was conceptually linked to the symbolic value of the color red, associated with nobility, beauty and talent. In ancient China

important documents were written in red, red was a color of the sun and the fire (Ibid 133-134, 141, 148). The Chinese character for cinnabar (丹, Korean tan, Chinese dan) means "red color". Dan became a generic term for an elixir of immortality (Ibid, 150). Dan forms a part of a word "cinnabar field", a term in internal alchemy which indicates three dantian (丹田, Korean tanjŏn), the three bodily loci which play a key role in East Asian practices of internal alchemy and nourishing life (Munakata 1991, 137). The three tanjŏn are located in the regions of abdomen, heart and brain (Pregadio 2008, 302). Korean ki suryŏn discourse relates to the three tanjŏn as hadanjŏn (下丹田, lower tanjŏn), chungdanjŏn (中丹田, middle tanjŏn) and sangdanjŏn (上丹田, upper tanjŏn). In GiCheon and other practices of internal alchemy the lower tanjŏn is emphasized, and considered as a storage of ki and a center of a human body.31

In alchemy, the process of the evolution of the material is its refinement. In nature, time refines the materials. In the alchemic melting pot refinement is the goal of alchemical operations (Daeyeol Kim 2000, 189-190). In internal alchemy, where the alchemic melting pot is a mind-body of the adept, refinement, purification and harmonization of the substances for creating the elixir translate into refinement, purification and harmonization of the self, thus becoming a technology of the self in the language of Michel Foucault.

In alchemical perspective reality itself is a chain of transformations. Alchemists attempt to discern the generative and productive principles of nature and create effects in their laboratories by employing the powers that inhere in nature. In internal alchemy, the mind and body of the alchemist is just such a laboratory. The processes which occur in nature (macrocosm) alchemists try to imitate in the laboratory (microcosm), gaining and developing their knowledge of nature by replication and imitation. Imitation entails ability to observe and reproduce, and observation and reproduction require self-reflection.

In this scheme, imitation itself acquires an epistemological status as the source of knowledge. Imitation is a productive activity, accompanied by beliefs and categories of thought that yield creation. The process of imitating nature itself constitutes a type of cognition (Smith 2002, 9-25, 121, 142). To imitate nature successfully, a bodily, experiential engagement with it is required. This engagement develops deep mastery of the behavior of materials, that by which carpenter knows how to choose, cut and prepare wood panels and by which the miner knows

[31] Interview with Ch'oe Hyŏng-su of 10.11.2010 Puch'ŏn, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten. Mr. Ch'oe gave Victoria explicit permission to use his real name. Interview with Pak Kyŏng-ae (not a real name), of 17.01.2011, recorded by Victoria Ten.

his mine. This bodily involvement with the matter, which in East Asian cosmology is not dead, but alive and active, also shapes the body and mind of the alchemist (Smith 2002, 86, 98, 114, 117). In internal alchemy, the materials to be perceived and grasped are the "self" of the adept, continuously shaped and re-shaped in alchemical process. Thus, the work of achieving immortality is based on self-knowledge; it is a process where the self of the adept constitutes material to be worked upon and with.

The work of achieving immortality is equally based on imitation of nature. Nature in East Asian context is often understood as a mountain. The character sŏn (仙, immortality) consists of two elements, in (人, Chinese ren, human being) and san (山, Chinese shan, mountain) thus demonstrating direct connection between immortality and mountains in East Asian culture. Ge Hong stresses the importance of carrying out alchemic work in the vicinity of great mountains, and recommends for this purpose about thirty renowned mountains (Munakata 1991, 35). Contact with a mountain is essential in internal and external alchemy. In the mountains immortals dwell; to sacred mountains adepts of immortality withdraw, there they seek herbs, minerals and mushrooms instrumental to alchemical processes. In internal alchemy a human body is often visualized in a form of a mountain (Despeux 1990, 194). Within East Asian paintings, a mountain is depicted as a "second self" of the adept, and parallel processes and phenomena occur in a human body and in a mountain. This way painted images of a mountain, and subsequently a mountain itself, perceived and experienced by an adept following certain cultural "programming", constitutes a model, or a paradigm, of alchemic transmutation of the self (Daeyeol Kim 2000, 17-20), while the practice of painting becomes an alchemic practice of self-perfection.

East Asian Paintings of Mountains

The culture of alchemy and immortality develops artistic representation as a technique of individual perfection and refinement. This culture has a long history. Bronze ritual objects from the Warring States period (480-222 BC), during the late Zhou dynasty, depict mountains as dangerous spaces of wilderness, where deities, monstrous creatures, animals, birds and sometimes humans engage in various activities, including hunting, fighting or dancing. Some bronze vessels portray the combatants pacifying or exorcising the mysterious realm naked,

other than wearing crown-feather headgear. The dots marking the nipple areas suggest that they might be female. In some pictures, a winged human figure moves to heaven through a mystical realm of the sacred mountain. Kiyohiko Munakata proposes to interpret this figure as a shaman on their ecstatic trip, a deceased person, or a spiritual messenger who conveys the prayer of the people to heaven. In the opinion of Kiyohiko Munakata, these are early depictions of the immortals (Munakata 1991, 12-20).

Mountains as a dangerous realm of wilderness depicted in designs at the time of Warring States transform to more peaceful, or festive space during the Han dynasty, where the immortals play music or dance in the mountains. During the late Han dynasty, individuals seeking immortality come to the mountains to engage in self-cultivation, to receive divine revelations, to attain magical powers or to prepare an elixir of immortality (Munakata 1991, 34), the procedure we have reviewed in the preceding section of this chapter.

One of the new iconographic elements in Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) mountain scenes is the yunki (雲氣, Korean un'gi: un cloud, ki life energy) motif, sometimes called "cloud scroll" in English. Its basic form is a rhythmic curvilinear pattern accentuated with cloud-like scroll forms that often suggest birds' heads, beaks and dragons' claws. This motif looks like a group of clouds charged with animistic energy. In the Han dynasty this cloud-like form becomes a vehicle of the immortals and these mystical curves serve as mountain peaks, cliffs, valleys and bumps on a slope (Munakata 1991, 20-21). They are embodied in the depictions of phoenixes and dragons.

The art of depicting mountains developed during the successful era of the Six Dynasties (221-581). Scholars such as Gu Kaizhi (344-405) and Zong Bing (375-443) composed essays instructing on how to draw a sacred mountain. A sacred mountain was drawn in the form of a writhing dragon, which expressed an ascending motion of a concentrated vital force (ki). On a picture, narrow canyon with sheer cliff walls on both sides, was suitable for the dwelling of the immortals. Besides, the painting usually included such symbolic elements as auspicious clouds, lone pine trees, vertical stone slabs, animals and birds (Munakata 1991, 36-41).

A common alchemic motif in the paintings is a mountain which parallels a human body. The first alchemical representation of a human body in a form of a mountain dates to 1227 (Despeux 1990, 195). One of the later examples includes a picture The Fanghu Isle of the Immortals, Qing dynasty (1644-1911), from the Nelson-Atkin Museum of Art. Three palaces situated one above the other on a mountain can be interpreted as three dantian (丹田, Korean tanjŏn), while

a mountain itself reminds the shape of a human body. Mountain paintings often depict people travelling toward the palace in the mountains. These figures are also a metaphoric depiction of either ki or body fluids circulating through the organism. The complex symbolism of mountain palace includes several interpretations. One of them is an imperial palace, another one – a palace of mountain immortals. It can also represent a head of a human body.

Another example of a parallel between the human body and a mountain is a Landscape with Buildings, Myong dynasty, from University of Michigan Museum of Arts (Munakata 1991, 134-135). On this painting the path leading to the palace curves just like intestines in the human body. The mountain itself is depicted as dynamically in motion, transforming itself and transforming the viewer. The movement of people on the mountain is a multi-layered complex metaphor. It connotes the movement of liquids and ki in a human body, the actual travel of people in a mountainous landscape, a pilgrimage to a sacred place, a travel to an imperial palace, and a spiritual progress of a human being toward immortality. Some of these processes occur simultaneously in old and new East Asian legends and images related to the quest for immortality. A moment of travel toward an imperial palace connotes a motif of improving one's status by ascending to higher ranks in the government bureaucracy and gaining social capital, an element which is definitely present in the immortality endeavors as well, as we noted in a previous section.

One of the arguments of our book is that the symbolic images of New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu are contemporary immortals of Korea. They inspire practices of self-transformation leading particular groups of followers to think, feel and act in certain ways. These contemporary goddesses speak to the ancient culture of immortality and alchemy of East Asia. As will be discussed in Chapters Four and Seven, the Woman of Heaven from GiCheon lore is an icon created to motivate the GiCheon practice of South Koreans. Our second goddess Kim Chŏng-suk is an image directed at instilling revolutionary ideology in the citizens of North Korea. The way both goddesses are depicted in contemporary Korean texts and paintings follows the lines, motifs and techniques utilized in the traditional East Asian ethos of immortality. Traditional East Asian paintings depicting mountain immortality vividly exemplify the parallel between the human body and the mountain. This motif is taken up and developed in the ideology of North Korea. Political narratives sourced from Pyongyang even claim that Kim Chŏng-il, the son of Kim Chŏng-suk, resembles the famous Mt. Paektu under which he was born according to the mythology of North Korea.

A metaphor of a mountain as a human body is important for practices of internal alchemy and East Asian medicine (Scheid 2002), where the human body is perceived as a system of ki passages or routes. Ki passes through acupuncture points, which are vital for the life of the body. The stimulation of these points can harmonize ki flow between the organs, heal illnesses and prolong life. These acupuncture points also connect ki from inside the body with the ki outside the body, thus allowing the therapist to "pump" new ki into the body of a patient. According to the parallel between the human body and the mountain, the process occurring in a human body occurs also in a mountain, and vice versa. Acupuncture points in the human body parallel the places on the mountain where divine immortals ascend and descend.32

The parallel between a human body and a mountain relates to another alchemic model, not exposing the elixir to sun and heat, described in a previous section, but placing it underground for maturation. In this model the alchemist recreates the space-time of the origin, generation, where the life germinates, reproduces, develops. This mechanism imitates the development of the embryo and the birth of a new life. Here the earth, the well and the egg are the metaphoric images of the womb. The genesis of the cosmos represented in the alchemic procedure parallels the gestation of a human (Daeyeol Kim 2002, 234). A feminine body, within which an embryo develops, becomes a metaphor for cosmos, for life gestation, and for an alchemical process (Schipper 1993).

Feminine Images of Divinity

Females are present in the arts of internal alchemy and nourishing life not only as abstract ideas and immortal deities, but also as actual persons. Women have often taken an active part in Daoist cults. For example, in Daoist school of Celestial Masters which arose in the 2nd century AD, women enjoyed a status equal to that of men. Women practiced techniques similar to those studied by men and received similar titles. Leadership positions were filled by members of both sexes (Despeux 1990, 19; Despeux and Kohn 2003, 105).

The Daoist immortal pantheon includes male and female figures. The cults of female immortals were particularly popular in southern China, and they included male and female worshipers.

[32] Kiyohiko Munakata brings translation of Tang source that notes the importance of the ascent and descent points of the immortals in the mountains, but he does not connect them to acupuncture points in the human body (1991, 2).

These cults provided a space for active female participation which intensified in the 8th century AD, when it became fashionable for the princesses of imperial blood to become Daoist nuns, as Daoism gained in popularity. Some of these cults included more female than male practitioners (Despeux 1990, 52). Feminine hagiographies popular at the time enumerated the techniques practiced by famous women, which corresponded to those practiced by men: abstention from cereals, internal alchemy, recitation of canonic texts, usage of talismans. These texts praised women for their achievements in painting, calligraphy, embroidery and poetry, demonstrating their spiritual perfection. Important abilities of perfected women included healing diseases and prophetic talent. A number of important female Daoist leaders were famous for these; some of them were later deified and new cults were developed around them (Despeux 1990, 53-56).

Gary Snyder identifies "spirit of the valley" and "mother of ten thousand things" from Tao Te Ching (道德經) composed in 4th century BC as echoes of a great goddess worshiped in Neolithic past (Snyder 1980, xiii). Edward Schafer calls her the "ancestress of all water goddesses of China" and compares her with goddesses of water and fertility from Babylonian, Greek and Egyptian cultures (1980, 42-43). In his book The Divine Woman he describes the development of feminine images of divinity in China focusing on the medieval period. Goddesses were also pictured as great creative powers of nature, but more often Chinese mediaeval poetry and prose focused on female immortals who came into contact with mortal men. This encounter was supposed to purify the body and soul of a man, and bring him incredibly long life. With the time, an erotic element of this encounter became increasingly explicit while a divine or purifying aspect diminished (Ibid 1980, 44, 46-47).

The motif of a romantic or sexual union between a mortal and an immortal comes from ancient times. Chuci (楚辭, Songs of the South), a collection of shamanic songs and ritual chants from the 3rd century BC, recalls that male and female shamans prayed for gods to enter with them into a close personal relationship. With prayers, fragrant flowers, dances and offerings the shamans enticed the gods to descend. The meeting was accompanied by music and transmission of divine secrets (Despeux, Kohn 2003, 42).

The themes of physical love between a living person and a spirit appear everywhere in East Asian folklore and literature. Edward Schafer thinks that the fantastic journey of a male hero and his mystic union with a goddess is a motif that goes back to Babylonian times at least. By Tang times (618-907) the king or a young scholar has replaced the archaic shaman in his

meeting with the goddess. An affair between a king/hero and a goddess in Tang prose and poetry takes place in a dream, or magic world, often on a mountain with strong wind blowing, which in East Asian tradition is a symbol of ki. Attributes of the goddess are rain, mists, clouds and snow. Her “flesh and skin resemble ice and snow" and various mountain related imagery is used to describe her; she is compared to stalactites, coagulated salts and magma. The goddess possesses alchemical secrets; here the motif of spiritual and physical regeneration is acted out through the agency of a divine sexual experience. The truth of her nature is impenetrable, she is difficult to attain, sometimes the hero sees only her reflection in the mist, fragile and dreamlike, or hears only the echo of her song. In some stories the goddesses are described as cultivated ladies of the given epoch, yet, underneath they remain fierce and powerful, pitiless and lethal nature spirits that can deprive the hero from virility and drain him from his blood (Schafer 1980, 53, 93-94, 97-98, 101, 109, 114, 147-148, 188). Many of these motifs appear in the contemporary legend about the encounter of the Woman of Heaven with Bodhidharma, as will be discussed in Chapter Seven. This legend comes from GiCheon, a contemporary art of internal alchemy directed at achieving immortality, which will be described in Chapter Four. It will briefly outline the history of GiCheon, and the concrete principles and methods utilized for achieving immortality. An invented tradition of GiCheon, including these newly created legends, draws on immense cultural reservoir of East Asian mountain tradition and further develops it.

Chapter Four: Ki Suryŏn and GiCheon

As a contemporary mind-body practice, GiCheon started in South Korea in the 1970s. We argue that this practice belongs to Korean mountain culture, which forms a natural part of the mountain culture of East Asia. GiCheon (氣天, Kich'ŏn), as a mountain practice and a technique of immortality, aims at reaching eternal life. In this GiCheon and similar East Asian practices of self-perfection are classic examples of what Foucault termed technologies of the self.

The previous chapter has explored the traditions of Korean sanshin, East Asian mountain immortals, and the artistic representation of the mountains within this framework of thought. In our time these cultural forms transform and give rise to newly invented traditions such as GiCheon. One of the two New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu we discuss in this book, the Woman of Heaven, comes from a GiCheon legend. In order to explain the process which underpins that legend, an extensive understanding of the GiCheon movement is required. This chapter will begin with a short introduction to ki suryŏn in general, proceeding with the history of GiCheon including its foundation myth, then relating the basic GiCheon positions and principles. The chapter then moves to consider the movement's focus on the achievement of an immortal body. Finally, the chapter encounters GiCheon within the conceptual frame of the subtle body. The GiCheon legend focused on the Woman of Heaven, one of our goddesses, will be further investigated in Chapter Seven.

What is Ki Suryŏn?

GiCheon represents a part of ki suryŏn tradition rooted in the East Asian practices of internal alchemy and nourishing life, which come from ancient times and focus on the use of ki energy. Practices of internal alchemy and nourishing life grounded in physiological, psychological and behavioural principles include gymnastics, massage, breathing, sexual hygiene, diet, healing, meditation and visualization, as well as rules of daily behaviour (Despeux 2008a). 33 In

[33] A practice of GiCheon on which I focus includes gymnastic, massage, breathing, healing, and meditation, but not sexual hygiene, diet, visualization or rules of daily behaviour.

contemporary South Korea, practices of ki suryŏn such as those taught by GiCheon and Dahn World (단월드, tanwŏldŭ, U Hye-ran 2006a) have been integrated into the routine of urban daily life; thus studying ki suryŏn culture involves investigating the way urbanites live and relate to each other.34 Studios and other training sites where practitioners come together create opportunities for social net-working and improving social status by getting to know people of higher standing – a striving for status that is encouraged by the competitive demands of modern society (Lett 2002). Other reasons that attract men and women to practice include health problems, seeking relief from stress, a longing for spiritual enlightenment, and the desire to leave the dusty city and spend some time in nature at the week-end retreats, which are often organized for the adepts of different ki suryŏn groups.

Although scholars sometimes include ki practices among religious practices (Baker 2007b), the practitioners of ki suryŏn of both genders are drawn from various religious persuasions. Often, individuals engage in more than one kind of ki suryŏn, and Christians and Buddhists join in ki-related training. Some Christian ki suryŏn practitioners believe that ki disciplines turn them into "better Christians": after starting the practice they pray more, listen to the priest with greater attention, and visit the church more frequently. Some Christians also pray to God during the training, to ask for forgiveness and express gratitude.35 Buddhist practitioners state that ki exercises in the studio improve their concentration in Buddhist meditation.36

But what is ki suryŏn more precisely? U Hye-ran defines it as a ki-based practice directed toward moral and physical development of a person. Ki suryŏn is believed to lead to harmonization of the mind-body and actualization of hidden potential of an individual in the context of a union with the universe. Ki suryŏn groups focus on bodily practice, while selectively appropriating elements of various Korean religious traditions. In the estimation of U Hye-ran, ki suryŏn has spread beyond particular ki suryŏn groups, becoming a cultural product approachable to the majority of the population. As part of popular culture, the cosmology and values of ki suryŏn are interiorized by contemporary South-Korean society through internet computer games, animation and films: the terms ki and ki suryŏn are among

[34] Dahn World, or Dahn Yoga has recently changed its name into Noe Hohŭp (뇌호흡, Brain Breathing) and Noe Kyoyuk (뇌교육, Brain Education).

[35] Interview with Yi Sŏng-do, 08.12.2010, Pusan, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten. Yi Sŏng-do gave Victoria explicit permission to use his real name. Interview with Kim Yŏng-hui (not a real name), 05.11.2010, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten.

[36] Interview with Yi T'ae-gyŏng, 09.12.2010, Pusan, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten. Yi T'ae-gyŏng gave Victoria explicit permission to use his real name.

vital keywords of contemporary Korean culture (U Hye-ran 2006b, 71-73). Ki suryŏn groups generally seem to be growing: in a dynamically changing South Korean society new forms of ki suryŏn appear almost daily, new leaders arise combining or shifting their diffuse organizational affiliations. New mythologies, contemporary legends and "histories of the movement" are produced for mass-consumption, both orally and in print. Various ki suryŏn organizations inter-penetrate, borrow ideas and practices from each other.

Contemporary adepts of ki suryŏn reconstruct this tradition on the basis of age-old East Asian cultures of mind-body cultivation, but the ways in which they experience and articulate this practice are informed by present concerns of Korean society.

Brief History of GiCheon

Similar to other ki suryŏn groups, GiCheon achieved its maturity as a movement in the 1980s. However, the roots of GiCheon as a cultural phenomenon are in the 1970s. Kouksundo (U Hye-ran 2006b, 78) and GiCheon were among the first ki suryŏn groups which were established in South Korea in the early 1970s. Ki suryŏn groups often inter-twined, co-influencing each other. In the early 1970s, the first GiCheon teacher Pak Chŏng-nyong (later called by his adepts Tae-yang Chinin 大洋眞人, "perfected man Tae-yang") trained and taught students together with his "brother" Sŏ In-hyŏk, the leader of Kuksul group (國術, Korean Martial Art).37 Four of the seven founding members of Dahn World, originally called Tanhak Sŏnwŏn (丹學仙院, Tanhak Immortality Academy) were GiCheon practitioners, and instructors of Tanhak Sŏnwŏn used to attend GiCheon studios and practice in the 1980s.38 Also in the 1980s, Kim Chŏng-ho and Na Han-il, two students of Tae-yang Chinin, created Haidong Gumdo (海東劒道, Haedong Kŏmdo, Korean Sword Art) on the basis of GiCheon sword art.

The first GiCheon teacher Tae-yang Chinin appeared in Pusan in the early 1970s, and started teaching new stances and martial arts. We do not know when exactly he started using the word Kich'ŏn (or Gicheon, 氣天) to identify his practice, but the picture taken in the year 1973 in

[37] *Chinin* (眞人, Chinese *zhenren*, perfect man or woman) is a term from the vocabulary of East Asian practices of nourishing life and internal alchemy. GiCheon is one such contemporary practice. In GiCheon *chinin* is simultaneously a title and a formulation of a goal, toward which the trainees are instructed to aspire.
[38] At the outset, Dahn World (Tanhak Sŏnwŏn) was also connected to Kouksundo (U Hyeran 2006b, 78). This is another example of inter-connection and co-influence of various *ki suryŏn* groups.

Tonghwa-dong (동화동, nowadays Sindang-dong 신당동) shows the words Kich'ŏn Sŏnmujang (氣天禪武場, Kich'ŏn Zen martial arts school) (Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun 1998, 6).39 At later stages Tae-yang Chinin also called his practice Kich'ŏndo (氣天道, Kich'on Way) and Kich'ŏnmun (氣天門, Kich'on Gate), finally settling for GiCheon (氣天, Kich'ŏn).

Tae-yang Chinin claimed that he was raised and taught GiCheon in the mountains, by Wŏnhye Sangin (元慧上人), an old man who possessed extraordinary powers.40 According to Tae-yang Chinin, Wŏnhye Sangin could run faster than the wind, created a magical boundary in the mountains from which Tae-yang Chinin, as a child, could not stray, and, to some extent, communicated with birds and animals (Pak Tae-yang, Ch'oe Hyŏn-gyu, unpublished manuscript).41 We could easily identify Wŏnhye Sangin as a traditional sinsŏn, an immortal mountain dweller, an exemplar of a perfect being, whom GiCheon practitioners are instructed to emulate. According to another legend, GiCheon originates on Mt. Paektu, and "have been passed down secretly […] amidst the mountains in Korea" (as explained at the website www.gicheon.org managed by Lee Ki-t'ae) presumably by nameless sages and immortals. This origin myth of GiCheon demonstrates the connection of GiCheon to Korean mountain culture, and is the first among a series of contemporary GiCheon-related legends.

These legends are taken seriously by many practitioners, who like performing GiCheon exercise on mountain tops. Impressed by these legends, some adepts venture into Korean mountains looking for Wŏnhye Sangin, whom Tae-yang Chinin first declared dead, but later

[39] Elements of Buddhism, Zen-Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism and mountain cults are plentiful in the mythology of GiCheon and other *ki suryŏn* groups (Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun 1998; Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun ed, 2000). So the word "Zen" in the name of the group is not surprising. Due to particular traditions and complex power relationships within the GiCheon hierarchy, the name of the author Kim Hŭi-sang does not appear on the covers or inside the books published in 1998 and 2000, and he is not even mentioned as an "editor". Instead, the credit for the authorship and the edition is taken by GiCheon organization Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun (GiCheon Headquarters) as a whole.

[40] *Sangin* (上人, a higher person) is higher in GiCheon hierarchy than *chinin*.

[41] The manuscript was circulating among GiCheon practitioners, and Victoria Ten personally received it from the now deceased GiCheon teacher Kim Hŭi-sang. Kim Hŭi-sang heard that the writer Ch'oe Hyŏn-gyu held a series of interviews with Tae-yang Chinin which lasted for six months, and composed the manuscript on the basis of these interviews. Kim Hŭi-sang has received the manuscript from other GiCheon practitioners, and assumed that this manuscript was indeed composed by Ch'oe Hyŏn-gyu. Victoria later met the author Ch'oe Hyŏn-gyu, who confirmed that he is the author, and gave her his belated permission to read and reference the manuscript. Ch'oe Hyŏn-gyu has previously submitted the manuscript for consideration to the Hankyŏrae Publishing Company, where the manuscript was rejected. However, some of the workers of the Hankyŏrae were GiCheon practitioners, they liked the manuscript and started circulating it within the GiCheon community. The manuscript describes the childhood of Tae-yang Chinin in the mountains, his later descent into South Korean society and his adventures there.

changing his mind, pronounced him to be alive again. Some GiCheon adherents maintain that they have met Wŏnhye Sangin, whom they describe as an old man who can turn into a tiger.[42] This is how the legends are experienced and lived again by the adepts, who re-enforce the value of these narratives through personal bodily practice in mountainous spaces. These legends began emerging in the 1970s but were mainly composed in the 1980s, and recorded by Kim Hŭi-sang in the years 1998 and 2000 (Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun 1998; Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000).

Tae-yang Chinin had numerous followers, of whom the best known among his direct students and friends are Kim O-hyŏng, Yuk Tae-an, Lee Sang-wŏn (Yi Sang-wŏn), Pak Sŏng-dae, Kim Hŭi-sang, Pak Sa-gyu, and Mu Na-mi. The followers of Tae-yang Chinin, similarly to some practitioners of Korean traditional dance or music, or contemporary Confucian scholars, used to wear a particular type of dress. It is called saenghwal hanbok (生活韓服, Korean clothes for everyday use) and is developed by contemporary designers on the basis of traditional costumes. The trend to wear this type of dress in everyday life is shared by those Korean urbanites who associate themselves with some kind of "traditional" or quasi-traditional practice or propagate the value of "Koreanness". This way they are placing themselves in a visual confrontation to "normal" Koreans who are dressed in western clothes. They are thus expressing ideological disagreement with westernization and the loss of traditional values. Besides their links to GiCheon, some followers of Tae-yang Chinin participated in reconstruction of such traditions as Korean dance (Pak Sŏng-dae and Mu Na-mi), Korean philosophy (Kim Hŭi-sang), Korean fortune-telling and healing (Kim O-hyŏng), or production of Korean traditional clothes (Lee Sang-wŏn).

As the years passed, the practice of Tae-yang Chinin was identified in Korean society as martial arts, dance, magic/mysticism, meditation technique and therapeutic gymnastics. Each of the major followers of Tae-yang Chinin developed GiCheon in one of these directions. Lee Sang-wŏn established GiCheon as a meditative self-healing discipline. Previously Tae-yang Chinin taught GiCheon differently to different people, without order or system. Lee Sang-wŏn systematized the teaching method to be applied to all the students more or less equally, though keeping in mind the particular characteristics of each person. Lee Sang-wŏn has modified the main GiCheon position, naegasinjang, to fit the body constitution of contemporary Koreans. Besides, Lee Sang-wŏn has realized the importance of prolonged standing in the naegasinjang

[42] As I heard from Lee Ki-t'ae (personal communication). This motif probably follows a traditional belief that *sanshin* can turn into a tiger. On the paintings *sanshin* is usually depicted with a tiger (Mason 1999, 77).

position, and correcting the position of the student, and his method was later adopted by other GiCheon instructors in Korea. The followers of Lee Sang-wŏn say that Lee Sang-wŏn asked Tae-yang Chinin countless questions, and made endless efforts to procure the answers from Tae-yang Chinin, the information Tae-yang Chinin never transmitted to anyone else.

In the 1980s Taeyang hagwŏn (대양학원, Taeyang Academy) was opened in Noryangjin district of Seoul. It was an ipsihakwŏn (입시학원, a private academy for the students who have failed their university entrance exams, and are studying for the next year exams). GiCheon was a mandatory subject, studied and practiced at Taeyang hagwŏn in order to maximize concentration and improve study results. The teachers such as Kim O-hyŏng, Yi Myŏng-bok, Kim Hŭi-sang and others taught there; Yi Myŏng-bok composed a textbook (1988). Taeyang hagwŏn closed a few years later, though the students of Taeyang hagwŏn continued to various Seoul universities, where they formed GiCheon clubs.

In the opinion of Kim Hŭi-sang, as he has written in letters to Victoria Ten in the years 2010 and 2011, it was at Taeyang hagwŏn that GiCheon teaching was systematized and classified into practices of warming-up, static and dynamic discipline, breathing techniques and decorum training (tanbaegong, a special bow described in the next section of this chapter). The contribution of Kim O-hyŏng to GiCheon development is critical in this respect.

Kim O-hyŏng was a childhood friend of Tae-yang Chinin, the son of a neighboring household.43 In his youth Kim O-hyŏng was an adherent of another discipline, which greatly enhanced what GiCheon calls naegong (內功, inner power) and facilitated his later GiCheon training with Tae-yang Chinin.44 Kim O-hyŏng prefers to keep secret the name of that other discipline and the circumstances of his discipleship there. Due to the efforts of Lee Sang-wŏn

[43] After transferring from Pusan to Seoul, Tae-yang Chinin, while presumably in his early twenties, was adopted by Kang Ok-sŏn, a professional Korean shaman specializing in *sinch'im* (神針, acupuncture directed by spirits). The mother of Kim O-hyŏng was a friend of Kang Ok-sŏn.

[44] GiCheon and other similar practices are contemporary manifestations of East Asian culture of nourishing life and inner alchemy, usually identified as "Daoist". The vocabulary of GiCheon comes from this culture. The term *naegong* indicates power stored in the lower abdomen. This power is generated through improved circulation of *ki* in the body and mind, and shows as physical and moral strength and balance. Catherine Despeux translates *naegong* (Chinese *neigong*) as "inner practices", when she renders the title of a book *Neigong tushuo* (內攻圖說) of late Qing period as *Illustrated Explanations of Inner Practice* (Despeux 2008b, 336). Therapeutic exercises *daoyin* (Korean *toin*) is another term shared by contemporary GiCheon practice with ancient East Asian methods of nourishing life. But GiCheon distinguishes clearly between *toin* shared by many and six basic positions which are unique to GiCheon. During the GiCheon classes taught by the followers of Lee Sang-wŏn, stretching and pulling exercise called *toin* are performed in the beginning and in the end of the session.

and Lee Ki-t'ae, static postures taught by Kim O-hyŏng were incorporated into the body of GiCheon training, despite the fact that they did not originate with Tae-yang Chinin.45

Lee Sang-wŏn was the most loyal and committed champion of Tae-yang Chinin, to whom Tae-yang Chinin always turned in time of trouble. Lee Sang-wŏn always supported Tae-yang Chinin emotionally and economically until the death of Lee Sang-wŏn in June 2007.

The Setting for Practice and Basic GiCheon Positions

Since its origination in the 1970s, various instructors have taught GiCheon at mountain centers, rented studios, police stations, schools, universities, academies and colleges, private companies and banks, hospitals, clinics and health centers in South Korea. In recent years GiCheon is gaining in popularity also outside Korea, as Lee Ki-t'ae and Victoria Ten, the followers of Lee Sang-wŏn, teach GiCheon seminars in Europe and America. The wide range of GiCheon practitioners includes different occupations, various ages and health conditions, diverse social and economic status (but mainly middle class and upwards). There are schoolchildren, university students, company workers, sales-persons, taxi-drivers, construction workers, school teachers, university professors, owners of small businesses and big corporations, bank employees, housewives, news-reporters and other professionals among GiCheon adepts.

The training usually starts with a warming up, which includes the slow rotation movement of various joints in the body (knees, waist, shoulders, wrists and neck). After that the static positions are performed, then the dynamic ones. After having briefly described the GiCheon session, we will now clarify the meaning of some of the basic words and expressions. The vocabulary GiCheon practitioners use when describing the practice, and the concepts they relate to, often come from the East Asian traditions of inner alchemy and nourishing life.

GiCheon dynamic positions, including martial and sword arts, arise from six static basic positions called yukhap tan'gong (六合 丹功, six unified positions which strengthen tan power). Yukhap (六合) means "six positions unified". Tan (丹, Chinese dan, cinnabar) as mentioned in the previous chapter of this book, is an important element in East Asian alchemy. In inner alchemy of the human body it is usually mentioned in the context of "cinnabar fields".

[45] Lee Ki-t'ae, personal communication.

The upper cinnabar field is located in the forehead, the middle – in the chest, and the lower and the most important one - in the lower abdomen. Though the Sino-Korean word tanjŏn (丹田, Chinese dantian) could refer to any of the three cinnabar fields, GiCheon practitioners mostly use it as indicating the lower cinnabar field. Tan'gong (丹功) in GiCheon and other contemporary East Asian practices is understood as strengthening the lower cinnabar field, and storing more kong (功, power), or naegong (內功, inner power), there. Yukhap tan'gong are believed to heal the body and mind, and improve ki circulation, resulting in growing and strengthening naegong. Later naegong can be utilized in dynamic GiCheon positions, directed toward martial arts. Naegong is also believed to develop the moral maturity of the person, contribute to clear vision and judgment.

Of the six basic positions, naegasinjang (內家神掌) is the first, and it is the heart of the practice, believed to suffice for achievement of perfect health, immortality and final enlightenment.46 Naegasinjang is considered to be the most efficient for improving the flow of ki and developing naegong. GiCheon practitioners often talk about this position and the pain it brings. In South Korean studios it is maintained by the students for long periods of time, sometimes for forty minutes or more.

Naegasinjang is performed as following: the legs are spread shoulder-length, the ankles are turned outward, the knees are bent down and inward, the back is arched, the buttocks are pushed out, the shoulders are pulled back, the arms are stretched out in the front above shoulder-height and finally the palms are pressed outward. In naegasinjang, the backbone is stretched from the neck to the coccyx, while the weight is directed downwards, toward the ground. Lee Ki-t'ae comments that this contributes to centering of the lumbar and pelvis area, supporting the whole body and balancing right and left hip joints, knees, ankles and shoulders.

---

[46] Some GiCheon teachers translate *naegasinjang* as "I am a spirit chieftain", rendering it in Hangŭl as 내가신장, *naega* 내가 meaning myself, *sinjang* 신장 – spirit chieftain. Sinjang (신장), a spirit chieftain, is an important figure in the Korean shamanic pantheon. The explanation going with this interpretation says that GiCheon is about worshiping myself, instead of worshipping gods and spiritual beings by sacrificing to them. This explanation should be understood in the context of Korean shamanic tradition, according to which various gods and spirits receive ritual offerings. GiCheon practice demands, however, that the effort and attention of a practitioner are directed toward themselves, not toward others. The problem with this interpretation of the word *naegasinjang* (내가신장) is that GiCheon books spell it as 內家神掌 in Classical Chinese (Hancha). The last character 掌 is pronounced as *jang*, which means "palm". The character for "chieftain" is also pronounced as *jang*, but has a different spelling, 將.

Naegasinjang position is said to be reminiscent of a "phoenix which is about to lay an egg".47 The 'egg' here is a metaphor for the new self of the practitioner, an outcome of the painful practice. The metaphor of the egg is one of the popular motifs in East Asian inner alchemy (Schipper 1993, 189).48 This position is described as a perfect application of yŏkkŭn, the principle of the maximal bending of the joints. Ankles, knees, waist, elbows, wrists and finger joints have to bend to the maximum. Joints in GiCheon are believed to be passages, or gateways (門, mun), though which ki flows. Maximal bending of the joints in yŏkkŭn opens the passages to allow the flow of ki.

The other central posture in GiCheon is tanbaegong, a bow, which involves bending of the main joints of the body: knees, waist, elbows and wrists. In Hancha it is sometimes spelled as 丹拜功, where tan (丹) is cinnabar, bae (拜) is bow, and kong (功) is power. This spelling stresses the function of the exercise as gaining inner power and storing it in the lower cinnabar field, the abdomen. 檀拜功 is an alternative spelling, where tan (檀) indicates Tan'gun, the legendary founder of Korean nation. GiCheon teachers mentioned that maybe this type of ritual bow was performed in front of Tan'gun, and the term tan'gun could be interpreted as a title for ancient Korean chiefs. This interpretation connects to nationalist views in GiCheon, projecting this practice back in time toward the legendary Korean past (Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000, 11).

The Principles of GiCheon Practice

In this book we argue that GiCheon and similar practices are contemporary offshoots of older Korean traditions of mountain worship. This manifests also in GiCheon mythology. GiCheon as a mountain practice includes formulating the goal to transform the body towards an ideal body of a mountain immortal. The path of this transformation is painful and difficult. In this section we consider a few aspects of this experience and what that means.

[47] Interviews with Lee Ki-t'ae of 29.01.2011 and 30.01.2011, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten.
[48] Schipper talks about the metaphor of an egg in the context of natural perfection and inner harmony, the goals of practices of nourishing life and inner alchemy. The egg here is also a belly, a seat of intuitive perception. This is idealized inaction, the universe before the Heaven and Earth came into being. For a human being, it means peaceful pre-corrupted state of a baby, but also a potentiality of later outburst in martial arts, in nature - a quiet moment before the storm.

The static positions (靜法, chŏngpŏp) are the core of GiCheon practice, and their maintenance is painful. However, only naegasinjang, the first among the six positions (六合 丹功, yukhap tan'gong), is maintained by the students in the studios for long periods of time, sometimes for thirty minutes or more. Naegasinjang is described as a perfect application of yŏkkŭn, a principle of maximal bending of the joints. Twisting the joints in yŏkkŭn is believed to open ki channels within the mind-heart and body, improving the flow of ki, which is painful.

In the interviews, the trainees talk about the satisfaction and sense of accomplishment that come together with pain. These are experienced by many practitioners after completing naegasinjang, as pride in the ability to persist despite the pain and as joy due to its cessation. A peaceful state of relaxation and almost enjoyment occurs also during the performance of the position. GiCheon practitioners often joke that they are masochists, and that normal people would never engage in self-inflicted pain of naegasinjang. This connotes an elitist element within GiCheon and similar practices of self-perfection. In theory, everyone is welcome. In actuality, only few can accept this type of practice (Foucault 2001, 109-112).

GiCheon trainees think that the meaning of pain changes if it has a purpose directed at myself. 49 GiCheon philosophy sees a body as scripture, and naegasinjang as a text inscribed on the body, an ample metaphor for technology of the self in general and for GiCheon in particular. The process of inscription is painful. This inscription provides sense and purpose to the pain. When the blank page is inscribed with text, it is transformed. In GiCheon thought, a body in naegasinjang position is metaphorically compared to a piece of metal forged into a sword by a blacksmith. Bending of the joints in naegasinjang puts a body and mind-heart into a harsh and severe state. In the beginning of practice, it might be shocking for those who are not physically, mentally and emotionally prepared for this type of experience. The body is in pain, and a lot of heat is generated. This body in pain is allegorically compared to a piece of metal on an anvil, pounded by a hammer. The purpose of GiCheon practice is transformation of the mind-heart and body. The self must be altered, forged into something different, just as a piece of metal must be forged into a sword.

GiCheon trainees are not the only ones willingly engaging in painful practices. Across cultures and historical periods, many individuals voluntarily have taken part in various painful activities. They sometimes are referred to as ascetics. In his recent work Ascetic Practices in

[49] Interview with Chŏn Sŏng-ho of 23.09.2010, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten. Mr. Chŏn gave Victoria explicit permission to use his real name.

Japanese Religion, Tullio Federico Lobetti discusses the meaning and the use of pain by the adepts of various contemporary practices. He uses a notion of “Japanese asceticism” as an umbrella term for different usages of the body and physical exertion, undertaken for spiritual empowerment in Japan (2014, 1-2).

The practices serving as objects of Lobetti’s anthropological study include walking in the mountains and climbing dangerous cliffs, water ablutions, climbing the ladder of swords, walking on burning coals, standing under a waterfall, enduring smoke produced by burning herbs and peppers, fasting and vigils (2014, 30, 36, 58, 61, 84). Often the same kind of practice is utilized by different and unrelated religious groups (2014, 30). Lobetti looks also at the motivations of the practitioners, which include a wish for advancement within the hierarchy of a group, or obtaining some other kind of benefit. The benefits might be desired for oneself only, for their family or group, or for the nation. Personal or familial benefits include getting a new job, success in business, finding a spouse, begetting a child, recovery from an illness, acquiring good luck, gaining strength, self-discovery, getting over a difficult period in life, reconciling with the family after estrangement or generally improving relationships within the family. The motivations of the practitioners studied by Lobetti are at times congruent with the reasons bringing people to GiCheon practice.

GiCheon practitioners accept pain willingly and so do other ascetics. But what is the definition of “asceticism”? This term originates with the Greek ἄσκησις, áskesis, meaning "exercise" or "training". Joseph Alter translates it as “disciplined practice”. He sees in askesis of ancient Greece a practice of virtue as embodied exercise, an end in itself of a lived body of experience (2013, 124). Michel Foucault draws a direct connection between askesis and technologies of self, or techniques of self-formation in ancient Greece (1994). Richard Valantasis understands Foucault as formulating a theory of asceticism which proposes the formation of a subject, subjectivation, through ascetic practices (1995, 546). Valantasis himself sets down his own theory of asceticism: asceticism initiates a practitioner into a new culture, into social and psychological systems associated with this culture. In order to engage a new alternative culture, an ascetic must retrain their senses, acquire a new self, become a different person in new relationships in a new society (1995, 547-551).

Scholarly attempts to define and represent various religious and non-religious practices in the East and the West as more or less ascetic, can be portrayed as a spectrum within which the presence of pain and its degree are one of the axes. Building on examples from Christian and

Buddhist textual narratives, Lobetti suggests a definition that emphasizes the "malleative", transformative character of asceticism.50 In Christian tradition, the body must be transformed through harsh labor in order to become a perfect temple for the perfect soul. The idea of a human body advancing towards a "sacred body" is equally present in Buddhism (Lobetti 2014, 15, 22). In East Asian traditions of inner alchemy and nourishing life, the body progresses towards immortality through a process which is often complex and demanding.

The malleation of Lobetti does not necessarily include religious connotations. He compares it to sculpture, carving, polishing and other ways of alteration of the object and reshaping it in a new form. An irregularly shaped log becomes a plank, a rough block of stone turns into a statue (2014, 124). According to Lobetti, if malleation is central to asceticism, athletes and other sportsmen might be included among "ascetics". The quantity and quality of effort and austerities to reshape the self, to awaken in the body new energies, make a practice into an ascetic one. Possible pain ensuing from the transformative practice is valuable as contributing to the alteration of the self (2014, 9-11, 118). According to this definition, pain is not an indispensable element of asceticism, yet constructive toward self-transformation. If more pain brings stronger effect, then its degree strengthens the ascetic character of the practice. Pain conducive toward self-transformation is a basic character of GiCheon practice as a technology of the self.

The painful striving toward self-transformation in naegasinjang position follows the motto of GiCheon "Do not cling to words and letters, just practice with your own body" (말과, 글에 집착하지 말고 몸으로만 수행해라). This is an attempt to shift the emphasis from the written or verbal articulation which is considered useless, toward the bodily practice, which is believed to be efficacious. This antipathy toward symbols relates only to letters written on paper. "We write letters with our bodies" say GiCheon teachers. Following this, GiCheon stances themselves are compared to letters. As to the meanings conveyed with these "letters", there is a general unwillingness in GiCheon community to put them into words. The official statement is that "these meanings are conveyed through the body only and read through the body only".

---

50 Equally, in some branches of the Jewish esoteric teaching of Kabballah, a body has to be malleated through painful effort, in order to serve as a vessel for receiving god's radiance. In the years 1995-1996 Victoria Ten studied Kabbalah with the followers of Rabbi Baruch Shalom HaLevi Ashlag (Rabash 1907-1991) in Israel. The painful effort of waking in the middle of the night to study the texts, or efforts involved in the pleasing of a friend through cooking and serving them food were considered vital for the practice.

When asked to introduce GiCheon verbally, the teachers usually reply "you cannot understand it until you try it yourself". This is slightly contradictory to the fact that GiCheon students and teachers have produced several books, as well as orally transmitting a body of knowledge. But then, these books and explanations are intended for the use of those already practicing GiCheon. The major resistance of GiCheon representatives to written word is directed at those yet unfamiliar with the bodily practice.

In the introduction to Lobetti's book, Hirochika Nakamaki suggest that the world of asceticism cannot be understood or described without personal experience. Without becoming a practitioner, we cannot understand the essence of the thing we are observing (Lobetti 2014, xiv). Lobetti considers his active participation in many of the ascetic practices as a necessary prerequisite for their theoretical analysis (2014, 6). He attempts to construct a theory for asceticism as a form of philosophy of the body. He defines asceticism as an "embodied tradition" inscribed as a text upon a body. The ascetic text is embodied because it is produced by the human body, which also becomes its recording medium (2014, 5-6). Analyzing the text thus means analyzing the body itself, its records of sensations and feelings (Lobetti 2014, 119). The body is used as a tool through which texts are enacted, similar to those enacted by other practitioners. This allows a translation of their bodily texts into terms immediately understandable by the body of the translator. When the practitioners Lobetti interviewed spoke about their feelings of "gain", "loss", "exhaustion" and so forth, he was able to critically evaluate their verbal translation of bodily sensations because he accessed similar bodily text himself (2014, 6-7). In GiCheon a terminology is employed that is similar to that used by Lobetti in talking about "letters and contents".

Writing letters on the body, carving the body into the shape of naegasinjang, is hard and painful. Naegasinjang is so painful that it is often compared by the practitioners to death itself. Naegasinjang is compared to death, but also to overcoming death. The yŏkkŭn principle of GiCheon involving seemingly unnatural twisting of the joints, is viewed in GiCheon thought as "reversing the flow of life". "Life is a progress toward death" say GiCheon instructors. "The application of yŏkkŭn principle is painful. This is the price we must pay for going against nature – against death. Yŏkkŭn makes us head towards life instead, towards youth, not towards old age".

In his discussion on asceticism Lobetti notes that asceticism aims at putting the practitioner in a condition proximate to death, while still preserving a degree of self-control. Ascetic practice

is an experience of death-in-life, thus gaining power over it (2014, 126), it reverses the "flow of life" (Lobetti 2014, 126; Flood 2004, 15). Lobetti connects this process of reversal of the flow of the body with ontological progression of the body of the practitioner toward a "purer and holier state", which has as a consequence the production of power and benefits (Lobetti 2014, 136).

The idea that pain brings benefits is generally recognized within GiCheon circles. Many adepts remark on the good feeling after completing naegasinjang. Finishing naegasinjang stops the pain. This is a very special moment. The practitioners report feeling calm, relaxed and refreshed after completing this position. Similar state of peace, composure and balance comes at times also during naegasinjang.[51] Some adepts note that after completing something as hard as naegasinjang they are not afraid of future life trials.[52]

As said, in GiCheon the pain comes with the application of yŏkkŭn, the maximal twisting of the joints. The degree of bending the joints in yŏkkŭn can be modified, thus increasing or decreasing the amount of pain. When a certain level of yŏkkŭn is mastered, the student has to proceed to the next. Yŏkkŭn is a maximal degree of bending the joints, and this maximum is different for each person. As the joints acquire greater flexibility, the degree of bending has to be heightened. The practitioner is required to strive for the maximal bending continuously. If they do not do so, yŏkkŭn is not achieved.

During the session, the students are instructed "to put themselves into as much pain as possible"- that is to maximize the yŏkkŭn bending of the waist, knees and wrists. In practice, students follow these instructions sporadically, at times increasing, but sometimes decreasing, the degree of bending of the joints, and thus the amount of pain felt. After standing in naegasinjang position for a few minutes, the joints start to "unbend" involuntarily. Therefore, maintaining a constant degree of yŏkkŭn demands focus and effort. These focus and effort strengthen or weaken progressively, contributing to an increase or decrease of pain. This way naegasinjang position turns into a little "war with oneself", where one strives to perfect the position by optimizing yŏkkŭn on one hand, but at times gives in to pain and unbends the joints, diminishing the degree of yŏkkŭn on the other hand.

[51] Interview with Pak Kyŏng-ae (not a real name) of 17.01.2011, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten. Interview with Kim Chŏng-hyŏn (not a real name) of 08.10.2010, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten.
[52] Interview with Kim Yŏng-hŭi (not a real name) of 05.11.2010, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten.

Lobetti connects asceticism to the willing production of some degree of pain and physical exhaustion. When a certain practice starts becoming too "easy" because of the practitioner's experience and increased prowess, the practitioner has to re-adjust the practice to make it "wisely harder" and thus effective. Ascetic pain is not aimed at destruction, but it is a "wise pain" through which the ascetic malleates her or his body. Besides, the body is employed for interpretation of the various sensations arising through pain (2014, 117-118). The GiCheon definition of yŏkkŭn reverberates with the notion of "avoidance of too easy a practice" as mentioned by Lobetti. The goal here is a perpetual striving for efficiency.

Lobetti argues that within an ascetic tradition the body demonstrates the possibility of being ontologically "improved": it is a "perfectable" entity that can ascend toward something purer and holier. This "improvement" connects to the idea that ascetic practice produces benefits or powers, pursuable by practitioners either for themselves or for others. The level of difficulty of the practice is directly proportional to the level of pain and effort that the practice requires, and the benefits or powers obtained therein (2014, 87, 119, 126). In GiCheon, this "perfected" state indeed involves benefits or abilities proportional to the effort invested.

Ha Tong-ju, GiCheon practitioner and a doctor of Korean Traditional Medicine, describes pain as coming when ki channels are blocked. GiCheon thought metaphorically compares this process to an old, unused hose tube, the walls of which stick together in some sections. The water is being pumped into the tube. First it is partially filled, then the tension increases, and the hose starts shaking. The dried parts are soaked through, the consolidated mud starts to dissolve and finally the water begins to pass. In this metaphor, the water is ki and the dried-out hose tube is the body of the adept. GiCheon positions induce the pumping of water (ki) into the tube (the body). The whole process is marked by painful pressure and strain. In this metaphor, the pumping of ki into the body occurs in the naegasinjang position. Another metaphor is a bottle which is suddenly shaken. When the bottle vibrates, the liquid and its components inside the bottle are stirred. The dregs come up from the bottom, the layers of the liquid shift. Here the bottle is an analogy for the body, and the liquid a symbol of ki.

Subtle Body Practices

In addition to the history of GiCheon within South Korean social development, its place within the framework of ascetic practices as conceptualized by Lobetti, and Foucauldian notions of

technologies of self, one other key concept is useful to gaining a holistic and well-rounded understanding of GiCheon. As explained in the Introduction to this book, Foucault's conception of the technologies of the self began with an investigation into the practices originating in archaic Greece. These included purification, concentration of the spirit/breath, and practices of enduring pain and hardship (Foucault 2001, 46-47). These ancient Greek practices have much in common with East Asian practices, directed at achieving immortality, but also with practices categorized as "subtle body practices".

In their book Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body published in 2013, Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston consider elite and vernacular practices related to "subtle bodies". Study of these practices is regarded by much of the contemporary English-language literature as a populist rather than an academic subject. Samuel and Johnston's book is one of the first English language academic works that inquire into subtle-body concepts over a wide range of societies.

Subtle-body ideas assume a common basis for both mind and matter. If the mainstream of Western thought, going back to Cartesian distinction, treat mind and matter as radically different in nature, then subtle-body concepts treat them as continuous (Samuel and Johnston 2013, 1-2). Through subtle body practices one can learn to operate with finer or more subtle levels of thought and consciousness (Samuel and Johnston 2013, 1-2). Ki suryŏn and GiCheon techniques of the self can also be classified as a subtle body practices which inevitably connects the Self with the Other.

The term "subtle body" became established in English usage among scholars influenced by the Theosophical Society founded in the USA in 1875, dedicated to the pursuit of esoteric knowledge. Neither Theosophy nor Anthroposophy were parts of the scientific and scholarly mainstream of Western thought, although some scholars were their followers. Thus, ideas about the subtle body became linked, in Western societies, with currents of thought regarded as questionable. The nature of the term "subtle body" is itself controversial. Samuel and Johnston use it as a generic term, to cover the various concepts, practices and phenomena discussed in their book. It includes Vedic ideas, a variety of aspects of Indian and Tibetan yogic, tantric practices, and a range of similar conceptualizations in East Asia and elsewhere.

As previously mentioned, the tendency of European thought from the 17th and 18th centuries onward, has been to treat mind and body as fundamentally different phenomena, that operate on different levels. Catholic Christianity tends to privilege the spiritual over the material, while

modern Western science treats the material as primary, and consciousness as secondary. Many Western intellectual dilemmas (nature or nurture? freewill or determinism?) owe their specific form to the difficulty of making sense of the mind-body relationship in this dichotomized conceptual framework. The area of subtle-body concepts lies between the materialistic and idealistic extremes, and recognizes a complex interplay between matter and spirit (Samuel and Johnston 2013, 2-4). Subtle-body models are increasingly a feature of the Western cultural landscape, from spiritual practices and avant-garde art, to complementary and alternative medicine. The notions of the subtle body assist us to rethink categorical dualisms and divisions, epistemology and ontology, ethical agency of contemporary subjectivity, and the concepts of self (Samuel and Johnston 2013, 187-189).

Bridging the gap between materialist and idealist extremes, in Western tradition, was marginalized into residual categories of mystical, occult or poetic. Subtle bodies feature strongly in Western esoteric traditions, often borrowing from Jewish mystical tradition of Kabbalah, and the Islamic mystical tradition of Sufism. An important subset of subtle-body practices in Indian and Tibetan traditions, and in East Asian culture of immortality, involves the idea of channels, and points of their intersection, in the mind-body complex, within which the flow occurs. In East Asian culture this is the flow of ki (氣), studied and directed in practices for achieving immortality. This flow is a matter of breath, mood, emotion and motivation. But mood, emotion and motivation have a strong interpersonal component: we learn to think in dialogue with others, and we learn to feel in relation to others. Subtle-body language opens up the picture of individual to include the relationship with others. In East Asian tradition, there is a close linkage, and sometimes identification, of flows of ki with emotional states, or states of bodily excitation. Subtle-body processes do not fit neatly into Western categories of mind or body, but hint at the need for models and modes of understanding that go beyond these divisions. A full understanding of subtle-body processes is likely to encompass research in the humanities and social sciences, as well as natural sciences, and question their basic postulates (Samuel and Johnston 2013, 5-7). Livia Kohn likewise indicates that the way East Asian ki works should be expressed in terms of relationships and correspondences, its effects and how it impacts self, others and cosmos. The way to describe human life within the frame of the subtle body, is by speaking about the way things function (Kohn 2013, 21). Subtle-body forms of subjectivity (subtle subjects) are a radical form of intersubjectivity that implicitly renegotiates the dualisms of normative Western discourse, including the dualisms of mind-body, self-divine and I-Other relations (Johnston 2013, 239).

The analyses of Samuel, Johnston and Kohn sum up to the notion that mind and matter are continuous, rather than of a different nature. Subtle body conception of mind-matter involves the emotional and relational attitude toward other people, other forms of life and objects, in line with an East Asian idea of a universe that is living and sentient.

Subtle-body concepts and practices can already be identified in China, in the second century BC, in manuscripts and images uncovered in the Mawangdui tombs, which present medical and sexual practices aimed at preserving and restoring health. These texts and images already describe structures of channels within the body, and physical exercises aimed at promoting proper flow through the channels (Samuel 2013, 13).

GiCheon conceptualization of ki belongs to the same frame of reference as subtle body conceptions, Daoist inner alchemy (Schipper 1993), and East Asian medicine (Scheid 2002). Ki is a medium through which teachers and students of GiCheon often describe and explain their experiences of bodily processes, such as sweat, heat, and pain, but also connections within the family, society and cosmos. Each person thus constitutes a "network and interplay" between emotional, bodily, familial, social and cosmic selves which are further connected with each other (Ten 2017a).

GiCheon interconnection between mind, body, cosmic and social is certainly not subtle in the conventional usage of the word. However, the complexity of the subtle body concept connects in a very useful way to the core practices of GiCheon, and the energies it harnesses, as technologies of self. GiCheon theory considers pain to be a healing process, according to this view, the healing of a particular body part is perceived as pain. Healing is conceived as moving in a certain direction, which is different for each practitioner, and also differs for the same practitioner on different occasions, depending on the mood, the body condition, the weather of that day etc. However, the practitioners who subscribe to this theory, notice a particular "system" in the pain/healing process they pass through. They observe a particular bodily phenomenon for some period of time, often, but not always perceived as pain, which later diminishes or disappears. They often report pain in the body parts that were previously injured.

Ha Tong-ju has compared healing to ascending a mountain. Revealing new peaks, once the summit is reached, is like discovering new points in the body which need therapy. In the naegasinjang position, the pain appears and disappears in different locations within the body. Mr. Ha compares the continuous emergence of pain in the body to the continuous revelation of new peaks while hiking. Once you climb one summit, another summit appears. After you

conquer this peak, yet another will be revealed to you. Similarly, according to Mr. Ha, pain is discovered anew in diverse body parts. According to GiCheon theory, pain appearing in various joints is a manifestation of ki attempting to flow. Once the working of ki is restored, the pain will surface in a different body part.

Mr. Ha continues his metaphorical comparison of the human body to the body of the mountain in another way. He equates the ki channels in the body to the pathways on the mountain. Just like mountain pathways disappear when untrodden for a long time, so the ki passages might close in a body. When this happens, the related muscles and joints cannot be exercised properly. However, untrodden mountain trails can "re-open". This happens if people or animals come back to retread them continually. Gradually, mountain passages will reappear, becoming visible and functional once more. In a similar fashion, ki passages in the body, which are currently blocked, can be re-opened. As discussed, in GiCheon this process is complex and painful. The pain, which signifies both a blockage of ki but also the "flushing" of ki channels, travels through the body, opening new perspectives in this bodily self-learning process. Mr. Ha compares this to mountain hiking.53 This is one example of how GiCheon adepts compare naegasinjang to ascending mountains. In the context of this comparison, the trainees bring together the ideas of sŏndo and sŏnpŏp (仙法, techniques of immortality) with mountain hiking in contemporary Korea. This is how these motifs are reincarnated within the constructed tradition of GiCheon, thus constituting a part of contemporary Korean mountain culture and mythology. In the opinion of Lobetti, ascetic practices aim at progressing from a human body towards an ideal body. The presence of the ideal "perfect body" contributes to progression within GiCheon practice, by defining its final theoretical goal (Lobetti 2014, 136). An ideal "perfect body", a purpose of self-transformation in GiCheon theory, is the body of a mountain immortal.

Having briefly reviewed some ideas of East Asian alchemy, mountain worship, the ideas and practices of the subtle body, Korean ki suryŏn in general and GiCheon in particular, we arrive at the point where we proceed from theory toward our core intention. GiCheon is a mind-body practice, directed at transformation of the self, using particular technologies. This is done in order to achieve the body of a mountain immortal. In the coming chapters we will outline narratives from either side of the divide on the Korean Peninsula, which relate to particular mountain immortals, as their own mythology would assert. We explore the transformations of

[53] Interview of 08.10.2010, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten.

the key characters in those narratives, and the particular technologies of the self, utilized for the purpose of their transformation within the topography of Mt. Paektu, where these narratives are embedded. Chapters Five and Six move to the north of Korea's demilitarized zone into the historiography of North Korea's pre-history, to the early years of Kim Chŏng-suk, the first wife of Kim Il-sŏng, the first leader of North Korea.54

[54] Chapter Two relies on the elements from chapters 1, 2, 6 and 7 of the Doctoral Dissertation titled *Body and Ki in GiCheon: Practices of Self-Cultivation in Contemporary Korea*, defended by Victoria Ten in 2017 at Leiden University.

Chapter Five: Routes to Mt. Paektu: The Young Kim Chŏng-suk

In this chapter we introduce the first of our characters whose life is entwined with the extraordinary landscape of Mt. Paektu and focus on her early life. Before relating the biography of Kim Chŏng-suk, we will briefly outline the history of Kim family, and their place in a political structure of North Korea. It is also important to explore some of the scientific literature which have been used to analyse the current situation in this country. Kim family of North Korean rulers, designated in the national literature as the "The Paektusan Generals", hold the Mt. Paektu very important to their history and political development (Berthelier 2014). The authority derived from the semi-mythical struggles against the forces of Imperial Japan in the vicinity of the mountain is projected onto the rulers of the Kim family.

North Korean politics is regarded as an extraordinary, aberrant conceptual landscape, layered with a multitude of theoretical approaches in academic analysis. Max Weber articulates the ritualization of political action and intent used within institutional, governmental, and bureaucratic structures, in history and in contemporary times (Weber 1967). Weber's analysis has become a key to discussions on political landscapes characterised as authoritarian. Contemporary analysis of North Korean politics moves beyond Weber's theorisation; Heonik Kwon and Byung-ho Chung's landmark work Beyond Charismatic Politics (2012) brought an analysis of the theatricality of current North Korean political forms to the foreground, identifying what they termed North Korea's "theatric politics." Kwon and Chung's work made clear that North Korea's ideology allows its charismatic politics to spill out beyond the realm of conventional political interaction, marking and reconstructing both physical topography and text.55 Continuing this line of thought, we suggest that all politics can be seen as a kind of theatre. Any theatre needs a stage, not just a debating chamber, but the physical topography of the nation, on which political culture is written. Thus the landscape of the nation becomes a stage for the theatrical performance constituted by its politics. Kwon and Chung discuss the role of Kim Chŏng-suk in the formation of North Korea's theatric narrative around her (Kwon

[55] A key example is the reconfiguration of Pyongyang: Japanese colonial authorities had built modern Pyongyang following the tram lines from east to west. North Korea would later reorganise the city urban planning on a north-south axis connecting Kim Il-sŏng's birthplace at Mangyŏngdae with Kim Il-sŏng square, and the tower of the Juche (Joinau 2014).

and Chung 2012, 58). Kwon and Chung assert that in North Korean historical development, Kim Chŏng-suk gained importance only when it became clear that Kim Chŏng-il, the son of Kim Chŏng-suk, was to be the heir to Kim Il-sŏng, the founder of North Korea. We support Suzy Kim's suggestion that the reality is more complex and nuanced. Suzy Kim developed the notion of revolutionary motherhood relevant for North Korean ideology, manifested by the constructed memory of Kim Chŏng-suk (Suzy Kim 2014). In this book, we suggest that the stage for Kim Chŏng-suk's self-transformation extends further than her role as revolutionary mother. She, in fact, becomes a revolutionary archetype for all North Koreans to aspire to in the present, not just to revere in the past. Nations are conventionally understood as being constituted by the bodies of past, present and future inhabitants of the land. Their historical narratives and mythologies are intertwined, and amplified by politics and culture. Based on his study of the development of Thailand and its sovereign territory, Thongchai Winichakul suggested that the landscape itself can be conceived of as a body of a nation. Winichakul's notion of the eco-body suggests that landscape can be deeply entwined into the idea of nation itself, a key part of historical narratives, and an agent in their formation (1994).[56] Valenius (2000) asserts that there is also a close correspondence between the nation and the bodies of women. In North Korean mythology, the body of Kim Chŏng-suk is embedded into the landscape of Mt. Paektu, becoming one with the revolutionary topography.[57] This revolutionary topography has its own charisma.

We suggest that in North Korea charismatic politics necessarily begets charismatic landscape.[58] Charismatic landscapes such as Mt. Everest, Mt. Fuji and Mt. Paektu are seen across the globe, with or without human interaction. When the threads and interactions of politics intersect with their physical terrains, they become more than simply natural places. Occasionally, landscapes in their meshing with social and political forces radically transform, and become places where ideologies themselves are re-projected by soil, rock and timber. Charismatic landscapes, through the action of politics and ideology, add to the conventional environmental realm, they are de-natured and at the same time re-natured. Political charisma

[56] On the basis of Confucian model for self-cultivation, Victoria Ten has worked out a concept of the self as starting with intention, and continuing toward feelings, thoughts, actions of the body, identifying with the nation and the universe. In this analisys, a body of the nation is one of the levels of the self. (Ten 2017a).

[57] Some examples include cooking and camaraderie landscapes, places where Kim Chŏng-suk cooked and socialized with other female guerrilla fighters; the romance landscape where her relationship with Kim Il-sŏng was acknowledged and confirmed (Winstanley-Chesters 2015).

[58] Cosgrove 1984; Castree 2001.

in the landscape influences nature and environment, but at the same time produces and reproduces charismatic politics.

In our book, following Swyngedouw (1997), we suggest that in North Korea the image of Kim Chŏng-suk is rescaled across both space and time: in terms of space, North Koreans re-enact her memory in national, regional and local campaigns, such as marches retracing the steps of Kim on Mt. Paektu. In terms of time, people today are encouraged to adopt her characteristics such as physical strength and commitment to education in different areas of life: at work, school or home (Rodong Sinmun 2017 and 2018).

We have already mentioned the work of Kwon and Chung (2012) on political charisma and theatric politics in North Korea. 59 According to Kwon and Chung, North Korean historiography and its present politics can be understood as an exercise, at least in part, of performance and theatre. The current North Korean politics derive power from the past, through re-enactment of the past as real. However, this past is imagined and constructed in the present. This way charismatic political energy can flow forwards in time, adding legitimacy to historical or quasi-historical figures. In the Introduction we have already mentioned the rescaling of the authority of these figures, who introduce such charisma and theatric power into more conventional political events. In North Korea, this process provides political energy, and adds a useful fluidity to its current institutions.

Focusing on the early life of Kim Chŏng-suk, Chapter Five will encounter the fluidity of North Korean political authority and charisma derived from history, which creates narratives used to colour Kim's own life story. This reconstructed narrative is re-written from time to time following the changes in contemporary North Korean society. Before we examine Kim Chŏng-suk's early life and the dubious historicity of her biographical narrative, it is important to give a brief outline of the circumstances that formed a background for her life. In our time, North Korea may be seen as a political outliner. In the past, its conception of politics, history and culture could have been seen with a more common frame of anti-colonialism and liberation. North Korean historical narratives of struggle, overcoming and resistance to an over-bearing colonial power were at one point very common across the globe. These narratives are replete with characters who serve as robust heroes of struggle and resistance, such as Kwame Nkrumah

[59] The work of Kwon and Chung (2012) builds on that of Weber (1967) and Geertz (1980).

(of Ghana), Robert Mugabe (of Zimbabwe) and Nelson Mandela (of South Africa). They are famous in their nations as liberation heroes and national founders, fighting for the achievement of either freedom or greater local equality (Welz 2013; Birmingham 1988). Given contemporary politics and history of North Korea, it would be now difficult to conceive of Kim Il-sŏng or Kim Chŏng-suk within such a context. However, this is how their generation was originally imagined, and is how such stories were received by forces of resistance and revolutionary politics in the wider world at the time (Young 2014). The Korean peninsula itself was subjected to a form of colonialism which deeply marked its territory, and from which its politics, culture or landscape have yet to fully recover.

The cultural and political status quo of Chosŏn, ruled by the Yi dynasty since 1392, was in the 19th century already under threat by social, economic and religious challenges. This status quo was tested by the power and interests of Russia, France, the United Kingdom, and an ambitious Japan (Duus 1998). After decades during which the Yi dynasty and social elite of Korea sought for measures of reform which might allow the peninsula a sovereign place in a rapidly developing world, Korea was briefly made a protectorate of Japan, before being comprehensively annexed by the Empire of Japan on August 29th, 1910.

Japan's annexation of the Korean Peninsula was a comprehensive effort at colonisation. While Japan was happy to allow a vestige of the previous Korean royal house to continue in a reduced and constricted ceremonial capacity, the Government General of Chosen (the new name for the Korean Peninsula), sought to reconfigure its political ecosystem (Caprio 2014). The Governor General (the first being Count Terauchi Masatake), built an infrastructure of power, in which Japanese operatives and bureaucrats were highly important. He deconstructed the patterns of traditional landownership which had supported the elite of Chosŏn, and had inspired the social upheaval of the later Yi dynasty (Gragert 1994). The move by the Governor General's Land Survey Bureau to review patterns of land rights on the peninsula was at first popular. It soon became clear that ownership would only be granted to those with formal written documentation. This excluded landholders and tenants of all classes, given the tendency for much of historical Korean land rights to revolve around oral traditions. Accordingly, Japanese settlers and private corporations (such as the Oriental Development Company) grasped control and ownership of much the land of the Korean Peninsula; in 1932 a great percentage was owned by Japanese citizens (Gragert 1994).

Japan also sought to reengineer Korean national and cultural consciousness later in the colonial period. There were a number of efforts by Japanese academic and educational institutions to systematise understanding of Korean history and cultural production in strictly Japanese terms (Toby 1974). New academic techniques of anthropology and archaeology were deployed to downplay some aspects of Korean history, and to frame Korean cultural development in a particular way, supportive perhaps of Japan's efforts at "modernising" the peninsula (Pai 2000). When it came to the education system, at first the Government General of Chosen sought to institute what has been termed a 'hybrid' system in which Korean language and culture were highlighted, using newly developed models of history from Japanese research institutions, as backward and inferior (Toby 1974). At the same time Japanese was taught as a vital, modern, international language. The history of Japan was taught with a particular focus on the Japanese Empire as set out in the context of the Imperial Rescript on Education (Toby 1974). Towards the end of the colonial period, as the Japanese Empire developed its military capacity and prepared for war in the Pacific, the pretence at hybridity was abandoned, Korean language teaching was abolished in the public sector, and then banned in private institutions (Toby 1974). Under the policies of Government General of Chosen, Koreans in the late 1930s and 1940s were to accept what has been termed 'Imperial subjectivity' through the Nissen Ittai concept.60

This later period of Japanese colonisation after 1933 would see the industrial and economic infrastructures of the Korean peninsula put to urgent work at the behest of Japanese militarism. The Korean peninsula would thus become a vital resource base for the pursuit of Japanese industrial and military development (Caprio 2014). This reconfiguration of land echoed earlier elements of the colonial project in which agriculture and forestry had been brought under the principles of Japanese science and industry, and the landscape itself made more Japanese in nature by planting Japanese trees (Fedman 2015). At the time Korean conceptions may have varied from the optimistic to the hostile, but the product of Japan's colonial exercise has often been Korean resentment and hostility.61

[60] Nissen Ittai (日鮮一体, "Korea and Japan are One") was a Japanese social and institutional project in colonial Korea during the 1930s, designed to dissolve the differences between notions of Korean and Japanese nationalism. This was achieved through focus on Japanese language, and reducing the influence of Korean, as well as focusing on Japanese history, rather than Korean history. This was not instituted on the Japanese mainland, where the distinctions were still encouraged (Shin 2014).

[61] A number of Korean intellectuals welcomed colonisation by the Japanese Empire as the route to Koreans' interaction with the brave new world of the modern (Poole 2014).

During the colonial period, numerous independence movements had differing approaches to the struggle against the Japanese, with varying degrees of success. The initial annexation in 1910 led to several years of struggle between the Japanese on one side, with the vestiges of the Yi Confucian scholarly bureaucracy and the remains of the yangban elite class, known as the Righteous Armies (Em 2013), on the other side. Later, following the death of Emperor Kojong in 1919, the March 1st Movement sparked a year or more of anti-Japanese resistance and spurred the foundation of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea in Shanghai (Em 2013). After 1919, resistance against the forces of Japan moved away from the terrain of Korea or Chosen itself. Korean democratic nationalists would find homes around the globe, advocating national refoundation from a number of different cities and institutions (Lee 1984). For this book guerrilla movements are particularly important; in North Korean historiography they are presented as having developed in the borderlands of the north of the peninsula, and in Manchuria. Advocates of Korean independence settled in these areas, supported by funding from the Soviet Union, and international communist movements. The Japanese documents record that the guerrillas, which harassed the Japanese forces on the border between Korea and Manchuria, did on occasion mount an attack close to the areas near to Mt. Paektu (Haruki 1992). Later, through the process of narrative reconstruction by North Korea, this struggle was reimagined closer to the mountain, as Mt. Paektu grew in importance to North Korean cultural mythologies. In reality, much of this struggle occurred further to the north. It is important when considering this reconstruction, that North Korea and its political elite are in many ways a newly imagined community (as Benedict Anderson articulated in 1983), just as Koreans at the time of the colonial period were. During the period of Japanese dominance, Koreans were encouraged to reimagine themselves and their community according to frameworks and concepts not their own. Nationalist Koreans or later North Koreans would imagine their community anew using newly invented traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), which were rooted in these reconfigured mythologies.

Within the invented tradition of North Korea, Kim Chŏng-suk is one of the advocates for Korean independence. She is imagined by North Korean history to have become deeply engaged in the series of battles near Mt. Paektu. She belonged to the disparate band of followers around Kim Il-sŏng; in the narratives of North Korea, these guerrillas are depicted not only as fighters against Japanese Imperial power, but also as inheritors of other histories of Korean national struggle. Kim Il-sŏng's relatives are recorded by North Korean historiography as

having been involved in the General Sherman incident62 , the Tonghak uprisings of the 1880s and with the Righteous Armies of 1910-1912 (Lee 1984). Whatever the veracity of these accounts, they are connected by a similar thread, thus providing a suitable canvas to which other narrative elements can be added. Mythologies and mythographies of North Korea are built round these narratives, involving a vast number of actors, both material and immaterial, sentient and non-sentient, divine and non-divine (Doty 2000). For the most part, these mythographies occur in mountainous and wilderness places in the north of North Korea, in particular Mt. Paektu. These mythographies involve various actors, such as mountains, rocks and animals, which are transformed by human culture and politics (Debarbieux and Rudaz 2015). The present chapter considers one historical character from such a mythography of Mt. Paektu, imagined in North Korea as a focus of revolutionary activity.

The Revolutionary Childhood of Kim Chŏng-suk

The mythology generated by the hopes, dreams and aspirations of Korean nationalist resistance sits within the cultural and social contexts of the years it was created. This chapter discusses real, imagined and semi-mythic revolutionary activity of Kim Chŏng-suk around Mt. Paektu. Her activities for the most part took place away from Mt. Paektu, in the area of the Soviet Union, but through acts of historical reconstruction and imagination, have been post-facto sited at Mt. Paektu.

Kim Chŏng-suk was born in colonial Korea, and at the age of four fled with her family to Manchuria. As such Kim Chŏng-suk has a very human pre-history, a real childhood and a life similar to that of her husband Kim Il-sŏng. However, the reality of her childhood is in a sense lost within the constructions of North Korean narratives. We consider the processes by which the image of her as an immortal is created. First, we attend to her pre-history as it is presented by North Korean historiography with all its imagination and mythology. Then we examine the content generated by North Korean historians and political writers in order to deliver a backstory, which would underpin her later transformation. This backstory itself constitutes an invented tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

[62] The incident involves an uninvited US merchant steamer named the General Sherman which was attacked and destroyed in the name of Korean nationalism in July 1866. See footnote 19.

Kim Chŏng-suk's revolutionary pre-history begins with her childhood. The child Kim Chŏng-suk that we encounter in this chapter, is reimagined in light of the development of North Korean politics and social organisation. Kim Chŏng-suk's own childhood was one of the Japanese colonial period, and the Korean diaspora of the 1910s and 1920s (Biography 2005, 9; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 1, 4). However, the cultural and social processes that make up her childhood were developed earlier.

Kim Chŏng-suk's history is far less extensive than her husband's, Kim Il-sŏng and her son's, Kim Chŏng-il, whose hagiographies are as detailed as they are disputed by external observers. The texts that describe her are less voluminous in size and less frequent in number. North Korean historians have gone into intricate and obsessive detail to locate Kim Il-sŏng at particular moments of his life, sometimes with some success. Kim Chŏng-suk, however, has not been subjected to quite the same archaeological historical review, despite becoming an important figure within North Korean revolutionary pantheon, revised during the 1980s (Lankov 2007). Elements of her life story tied directly into the narratives of her husband, are addressed within works by Dae Sook-Suh (1995), Bruce Cumings (1981) and Sydney Seiler (1994), to name just a few commentators from the wider academic world. But the primary texts describing Kim Chŏng-suk's life are indigenous North Korean publications with their attendant problems of veracity for academics and readers.

As previously mentioned, we do not assert that these publications hold to acceptable levels of historicity or truthfulness. On the other hand, we also do not accept the assertions that this renders them useless to the critical or academic work (Myers 2011). Particularly not, when it comes to the examination of legendary or historical female characters bestowed with magical powers, and their interactions with Korean topography, the themes our book deals with. We primarily use the anonymous biography published in the English language by Pyongyang's Social Sciences Publishing House and Foreign Languages Publishing House in 2005 to navigate the life of Kim Chŏng-suk. The Korean language version of this biography is known as 녀장군 (Nyŏjanggun). We use both the English and Korean versions of this Biography, though the text and the order of events in these two versions can be substantially different. We also refer to the later English language biography "Kim Chŏng-suk Anti-Japanese Guerrilla heroine" (published in 1997), as well as the three volumes of "Reminiscences (With the Century)" (published between 1993 and 2007), titled 세기와 더불어 (Segi wa tŏburŏ) in

Korean (published in 1992), apparently published by Kim Il-sŏng as autobiography.[63] There are also extensive bodies of other material on Kim Chŏng-suk, generated by North Korea over the decades. There are extensive paintings and graphic representations of Kim Chŏng-suk, demonstrating visually elements of her character and history. There are poems and songs about Kim Chŏng-suk, some of which are still sung today as part of North Korean musical repertoire (Rodong Sinmun 2018). There are even theatre and opera pieces about Kim Chŏng-suk and her female guerrilla band (North Korean Leadership Watch 2017). Finally, she is remembered in the architectural and institutional fabric of the country through the naming of places like the Kim Chŏng-suk Textile Factory (Rodong Sinmun 2018). These various manifestations of Kim Chŏng-suk's mythology are part of wide network of different materials and memorial places. They inform the textual elements we use primarily in this book, and constitute vital parts of the invented tradition surrounding Kim Chŏng-suk.

Within the body of literature and hagiography, Kim Chŏng-suk's constructed story shares some commonalities of theme and content with that of Kim Il-sŏng. This is true in relation to the description of an early period in her life. Kim Chŏng-suk is presented as having been born of peasant parents, father Kim Ch'un-san and mother born of O family[64], at Osandong village[65], Hoeryŏng County, on December 24, 1917 (Biography 2005, 9; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 1, 4). Within the narrative, the parents of Kim Chŏng-suk encountered Japanese colonisation in its harshest, most degrading form, similarly to the parents of her husband, Kim Il-sŏng. The text suggests they had always been subjected to ill-usage of a sort. "Her family had moved from place to place, being mistreated and exploited by landowners" (Biography 2005, 9; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 3). Kim Chŏng-suk's family in this text includes her mother, father, two elder brothers and one younger brother. Kim Chŏng-suk's parents and grandparents, similarly to those of Kim Il-sŏng, had been controversial and politically active characters. Though the campaign is not stated by name, we learn that "Her grandfather had participated in a peasant uprising against Korea's feudal rulers…" which is a reference to the Tonghak uprisings of the

[63] Kim Chŏng-suk's 'Biography' was published in 2005 by the Social Sciences Publishing House and Foreign Languages Publishing House in Pyongyang. 녀장군 (Nyŏjanggun), the current Korean language version, was first published in 2007. There is a 2017 version available online. 'Kim Chŏng-suk Anti-Japanese Guerrilla heroine' was published in 1997 by the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Pyongyang. 'Reminiscences (With the Century)' is published in English by the Foreign Languages Publishing House, Pyongyang, and in Korean by the Workers Party Publishing House, Pyongyang.

[64] We have not managed to find the name of Kim Chŏng-suk's mother in the sources. Traditionally, married women are referred to only by the surname of their natal family.

[65] The English text of the Biography says that the family comes from a small village in Hoeryŏng called Osandong. The Korean text of *Nyŏjanggun* does not mention the name of the village and refers only to Hoeryŏng.

late 1890s. Following the death of the grandfather in 1908, her family "…became worse off, under the burden of increasing debts…" (Biography 2005, 9; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 3-4). These burdensome debts were incurred not simply due to the inequitable impositions of landowners. "…Her father, the pillar of the family, was frequently away from home working for the independence movement…" (Biography 2005, 9; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 3-4).

The commitment of Kim Chŏng-suk's father to the cause of Korean independence and his resistance against Japanese imperialist power brought them familial disruption and financial difficulty. "…The family, unable to pay back its debits, lost its share of cropping land and its thatched cottage was pulled down. They had to live in a room in another family's house on Osan Hill…" (Biography 2005, 9; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 3-4).

Aside from the financial impact on Kim Chŏng-suk's family, there is an acute and determined violence within her early history. Kim Chŏng-suk's father died in "a foreign land" in 1929, her mother who "helped her husband in his patriotic struggle" was killed "by Japanese 'punitive' troops in 1932", and her elder brothers were both killed fighting the Japanese as part Kim Il-sŏng's forces (Biography 2005, 7). The coagulation of violence and death within one revolutionary family is similar with the family of Kim Il-sŏng.

The violence is tied to other elements of her development, used by the narrative in a transformative way. These transformative elements are considered in our book as "technologies of self", an idea suggested by Michel Foucault (1988). The reader will see Kim Chŏng-suk's personality evolves through educative experience, revolutionary political awareness, and military training. These practices would support her social and political growth, allowing her to become a better, more capable individual, to gain control over challenging life. Just as adherents of GiCheon utilise their techniques as technologies for self-improvement, so Kim Chŏng-suk harnesses the power of her own development as a Foucauldian technology of self (Foucault 1988). For North Koreans interested in hagiography of their historical leaders, awareness of Kim Chŏng-suk's story becomes itself a technology of self, necessary for the instigation of their own ideological maturity. The themes of violence, perseverance, survival and overcoming, just as the difficulties of her family, are vital elements of Kim Chŏng-suk's transformation, technologies through which this transformation happens in the text.

Violence is utilised by Kim Chŏng-suk, her fellow actors and the narrative writers in both destructive and constructive ways. Destructive violence manifests when fellow guerrillas are being brutalised and degraded within the narratives, affecting the readers in particular ways.

The constructive influence of such violence is demonstrated, when Kim Chŏng-suk harnesses violent impulses to overcome her own body and self, depriving herself of food and sleep in acts of self-cultivation, a classic example of applied technologies of self. This feeds back into the processes of transformation and becoming, leading to further overcomings.

Another motif important for the transformation of Kim Chŏng-suk is "crossing of rivers." Crossings of rivers in North Korea's historical narratives are vital moments of transition and self-transformation. The Tuman and the Amnok rivers are key sites of crossing for Kim Il-sŏng in North Korean revolutionary mythology.66 Kim Chŏng-suk also appears to have shared with her husband a tendency for intense remembrance of moments of river crossing. The North Korean tradition amplifies the burden of colonial oppression on the individual: once Koreans cross the rivers at the boundary of colonial Chosen, they feel freed from the oppression and subjugation of Imperial power. In world mythology the crossing of a river can be an important moment of transformation of the self.67 Crossing the rivers activates the mythological power within the historical narratives, generating transformative possibilities for characters in them. Kim Il-sŏng's crossing of the Tuman river in 1918 serves as the moment of political awakening in his narrative. Having crossed the river, Kim Il-sŏng operates in a different space, free from the bounds of colonial politics. Now he is able to develop his own political sensibilities and eventually to act on them for revolutionary purposes. Kim Il-sŏng is transformed in this space; the future of the revolutionary movement which he would lead, and which gives birth to North Korea, is also transformed. Here the crossing is a technological element of the narrative; it acts not only upon the person crossing the river, but on the landscape itself. The crossing is transformative as for Kim Il-sŏng so for the supposed readers of the story, forming their way of thought and feelings in a given direction.

Kim Chŏng-suk also crosses a river early in her life, later conceiving of her own crossing of the Tuman as a vital moment in her upbringing and development. The crossing of this river is itself a technological aspect of self-improvement within the narrative. The crossing is transformative; it embeds a geographic locality in her consciousness, connecting it to nationalistic aspirations. "I never lost the memory of my hometown after I left it. At every moment of joy or sorrow, fighting under the General's command, I thought of my hometown Hoeryŏng. When on a march or in battle, I felt a little easier, but whenever I looked up at the

[66] The river Tuman romanized in McCune Reischauer is often referred to as the river "Tumen" in academic writing.

[67] In ancient Greek mythology, crossing the river Styx signifies a passage from the world of living to the world of dead; in Buddhism crossing the sea of *samsara* brings an adept to the island of *nirvana*.

moon shining on the camp in the forest, the trees, grass and pebbles of Hoeryŏng swam before my eyes…" (Biography 2005, 10; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 5). In this sense, geography and nationalism are connected for Kim Chŏng-suk. In her later years, this connection is embodied in Mt. Paektu. According to the contemporary version of Tan'gun myth, god Hwanin descended on Mt. Paektu, characters both mythic and historical can be reborn and transformed there.

North Korean authorities reconfigured the personality of Kim Chŏng-suk in the texts, utilizing objects from her childhood[68] and places from the later revolutionary period of her life[69]. These locations are used to re-imagine Kim Chŏng-suk's personality as that of a revolutionary fighter, just as the moments from her childhood are deployed in order to embed particular behavioural or emotional tropes within her narrative construction. We will see later, that a form of revolutionary fraternalism is a key personality trait embedded within the texts recounting her life. This trait is demonstrated in a narrative addressing her early years. The text of her Biography recounts that "…from her childhood, Kim Chŏng-suk gave thought more to the welfare of her parents and brothers, and her neighbours than to herself…" (Biography 2005, 10). This selflessness takes many forms within the text. Having accidentally broken one of her mother's earthenware jars (described as "part of her dowry", therefore culturally important), the young Kim Chŏng-suk attempts to make good her accidental damage. She gains employment at a kiln which pays in earthenware jars. This would seem an honourable and ethical thing to do, however her decency is amplified further. When refused a job at the kiln on account of her age, before turning disappointed for home, "…she saw that one of the women working there had a crying baby on her back. Feeling pity for the woman, she took the baby from its mother and cared for it until noon…" (Biography 2005, 10).

Another episode of Kim Chŏng-suk's sacrifice related to her family's difficult situation in quite dramatic and revealing terms, describes how she was compelled to collect edible herbs for her family. On her way home "…she heard the crying of a baby from a hut at the foot of the hill. It sounded so pitiable that she entered the hut, to find a young woman ill in bed with her crying baby sucking at her breasts that had run dry…" (Biography 2005, 11). Such a

[68] Hoeryŏng, the town in North Hamgyong Province, where Kim Chŏng-suk was born, is home to the Museum of Revolutionary Accomplishments of Kim Chŏng-suk. The Museum has a collection of Kim Chŏng-suk artefacts such as her walking sticks, wedding ring, school uniform, first pistol etc. (Lee Chong-Sik 1982).

[69] These places include areas where Kim Chŏng-suk made camp and cooked on Mt. Paektu, lake Samji and birch trees under which her relationship with Kim Il-sŏng was confirmed and commemorated. All these places became memorials and museums (Lee Chong-Sik 1982).

desperate situation does not phase the young Kim Chŏng-suk. Instead, she is recounted as having "…lifted the baby onto her back and, lulling it to sleep, cooked gruel with her herbs, and served it to the woman…before returning home with an empty basket…" (Biography 2005, 11).

Kim Chŏng-suk's Education in Nationalism

Kim Chŏng-suk's Biography spares none of the misery of her childhood years, making sure to recount all possible unfortunate instances which befell them. "… In their new place, their standard of living went from bad to worse. Her father was laid up with illness, her crippled elder brother was unable to work properly, and her sister-in-law was suffering from a disease after childhood…" (Biography 2005, 11). Would it really be surprising if anyone subjected to such difficulty developed a combative or restive streak? As Kim Chŏng-suk grows older, the feminine characteristics involving care (such as cooking, hygiene or personal grooming), are scaled and rescaled within the political and historical narrative, through its foregrounding of her connection to North Korean combative nationalism. These practices of care marked by selflessness began in her childhood. Later such practices are amplified to include the entire Korean nation. The reader of the narrative is encouraged to perceive the way that Kim Chŏng-suk cared for her siblings and family in childhood to be the way she later cares for the entire nation.

The importance of Korean education and language during the colonial period has been the subject of intense academic analysis in Korean and Japanese studies (Caprio 2014). Running counter to Japanese efforts to transform Koreans into imperial subjects under the Kokutai principle (Caprio 2014), the inculcation, continuation and survival of local linguistic and culture was regarded by the colonial authorities as an intensely political act (Poole 2014). It was important for the colonial authorities to directly engage the Korean community into the exercise of becoming a new imagined community, and to forget or unimagine their previous historical reality. Accordingly, in the later colonial period, Korean language education and publication possibilities were eradicated and made illegal (Caprio 2014). Maintaining Korean language was difficult as at the periphery so within the diaspora, seen by Japanese authorities as political, and later restricted. Although Kim Chŏng-suk's family were not resident in the colony itself, the restrictions applied to them as well. Kim Chŏng-suk is presented as having

been eager to learn: "…she herself wished to learn. The stronger her desire to learn, the more bitter was the resentment she felt at the heartless world which denied her a decent life and an opportunity of learning." (Biography 2005, 12). In this sense her education is itself a technology of self, utilized both for her own transformation and development, and for the later deployment in revolutionary activity as a weapon of nationalism. As she moved from childhood to adulthood, the resistive nature of Kim Chŏng-suk finds an initial home, and is later amplified, by her educational technologies. Pedagogical interactions provide the opportunity to establish connections between her and the political group which would later eulogise her, and in which she would find fulfilment, family, death and memorialisation.

Pedagogical development and educative practice have vital importance and cultural tension in revolutionary politics over the world. Revolutionary theorisation has usually been an exercise of the very few or the elite. For example, the famous anarchist theorists Pyotr Kropotkin and Mikhail Bakunin were both born of the Russian aristocracy. Kropotkin was actually a Prince of the Rurik dynasty of Tsars who ruled before the Romanovs, with family possessions of some 1200 serfs. British socialist William Morris was raised in a wealthy family of London financiers; the father of Karl Marx was from a line of Rabbi's and a successful lawyer in Prussian Trier. Revolutionary politics, as it is known in communism or socialism, have sought to escape this elitism and to harness the power of a small group of committed activists.

Therefore, a key practical strategy for the revolutionary elite to gain power, was to break out from small group of theoreticians by spreading education among the masses. This is clear in the historiography of the Bolshevik uprising that overthrew Tsarist and Social Democratic power to form the Soviet Union in 1917. Bolshevik historiographers, for instance, record as 'agitators' those who were vital participants in inculcating Marxist or Leninist theory amongst the working class. Their support would be essential in enabling the Russian revolution to succeed and persevere (David-Fox 1997). Over time particular figures from non-elite groups such as Alexey Stakhanov in the Soviet Union or the whole population of the agricultural village of Dazhai in the People's Republic of China, would become fundamental to the processes of workers' agitation or education (Shapiro 2001). These exceptional personas would serve as models to follow for other workers and non-elite groups, exemplars of both personal behaviour and political practice. Stories about such models would become part of revolutionary education (Shapiro 2001). In a sense, the bodies and energies of these exceptional personas were deployed as technologies of the self within the political structure.

There is a number of examples of revolutionary movements, in which one generation of the educated are cast aside by revolutionary practice as being beholden to counter-revolutionary or old-fashioned beliefs. A particular example is that of Cambodia following the revolution which brought Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge to power, and formed the Democratic People's Republic of Kampuchea for three brief yet bloody years. Pol Pot had theorised that his revolution brought the 'year zero' to Cambodian society, a de-temporalized state of being where there was no past and no history; only the present and the future (Bergin 2009). Intellectuals of the past were perceived as a threat to the new regime; they were neutralised and executed whenever possible (Bergin 2009). History records that the regime of Pol Pot killed teachers, lecturers, intellectuals, even to the extent that it sought the death of those who wore glasses, as a signifier of intelligence (Bergin 2009). While this looks like a regime entirely anti-intellectual or philistine, the Khmer Rouge had in fact extensive theories on educative practice (Bergin 2009). Having created a blank intellectual slate through killing, the Khmer reformulated the mental worldview of the population through the education of children. The regime would use these educated anew revolutionary children to re-educate and to keep in intellectual check their parents and older members of society (Clayton 1998). These children were themselves technologies of self deployed by the Khmer Rouge bureaucracy to transform other citizens. However, education was not the only technology at their disposal. The Khmer Rouge sought to use the cathartic and brutal process of bloodletting and death to generate intellectual epiphanies in those exposed to its revolutionary cause (Bergin 2009). While Pol Pot and his followers did not have long enough to instigate the entirety of their pedagogic revolution, the transformative power of these technologies of violence and education has been deeply important to many of the more esoteric revolutionary movements of the late 20th century.

Both the more urgent moments of Maoism during the Great Leap Forward and movements later influenced by Maoism, such as Peru's Shining Path, and India's Naxalites, would privilege the transformative technological power of violence and education (Chakravati 2009; Gorriti 2000). One could access an authentic, activated revolutionary nature by abandoning the ignorant, pre-revolutionary self through acts of violence and education.70 This way the new revolutionaries would become opposed to their past lives, and unlikely to return to previous

[70] Western or European models of spiritual or artistic practice often regard aesthetic and ascetic practices as mutually exclusive. Some traditions of asceticism necessarily excluded interest in aesthetic elements (hermitry or rigorous monasticism for example). However, in many Asian traditions of self-cultivation aesthetic and ascetic aspects can be combined within a repertoire of practices and can be inclusive. One example are practices of martial arts, which combine severe training with focus on beauty and harmony.

ways of being. The reader will see many of these processes and practices in the education of Kim Chŏng-suk. For the revolutionaries seeking to overthrow the forces of the Japanese Empire and instil their own particular Korean national subjectivity, both violence and pedagogical practices were key technologies in the process, by which young Koreans were enticed or encouraged to join the movement.

Kim Chŏng-suk's desire for education was fulfilled, when a Korean language school was founded in the village where her family lived. This way North Korean historiography connects her educational experience with a key vector of Korean nationalism, the bettering of Korean language skills.71 As she had to work and to care for her family, Kim Chŏng-suk attended the school at night. She was taught by Kwak Chan-yong who "…was engaged in anti-Japanese patriotic enlightenment as a member of the revolutionary organization formed by the young communists dispatched by Kim Il-sŏng …" (Biography 2005, 12).

Kim Chŏng-suk's first educational encounter is presented as a dramatic epiphany. "How grateful I was at the news that the night school had been opened!... that was the first gratitude I had felt in my life, I was so happy that I shed tears holding onto the edge of the blackboard…" (Biography 2005, 13). The world of revolutionary nationalism now opening up to her had an intense physical impact on her person; "…back at home that night, Kim Chŏng-suk could not sleep…". Kim Chŏng-suk's emotional educational experience bridges the narrative gap between her childhood and adulthood. It connects the lack of agency in the pre-history of her family to active political future and later transformation of Kim Chŏng-suk within the landscape of the North Korean revolution. The most dramatic elements of this transformative process occur in the mid-1930s, her education providing the initial vector for this transformation.

"Comrade Kim Chŏng-suk looked much more developed than her age in those days. She was clever and well behaved and eager to learn…". This quote from the recollections of Rim Chun-chi (an "anti-Japanese revolutionary veteran…") portrays Kim Chŏng-suk on the cusp of her becoming an adult. She was exposed to new paradigms of political conception and social relation, "…the fact that there were kind people who were sympathetic to the poor in the cruel world excited her personally…" (Biography 2005, 13). The realisation of the inequity and exploitation within the diasporic and colonial Korean society spurred her on to continue her

[71] The preservation of Korean language was an important priority for the fighters for national independence of Korea.

own education and support others in accessing such new knowledge. "…She advised her friends who were hesitant to come to the school, saying that women too should learn how to read and write so that they could see clearly the injustices in society and get rid of outdated feudal ideas…" (Biography 2005, 13).

Kim Chŏng-suk's early steps in education began the process of transformation to be subsumed into revolutionary struggle. As is often the case in the narrative of her life history, this struggle is presented as a combination of education, and the social relations in her family and community. "…in those days, Kim Ki-jun was a hardcore member of the AIU [Anti-Imperialist Union]. His family did not know this, but Kim Chŏng-suk sensed that her elder brother was working by night for a great cause…" (Biography 2005, 14). Developing a sense of nationalism and social oppression, she resolved to become more deeply involved with the revolutionary movement. The movement was eager to support her in political transformation; her night school teacher was even supported by the Young Communist League to better train Kim Chŏng-suk for revolutionary ends. Naturally for North Korea's historiography, it was Kim Il-sŏng's revolution she "believed would win back the lost country for the nation, provide the Korean people with a new world free from exploitation and oppression, destroy the Japanese marauders and put right the evils of society…" (Biography 2005, 15).

The first revolutionary act of Kim Chŏng-suk merges naturally her familial educational and political connections. "One spring day in 1931 Kim Chŏng-suk turned up at a rendezvous at the foot of Mt. Nan… From a shady thicket her night-school teacher appeared. Some distance away, Kim Ki-jun was standing. Her heart throbbed with a feeling of respect for her brother and pride in having such a brother…" (Biography 2005, 15, Nyŏjanggun 2007, 26). Kim Chŏng-suk's first act of concrete rebellion was leafleting in the village; one leaflet "… was even pasted on the gate of the landowners house…". This way Kim Chŏng-suk attempted to entice in her fellow villages a protest against exploitation, a form of political technology utilised to promote the transformation of the self in other people. It seems that during the middle of 1931 Kim Chŏng-suk was busy learning, engaging in agitation and underground work. The text focuses distinctly on the utility of her youth and gender for tactics of struggle: "To avoid the enemy's watchful eyes, she disguised herself as a peasant girl going to sell edible herbs, like a girl going to school, or as if she and her younger brother were going to visit relatives…" (Biography 2005, 16; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 27).

In this chapter we have seen the development of Kim Chŏng-suk within North Korean historiography, from her birth as a peasant in Hoeryŏng, to the beginning of her transformation into a committed revolutionary. So far, this transformation is described to have been spurred by external and internal factors. External factors include being impacted by economical structure, deprivation and persecution by the state, in short - suppression of the whole family by the wider capitalist system. Internal factors include her desire for education, aspiration to overcome the Japanese, and to seek retribution on the people who hurt her family. Her familial misfortune, cruel treatment by the colonialists and landlords, typical for North Korean narratives, serve as a precursor to the violence meted out by her and wrought upon her, that we describe in the next chapter. Equally, her belated access to education, while developing her sense of nationalism and subjectivity as a Korean, would take Kim Chŏng-suk to the precipice of transformation. Kim Chŏng-suk's subjectivity would be radically converted by the process of pedagogical interaction, particularly through the use of affective techniques. Kim Chŏng-suk's own agency would become vital for the processes of change and resistive encounter. The next chapter will show how Kim Chŏng-suk, as human actor within a historical mythography, is encompassed by an active landscape which effects and affects change.

In the next chapter, Kim Chŏng-suk will move into the landscape she called home in her early youth, and where she concludes her transformation. Within the North Korean narratives recording her life and death, the personality of Kim Il-sŏng becomes a key element in these new spaces. It is clear that Kim Il-sŏng is the centre of the political movement during this era, all others orbiting around him in some way. From this centre emanates an energy, which draws those interested in the potential transformation of Korean politics and political subjectivity towards Kim Il-sŏng himself, and the landscapes through which he travels. These landscapes themselves appear to become imbued with the political energy generated by Kim Il-sŏng, also becoming participants in the power which encourages the people around him. Kwon and Chung, thinking through the analysis of Max Weber, describe this power as charisma, which drives later North Korean politics, drawing authority and legitimacy from this very period. These power and energy produce a thick stream of affect meant to inspire and influence the reader. Just the same power serves to drive Kim Chŏng-suk closer to Kim Il-sŏng, and transforms the landscapes where revolutionary politics are most frequently exercised. There is a sense of inevitability surrounding the eventual crossing of Kim Chŏng-suk and Kim Il-sŏng's paths, and the entwining of their political energies; the processes leading up to their encounter continue the transformation of Kim Chŏng-suk. In the next chapter Kim Chŏng-suk has broken

the bounds of her past, and is in the midst of transforming her own future and the future of others.

Chapter Six: Kim Chŏng-suk and the Transformation on Mt. Paektu

"She felt it would be impossible to be free from poverty and disgrace in such a world, and firmly resolved to fight against injustice to the end…" (Biography 2005, 14).

Kim Chŏng-suk died on September 22nd 1949, at 32 years old. In North Korean historiographic sources, she is remembered by her husband as "an ardent revolutionary who devoted her all for the liberation of the country" and "whatever she did was for her comrades, not for herself." She died within four years of the Liberation of Korea, merely a year since North Korean state was founded, and a full year before the outbreak of the Korean War (Biography 2005, 268). She is a figure truly from the infancy of North Korean political form, coming to us as the faintest echo of the nation's initial foundation. Yet, if a traveller to Pyongyang gets a chance to visit the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery, one of the holiest political grounds in that land, they will see no commemorative monuments dedicated to people who died in the Korean War of 1950-1953. Instead, the sacred architecture memorializes those who fell during the pre-Liberation period. It is vital for North Korea to connect these historically disconnected activists to its newly imagined community, generated after 1945. The memorialising of this group of people itself is an important new invented tradition for this community. The visitor will certainly notice that the largest and most prominent of all the memorials and graves, at the fulcrum of the site's architecture, is that of Kim Chŏng-suk. North Korean politics and cultural memory hold this woman as not simply a vital revolutionary figure, but almost an immortal. The previous chapter recounted Kim Chŏng-suk's childhood and youth. In this chapter we discuss her transformation into a mature revolutionary by North Korean writers in political and historical narrative. Finally, through all these narratives, Kim Chŏng-suk has reached adulthood.

In Chapter Five the reader encountered a young Kim Chŏng-suk, confronted with familial and social troubles, common to many Korean rural households of the late 19th, and the early 20th century. Kim Chŏng-suk and others like her struggled with economic and social structures of the late Yi dynasty. However, these structures had been turned upside down through the encounter with modernity. The national landscape of the Korean Peninsula was subjected to enormous and overwhelming challenges presented by new forms of economic development,

extraction and accumulation. These changes challenged the ancient status quo of Korean government and politics, even in spite of its attempts at reform and reconfiguration. Japanese colonialism also let loose new urgent forces upon Korean social and productive terrains. Families and communities such as Kim Chŏng-suk's, were forced out and off their land by an influx of new landowners (Caprio 2014). Japanese owners sought to reconfigure Korean agricultural landscapes under new economic prerogatives. Such reconfigurations did not always include traditional Korean agricultural practices (Fedman 2015). Resistance to the new modes of being was treated very harshly, families such as Kim Chŏng-suk's in the narratives of her biographies and hagiographies, were forced to flee and retreat to the margins of the Korean Peninsula and beyond.

This diasporic community of Koreans would be key to the politics which has produced modern Korea. People inspired by the possibilities of capitalism and hostile to communism, including social democrats, sought refuge in the United States, China and elsewhere (Cumings 2005). They would also find ways of accommodating themselves to Japanese modernity, later be deeply involved in the production of the industrial and economic base of South Korea (Em 2015). Another camp sought to overthrow the Japanese power, historical forms of social hierarchy and the new processes of capitalism. They hunkered down in cities across Asia, especially in the Russian Far East and Manchuria (later Japanese occupied Manchukuo).[72] Kim Il-sŏng was in this second group. Those who surrounded him, harnessed the support of political actors, which sought the diminution of Japanese power in the region, namely a Soviet Union, optimistic about the possibilities for spreading revolution on its eastern fringes.

In the narratives related in Chapter Six, the reader follows Kim Chŏng-suk into the spaces of political resistance, where she continues her dramatic transformation from child of colonial oppression to full blown participant in revolutionary mythography. This narrative is rich in political colour which marks North Korea's historiography. An important assertion of this book is, that within the narrative of Kim Chŏng-suk, personal agency and power are transferred between the human and the topographical. This interaction so characteristic of East Asian landscapes connects to the culture of immortality described in Chapter Three. Immortality culture conceives of a human as a model of a cosmos. The cosmos is often represented in a shape of a mountain. Mountain mirrors a human body; rivers and waterfalls on a mountain

[72] Known historically as Manchuria, the territory was invaded and occupied by the Japanese Empire in 1931, and functioned as the puppet Kingdom of Manchukuo under Emperor Puyi, last of the Qing dynasty, between 1932 and 1945. It was invaded by the Soviet Union in August 1945, and occupied, before control was handed over to Chinese Communist forces in 1946. It is now part of the People's Republic of China.

parallel blood vessels and ki channels in a human body. The body of a human and the body of a mountain talk to each other: there is interaction and mutual co-influence. In contemporary North Korean narrative, the transfer of personal agency and power between the human and the topographical supports the transformation of Kim into an immortal, or a mountain goddess of sorts. Within the narrative, the mountain reacts to revolutionary struggle, the nature itself supports this struggle, mirrors and reflects it. Mt. Paektu helps Kim Chŏng-suk and her fellow revolutionaries to contest Japanese power by providing shelter, food and medicine herbs. The lively active matter of Mt. Paektu projects energy into current North Korean politics.[73]

The Emergence of Kim Chŏng-suk

According to North Korean narratives and invented traditions, Kim Chŏng-suk's emergence into the revolutionary movement was meteoric. Members of the political movement she joined after the educational and personal epiphanies described in Chapter Five, apparently "marvelled at her wits, audacity and resourcefulness." By the middle of September 1931, Kim Chŏng-suk, still only fourteen years old, had become a member of the Children's Vanguard, described as a "paramilitary organization of young people and children formed by Kim Il-sŏng." (Nyŏjanggun 2007, 27). Later in that month, in what the narrative holds as something of a public coming out for a new revolutionary star, Kim Chŏng-suk is described as having roused passions during a meeting focused on the Manchurian Incident, and Japan's annexation of north eastern China, with her first key piece of oratory.

"Why should our parents perish with bitterness in their hearts in this rough foreign land without seeing their beloved homeland? Why should our young people wither away, shedding tears and blood in the midst of these hardships? What is the cause of all these miseries, and who are to blame for these misfortunes? It is the Japanese marauders occupying our country and the fiendish landowners who are to blame. They are our sworn enemies. Without destroying them, none of us will be able to live in peace. Let all of us turn out as one, in the fight against the Japanese imperialists." (Biography 2005, 17; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 29).

Then Kim Chŏng-suk's audience are recounted to have been "Roused by her speech, the people shouted, raising clenched fists: Down with the Japanese imperialists and the wicked

[73] As mentioned in the Introduction, in the 21st century the political scientist Jane Bennett developed a theory on lively, active matter, talking about active participation of nonhuman forces in events (Bennett 2012).

landowners!" (Biography 2005, 18; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 30). Similar agitation was undertaken by Kim Chŏng-suk amongst female peasants, as she critiqued methods and modes of their work for landlords. In particular, the exploitation of Fuyandong's landowner, Ru Chun-phal, was laid bare by her analysis resulting in a "forest of sticks, hoes, rakes and sickles raised by the peasants threatened the landowner who was brought to his knees…" (Biography 2005, 18; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 33).

Our book has already asserted the importance of the transformative process and the technologies of self utilised to support it in Kim Chŏng-suk's narrative (Foucault 1988). This transformation is an embodied technological process wrought upon herself and the selves of those closest to her. Her exposure to the perceived injustices of Japanese imperialism and landowner exploitation of the peasantry is itself transformational, in particular the disruptive moments which have marked out her family's interaction with authorities. The injustices are used as technological devices by the authors of the narrative, to drive Kim Chŏng-suk's transformation. Equally, the process of cultural and political education, through which she would be inculcated and absorbed into the revolutionary movement, were the means of transformation. However, the primary vector in Kim Chŏng-suk's transformation from young peasant girl to Korean revolutionary nationalist, were her experiences of moments of extreme violence. These moments of violence are themselves technologies of self, applied upon the corporate body politic of North Korea. It is through this body that Kim Chŏng-suk is transformed by these technologies into a new self, into the immortal that the reader has seen her becoming. Beyond acts of physical violence, the violence of family separation and dislocation has played a key role in narrative memory and memorialisation, now it will be deployed on her own body.

The previous chapter touched upon past moments of brutality and inequity meted out on the peasantry of the peninsula by its traditional oppressors, the landowning class, and by new landowners during the colonial period. Of course, these brutalities are direct technologies of oppression deployed by those seeking to control groups of citizens such as Kim Chŏng-suk. These moments do indeed touch upon the immediate family of Kim Chŏng-suk, but at this point in her life, violence comes much closer to her person. One moment in particular, occurring around July 1932, was the attack on her (then) home village of Fuyandong by Japanese forces, directed at suppressing agitation and revolutionary anti-colonial and anti-landlord groups.

The Japanese soldiers attacking Fuyandong apparently set fire to the village, including Kim Chŏng-suk's own house. Upon arriving at her burning house, she found her sister in law dead and her mother dreadfully burnt. In spite of her mother's last words having been "take revenge on the enemy for me," Kim Chŏng-suk was momentarily confused, momentarily distraught "…the thought of bringing up my infant nephew in this harsh world dazed me as if the sky had fallen in, as if the earth had sunk into an abyss…" (Biography 2005, 18-19; Nyŏjanggun 2007, 33). This technological or literary device of the narrative ruptures the bounds of social possibility for Kim, and forces her to adopt revolutionary political means and making alternate modes of being impossible. However, it is also the loss and brutality of the moment that dramatically transform Kim Chŏng-suk, shape and drive her political commitment. She turns away from such forms of resistance as education, agitation and distribution of leaflets to more direct revolutionary modes of action, such as guerrilla warfare. "The consciousness of the revolution helped me to rise" she recounted and the text asserts that "…unyielding struggle and punishing the enemy without mercy was the only way to wreak vengeance for the deaths of her parents and other family members…" (Biography 2005, 19).

Kim Chŏng-suk was forced to leave the bounds of familial connections and "normal" life behind when she joined the Young Communist League on July 25th, 1932, to begin the combat phase of her resistance. Her final transformation from member of her blood family to member of a political family, is marked by giving up responsibility for the baby nephew she has been caring for since her sister in law was killed. Her own brother demands that she give up the child, asserting, as he took it out of her arms, that "You're not yet fully determined to fight for the revolution. If you are going to be a revolutionary, you must first think of the revolution. If you worry about your family, how can you make a revolution? Don't worry about the family ... go and fight." (Biography 2005, 20).

In the period when Kim Chŏng-suk was heavily involved in the Children's Corps of the Young Communist League, the narrative takes effort to mould her image in a way similar to how it was later formed on the slopes of Mt. Paektu. While she has left her familial commitments behind, it appears important for the writers of the text to continue asserting her conventional female character tropes. Kim Chŏng-suk, even at the height of this period of struggle, loved caring for children; "for her love for the children…in the guerrilla zone and her self-sacrificing devotion to them, she was loved and respected by them…" (Biography 2005, 24). However, it is clear that the children under Kim Chŏng-suk's care are not to be exempted nor excused from revolutionary activity. Education Kim gave to the children included political inculcation. This

political activity echoes her own technologies of self and technologies of resistance, instilling a commitment similar to her own; "Kim Chŏng-suk also hardened the children through the revolutionary struggle. Revolutionary practice is a school for training people as revolutionaries, she said, and emphasized that only when the children were hardened through work and struggle from their early years could they become true revolutionaries, capable of breaking through all difficulties and trials…" (Biography 2005, 22). These children were to repeat Kim's own experience. They would not be simply targets of pedagogical practice, but combatants exposed to danger, to be transformed by similar moments of violence "…the children sometimes carried ammunition to the trenches on embattled hulls and rolled down rocks upon the "punitive" troops who were climbing up the hills…" (Biography 2005, 22).

Besides Kim Chŏng-suk's feminine or maternal qualities (even if couched in revolutionary terms), the narratives assert her seemingly superhuman abilities to resist pain or discomfort. Kim Chŏng-suk was able to work harder than others and to cope with hunger: "Hurrying about here and there every day, she often had to skip a meal. She bore all this, however without any sign of fatigue…" (Biography 2005, 21). In another instance, the owner of a house where she was staying has found her after a long day of work "…washing the clothes of guerrillas at the riverside, even forgetting to have her supper." The host's response is intriguing "…holding and feeling her wet hands in his, the host was surprised at how coarse they were. Although her hands were severely chapped and calloused, she endured the pain with a sense of pride…" (Biography 2005, 21).

Kim Chŏng-suk's abilities to resist pain and endure physical suffering, combined with her prowess at guerrilla and war fighting in spite of her young age, are also highlighted in the texts. An example of this tendency is a text describing the events of the early 1930s when Kim Chŏng-suk and some of her fellow Children's Corps members are pinned down by Japanese "punitive" forces in a snowstorm. During this altercation one of her fellow members, a boy who has claimed that he "would wreak vengeance upon the enemy for the deaths of his parents", disappears and is found being chased and about to be caught by a Japanese soldier. Kim Chŏng-suk, the narrative recounts "…dodged behind a rock and waited until the soldier had passed. Then she leapt from her hiding place and felled the enemy with two blows of a wooden club…" (Biography 2005, 24).

Kim Chŏng-suk and the Road to and beyond Paektusan

The narrative is now at the point where Kim Chŏng-suk grows beyond the bounds of the Children's Corps. North Korean sources describe Kim Chŏng-suk as having moved to the Chechangzi area after a period of real strife, when diasporic Koreans and the various resistance movements in Manchuria were subjected to famine and disruption at the hands of Imperial Japan's forces. In September 1935, in Chechangzi, Kim Chŏng-suk was admitted to the Korean People's Resistance Army (KPRA), Kim Il-sŏng's band of adult guerrillas.

Kim Chŏng-suk's entry into the KPRA is marked by distinct connections with historical and nationalist symbolism: "…in front of the red flag fluttering in the sky of Chechangzi, she was awarded a rifle bearing the wishes of fallen comrades and the expectations of the Korean nation". Kim Chŏng-suk herself remarks on these symbolic elements with a quotation repeated many times in North Korean literature: "With this rifle bearing the blood of the revolutionary forerunners and the people's desire for national liberation, I will be faithful to General Kim Il Sung to the last moment of my life. I take this one rifle as one hundred rifles and will shoot one bullet as one hundred bullets to take revenge on the enemy." (Biography 2005, 45).

Kim Chŏng-suk's transformation through war and combat, continues during her time in the KPRA and culminates on the slopes of Mt. Paektu. North Korean mythography deploys her skill and adeptness at taking "revenge on the enemy" as key features of the story in the period preceding the events around Mt. Paektu. Intense violence again marks the narratives of this period: for instance, while crossing the Godong River, "the guerrillas discharged a volley of bullets when the main column of the enemy trips was in the middle of the bridge. The bridge was covered with the corpses of the enemy soldiers in an instant. Kim Chŏng-suk hit with a single shot a Japanese officer who was commanding his men with a sword…" (Biography 2005, 46). Later, in January 1936, Kim Chŏng-suk again attacks the Japanese with fatal accuracy "Kim Chŏng-suk fought at the salient of the height that bore the brunt of the battle. Four hundred metres down from the height, an enemy officer was leading a charge. She killed the officer with a single shot" (Biography 2005, 49).

Against the background of the blood soaked, aggressive atmosphere of the KPRA's activities, the text highlights Kim Chŏng-suk's feminine or maternal characteristics. She is a devoted wife willing to put herself in danger for the sake of her husband Kim Il-sŏng, serving as his bodyguard. The narrative describes the events as following: "Kim Il-sŏng commanded the

battle from a rock on the ridge of the mountain. Mindful of his safety, Kim Chŏng-suk kept a close watch on the surroundings. Noticing reeds swaying strangely, she turned her eyes and saw half a dozen enemy soldiers hiding in a reed field, taking aim at Kim Il-sŏng on the ridge…at the hair-raising moment, Kim Chŏng-suk raced to Kim Il-sŏng, shouting "Comrade Commander!" and shielding him with her body. Then she pulled the trigger of her Mauser. The enemy soldier in the front fell down, dropping his gun. A gunshot followed. Kim Il-sŏng had shot over her shoulder. In this way they both shot all the enemy soldiers in the reed field dead…" (Biography 2002, 165).

This linguistic formula is intriguingly repeated in the text which describes the battle in the forest at Huanggouling in October of 1940.74 "[…] Kim Chŏng-suk shot the enemy machine-gunner to death, covering Kim Il-sŏng with her body as she did so. 'Comrade Commander! It is dangerous here. You must leave here.' It was really a hair-raising moment." (Biography 2002, 132). Kim Chŏng-suk, already a figure of considerable acclaim, is transformed by these events, moving toward a charismatic, saintly status, marked by selflessness, concern for the person of Kim Il-sŏng, and for the continuation of the revolution.

In Korean historical context, dying for the sake of a husband, in order to benefit his family, or protect a family honour, was considered a rarely practiced but important obligation of the Confucian wife. Such a behaviour on the part of the wife was rated exemplary in early Chosŏn dynasty: a virtuous wife named Kim, just like Kim Chŏng-suk, shot a tiger attacking her husband with a bow and arrows, almost shielding him with her body. This popular illustrated story forms a part of Samgang Haengsildo (三綱行實圖, Illustrated Exemplars of the Three Bonds75), commissioned in 1428 by King Sejong (1418-1450) for the purpose of 'people education' and woodblock-printed in 1434 (Kim Nayeon 2012, 225, 228, 232).

As we have mentioned before, Kim Chŏng-suk is presented as having a real commitment to the safety and care of children. In the narrative, the KPRA was accompanied by the families of the fighters including their children, and the children of those who have lost their lives in battles. However, the children were not well cared for given the difficulties of war, so Kim

[74] Reiteration of linguistic formulas in North Korean texts is a technique utilized in various spiritual and religious traditions around the world. Repetitions serve the purpose of continuously programming the reader on the conscious and unconscious levels, and help memorization, similar to mantras and prayers.

[75] The Three Bonds describe the three social structures, the three ethical obligations of loyalty and servitude. The subject must serve the king, the son or daughter must serve the parent, and the wife must serve the husband. Thus formulated moral and social obligations show that women were traditionally included among the subjects of virtue in East Asia.

Chŏng-suk made it her business to improve their lot. She "had charge of dozens of children … had to take care of sick children and patch their threadbare clothes…". Kim Chŏng-suk's maternal characteristics filled with a sense of selflessness and sacrifice suggest a superhuman, semi-immortal nature. This is particularly acute when applied to her abstinence from normal eating and sustenance patterns; "Kim Chŏng-suk herself dug out grass roots from the snow-covered ground and picked berries to feed the children. Many times, she had only water for her own meal." (Biography 2005, 51). In East Asian tradition, self-transformation through pain, suffering and self-sacrifice is often a necessary step on a way toward immortality. Kim Chŏng-suk follows this pattern in her narrative. Here an admitted immortality practice can be identified: an adept refrains from eating, later drinks only water and at last feeds solely on the air (Vasilyev 1970).

Another technological element of Kim Chŏng-suk's transformation within the narrative connects back to the river crossings recounted in Chapter Five. In Chapter Five, Kim Chŏng-suk crosses rivers as a young child, moving into a place where she can be transformed from a subject of colonial pressure into a politically active young person. The present chapter discusses Kim's crossing into a transformative territory of Mt. Paektu. It is a territory sacred to North Korean historiography and mythology: "This wonderful natural fortress stretching from the summit of Mt. Paektu, the ancestral mountain of our country, will provide us with a theatre of our sacred future struggle…" (Biography 2005, 61).

Kim Chŏng-suk's exploits on the mountain have generated a memorial architecture on this territory (Chi Hŭng-kil 2004). The areas on Mt. Paektu and in its vicinity are held to be camps and overnight resting areas established by Kim Chŏng-suk and her female guerrilla band (Rodong Sinmun 2017). Memorial architecture includes cooking and firepit places where Kim Chŏng-suk is attested to have cooked dinner for her fellow fighters (Rodong Sinmun 2016; Rodong Sinmun 2017). Tree trunks and stones have slogans and political graffiti inscribed on them, again considered to have been left by Kim Chŏng-suk and others (Rodong Sinmun 2017). North Korea's current political texts hold these sites to be historically accurate and authentic. These cooking sites and camps are believed to be the actual physical spaces where Kim Chŏng-suk and her fellows interacted. The "slogan trees" are covered by wrappings of transparent plastic, whereas the cooking areas are protected with wooden and glass structures. These sacred objects are designed to demonstrate efforts towards their preservation and to articulate the stories behind them.

North Korean media regularly refers to ritual visits by groups of school children and bureaucrats to these sites. The construction of the architectures and infrastructures designed to make such tours comfortable (hotels, railway lines, stations and places to eat) are also regularly highlighted by the media (Rodong Sinmun 2015; Rodong Sinmun 2016; Rodong Sinmun 2018). These visits perform educative, pedagogic and training functions. The power and charisma of Kim Chŏng-suk and her fellow guerrillas is reactivated at these moments and incorporated into contemporary lives of the visitors (Winstanley-Chesters 2015). By the process of scaling and rescaling of the events memorialized by the sites, contemporary North Koreans are transformed anew by bringing the energy of the past into their own lives and practices.

According to North Korean mythological narrative, Kim Chŏng-Il, the father of the current leader Kim Chŏng-ŭn, was born to Kim Il-sŏng and Kim Chŏng-suk in a secret camp at the base of Mt. Paektu. North Korea has directed much political effort at messaging and propaganda regarding the infrastructures that surround political tourism of the "Paektu Secret Camp". The initial versions of the narrative recount battles between guerrillas and the Japanese. In reality, these battles were not in the vicinity of Mt. Paektu. The Works of Kim Il-sŏng, as published in the late 1960s and early 1970s, place the most important emphasis on the military altercation between Kim Il-sŏng's guerrilla band and Japanese forces at a police outpost in Poch'ŏn County, the area to the south of Mt. Paektu. Other battles in Changbai and Antu Counties across the border of Manchukuo are also important to the narrative of this period. Later in North Korean historiography, these events were shifted closer to Mt. Paektu, and then placed directly upon the mountain in acts of historical reconstruction. Later works from the 1980s and 1990s, such as Kim Il-sŏng's biography With the Century (published in 1992), the Biography of Kim Chŏng-suk (first published in 1991), reconfigure the historical narrative, placing new incidences on and around Mt. Paektu. These works blur the narrative's geographical clarity, so in the end it is no longer understandable in which counties these important events took place, and not even clear if they happened on the territory of Korea at all. These traditions and narratives become invented anew once again. As a new location of the battles, Mt. Paektu thus becomes vitally important to the narrative. Such historical shifts are, of course, not recorded in the current version of North Korean historiography, nor in the life stories of those involved. The constructed, re-created and partly imagined narratives, picture this small collection of log cabins situated at the foot of Mt. Paektu as vitally important for their resistance and survival. The mountain and the landscape of the cabins are reimagined and

reborn as a new sort of mountain, as Debarbieux and Rudaz (2015) would understand, a political mountain. This mountain's material presence is made active and lively by its intersection with politics and historical ideology (Bennett 2012). Here the sense of North Korean politics and nationhood is born. The historiography recounts that the camp underneath Mt. Paektu made a future Korean revolution possible, and secured the success of a group led by Kims. This camp, now singularly immortalised in the constructed historiography, was initially but one of a collection of secret guerrilla camps all around the mountain. The text of Kim Chŏng-suk's biography admits that "other secret camps were built in many places in the Mt. Paektu area, such as Saja Peak, Mt. Kom, Mt. Sono, Mt. Kanbaek, Mudu Hill and Soyonji Peak. In the west Jiandao area, satellite secret camps were built in Heixiazigou, Diyangzi, Erdaogang, Hengshan, Limingshui, Fuhoushui, Qingfeng, and other places" (Biography 2005, 63).

According to the texts Kim Chŏng-suk was at the centre of all these camps' activities. Having arrived at the camp, she helped the rapid construction of the camp facilities, and continued military training, to become, as the narratives often describe her, a "crackshot". Kim Chŏng-suk transforms herself into a warrior, ready to mete out violent ends to her enemies. In an initially light hearted after dinner conversation at the Paektu camp, Kim states that "If I fail to kill the enemy at the first shot, the enemy will kill me. Moreover, we accompany the General in dangerous situations. So I am always enthusiastic about shooting practice, striving to kill the enemy with one bullet, no matter when or where he may appear…" (Biography 2005, 63). The insistence of Kim Chŏng-suk and her fellow guerrillas' that they should be Kim Il-sŏng's "bullet proof vest" and think nothing of the annihilation of their own bodies for the needs of the revolution, would soon be put to the test on Mt. Paektu.

The female guerrillas who surrounded Kim Chŏng-suk also were outstanding warriors. Kim Hwak-sil, referred to as a "woman commander" by her colleagues and comrades was, similarly to Kim Chŏng-suk, a "crackshot" who "could hold a rifle by the barrel in each hand and lift them overhead" (Women of Korea 1990a, 25). Kim Il-sŏng himself presented her with a golden ring for "mowing down the enemy with a sharp-edged bayonet like an angry tigress, shouting out 'Enemies, Come on! I'm avenging my comrades with this bayonet'" (Women of Korea 1990a, 25). Pak Rok-gun was "as brave as a lion in battles…She walked more than 15km a day with a machine gun on her shoulders" (Women of Korea 1990c, 25), and Pak Su-hwan "fought bravely in many battles including those at Chechangzi and Naitoushan" (Women of Korea 1987b, 30).

Sometimes the deaths of Kim Chŏng-suk's fellow travellers are portrayed as acts of military significance: such is the case of Kim Hwak-sil. In March 1938 Kim Hwak-sil encountered an attacking Japanese force having walked through "a field of shoulder-high purple eulalia". Hiding behind a rock, she was wounded in the chest and then ran out of ammunition. North Korean journal Women of Korea describes her next move in some detail: "She disassembled the lock of her rifle and buried it under the snow so that the enemy could not deprive her of the rifle permeated with the blood and soul of her comrades in arms. Then she dashed into the enemy with hand grenades in her arms. An explosion shook the forest and the enemy was wiped out" (Women of Korea 1990a, 25).76

Kim Hwak-sil's resistance by self-immolation is by no means an isolated occurrence. The violence enacted by Hwak-sil on her own body and the bodies of her enemies (who no doubt died agonizing and instant deaths) becomes a key narrative and political device in the texts. It is meant to be transformative also for the readers of the text. The disfigurement and destruction of these women's bodies at the hands of their Japanese enemies, perhaps served to illustrate for North Korean readers the potential violence to be enacted on themselves in the event of a future enemy victory. The brutality enacted upon fighters such as Pak Rok-gum whose "torture was extremely cruel" (Women of Korea 1987a, 26) is extraordinary and savage. Thrown in a room where patients "with epidemic diseases were kept" she "died of illness on October 16th, 1940 at the age of 25" (Women of Korea 1990b, 25).

The female warriors' torture and deaths are presented as powerful moments of witness. The dying women themselves testify to future revolutionary generations: while dying in prison Pak Rok-gum coined a song with the verse "the red flag of the masses/covers the corpse of the fighter/the blood dyes the flag/before the corpse cools" (Women of Korea 1990b, 25). Suggesting the transfer and rescaling of charismatic nationalist power through the violent death of these fighters, their deaths are becoming moments of narrative transfiguration.

The female heroes' lives and deaths are intertwining with Kim Chŏng-suk's own story. Choe Hui-suk, one of Kim Chŏng-suk 's followers, was captured by a Japanese "punitive force" while taking a message to Kim Il-sŏng. She was badly wounded in the initial raid; and the texts describe in detail how she was tortured (Women of Korea 1986a, 25). Choe died on the 12th

[76] Women of Korea is the English edition of a famous North Korean journal devoted to women's matters. The Korean edition is titled Chosŏn Yŏsŏng. The journal has been printed since the early 1960s, however its English edition ceased production in the early 1990s. The Korean version continues production to the present day. The Korean and English versions of the journal do not always include the same articles, but contain material which feed off and influence each other.

of March 1941. The transformation of Kim Chŏng-suk and characters such as Choe projects a potentially vital message for North Korea's future citizens. Residents of the future nation would read that subjugation of the life of the individual is a necessary step for the eventual success of the collective. Choe Hui-suk would not be able to witness the later commemoration of Kim Chŏng-suk following the various battles on Paektu, and, in particular, Kim's similar experience at the hands of a Japanese "punitive force." Kim Chŏng-suk was captured in August 1937 while travelling from the Paektu area to meet a women's group, who had been offering support to the guerrilla fighters. She was incarcerated in Yaofangzi (now in Jilin Province, China) by operatives of Japanese counter insurgency forces. "The enemy put her to bestial torture to take confession out of her…" and her captors had taunted her with assertions "that she would have to be ready for death" (Biography 2005, 84). Kim Chŏng-suk is marched through a local village, the text recounting that her feet were bloody from physical punishment and "her whole body bearing traces of horrible torture and her white jacket and black skirt torn here and there" (Biography 2005, 85).

Kim Chŏng-suk's survival from torture and pain is vital to the process of her transformation into a North Korean political and cultural immortal. In many cultures around the globe, including Christian culture, passing through an ordeal is an important element of attaining a status of a saint. The text records that while Kim is being hauled through the village, trailing her damaged body upon the ground, the residents remarked upon "her eyes full of strong will and wisdom all the time, shining with confidence and conviction." Kim Il-sŏng is even recorded as having exclaimed upon her release: "She was afire with love for the people. She thought her sacrifice for others was not in the least wasteful. It was her nature to go through even fire and water if it was for the sake of her comrades." (Biography 2005, 86). Kim Chŏng-suk metamorphoses in the fires of torture and pain, to become more than a human heroine, almost an immortal. Mt. Paektu grants to Kim some of its power; accepting this power, Kim Chŏng-suk resembles traditional figures of sanshin and their worshippers: sanshin, spirits of the mountains are themselves manifestations of the strength of the mountain, and those who pray on the mountain absorb this power into their minds and bodies. Similar to a Woman of Heaven from a GiCheon legend, Kim embodies and demonstrates the power of the mountain, gaining an ability to transform herself and others. This transformation manifests in her own survival from severe ordeals, in her ability to heal her comrades by picking medicine herbs growing on the mountain. Applying medicine herbs to ailing warriors is a symbolical manifestation of harnessing the power of the mountain, and incorporating it into the bodies of

people. Gathering magical herbs, which grow on a magical mountain, is an attribute of traditional healers.

A good example is the story of Jang Chol Gu. Jang, a guerrilla close to Kim Il-sŏng, is weighed so low by the travails of revolutionary combat, that he becomes paralysed and semi-conscious. As the guerrilla band are traversing some thick forests near Mt. Paektu, they must leave the incapacitated fighter behind. Kim Il-sŏng suggests Kim Chŏng-suk stays with the dying man to comfort him in his final moments, but the troop returns to pick her up later. Kim Chŏng-suk agrees to stay, but instead of simply witnessing Jang's expiration, takes it upon herself to heal him. At this point the narrative begins to refer to Kim as a healer and "surgeon". Using materials she gathers from the forest, in a series of acts suggestive of Korean traditional herbal culture, she starts to "gather pine and fir resins, which she pasted over Jang's swollen arm and the backs of her hands." Kim Chŏng-suk continued to "pluck wild fruits and medicinal herbs that could help reduce fever, boiled them overnight, and put spoonfuls of the boiled medicine into the mouth of the sick woman" (Biography 2005, 118). One day, deep in the forests underneath Mt. Paektu, Kim Chŏng-suk even used her own body to fend off the cold of night, and prevent further degradation in her patient's condition: "Kim Chŏng-suk took off her jacket, and covered Jang with it and her own blanket. Yet, even the jacket and the blanket could not prevent the rain from soaking the patient. So, Kim Chŏng-suk covered the patient with her body." (Biography 2005, 118).

"Eyes glaring at the raging rainstorm in the night sky and her mouth moving in time to a song, she reminded me of an invincible fighter, as fierce as a tiger, engaged in a do-or-die battle with the enemy. Her noble image greatly moved me." (Biography 2005, 119)

The recollections of the recovered Jang Chol Gu, nursed back to health in the forests of Mt. Paektu, give an extraordinary account of Kim's appearance at this moment. In her apparent invincibility, Kim Chŏng-suk has become a semi-immortal. Her power and energy have developed beyond human. Kim's devotion to cause of Korean revolutionary nationalism, her passionate resistance to Japanese imperialism, would further her transformation in the years leading up to the collapse of Japanese power in the Pacific region in 1945. The Liberation of the Korean peninsula in 1945, and Kim Chŏng-il's birth, mark just a stage in the progression of North Korea's historical narrative. Within this narrative, the roots of Kim Chŏng-suk's future image can be found. At the moment of North Korea's foundation, a developing sense of

mythology surrounding Kim Chŏng-suk in the landscape of Mt. Paektu, her future embedding into Pyongyang's pantheon of revolutionary heroes, was already under way.

Kim Chŏng-suk Beyond Paektu

Kim Chŏng-suk was transformed into a warrior at Mt. Paektu. Cultural and political landscapes of Korean nationalist revolution made her a teacher of other guerrillas. She becomes also a healer.

"Legends have it that 'the woman general of Mt. Paektu employs the art of shrinking space and has mastered the art of changing her shape. She makes the enemy blind by using magical power." (Biography 2005, 158).

The ability to modify space, change shape, make the enemies blind etc. are classical attributes of East Asian immortals. These legends, surrounding Kim Chŏng-suk's combat on the periphery of colonial Chosen, are vital for her later political canonisation. Her transformation in the narrative began at the moment when nation building in Korea followed the collapse of Japanese power in 1945. Although the Liberation was in August of 1945, it would not be until November that year that Kim Chŏng-suk, and some of her guerrilla attendants, travelled from the training base, where they had seen out the last period of colonial rule. Kim Chŏng-suk journeyed from colonial Chosen to the diasporic world of struggle in 1922 as a young guerrilla. She crossed back into the territory of newly independent Korea (though not yet North Korea at this point), in 1936, as a seasoned warrior.

"Kim Chŏng-suk standing on the deck side by side with her son Kim Chŏng-il felt that the mountain range of the homeland, in the morning sunshine, was approaching to welcome them. 'Comrades,' she shouted, 'I can see the homeland over there, the homeland!'"

In this newly independent sovereign space, Kim Chŏng-suk's efforts would be translated from practice into mythic narrative, and the moment of transformation and 're-crossing' is visceral.77 "Scalding tears were trickling down Kim Chŏng-suk's cheeks. How much she had yearned to see the land of her forefathers! Not for a moment had she forgotten her homeland during so many years of desperate battles" (Biography 2005, 160).

[77] For the concept of re-crossing see Chapter Five.

Kim Chŏng-suk and her compatriots arrived at the damaged port of Sonbong, to be greeted by an initially small contingent of veterans of the anti-Japanese struggle. According to the narrative, Kim Chŏng-suk could not even make it off the wharf and breakwater, before the first ripples of her legend and mythical status began to catch up with her: "…there spread among the people, a rumour that the woman talking with the anti-Japanese veterans was the famous woman general from Mt. Paektu, Kim Chŏng-suk… The people were greatly excited to see with their own eyes the legendary anti-Japanese war heroine. An old woman came running from the crowd and embraced Kim Chŏng-suk" (Biography 2005, 160).

Apparently, it was not just the common people who revered the legendary character. Kim Chŏng-suk was also beset with interview requests from local media who were keen to "…hear how, she, a woman, had been able to fight and defeat the one million strong Japanese army in Manchuria". The Biography maintains that a number of pamphlets with titles such as "Plunged into the Revolutionary Movement as a Fourteen Year Old Girl of Fervour" and "The Woman Fighter Dedicates Half Her Life to Independence: Let Us Follow the Example of Her Self-Sacrificing Spirit" were printed following the Liberation, the first elements of a legend, which glorified and memorialized Kim Chŏng-suk.

Kim Chŏng-suk herself would not live much beyond the very early period of an independent Korea, and would experience only a year of the existence of North Korea. Presumably, the physical impact of many years of fighting, struggle, frugality, and deprivation took their toll on her body. The element of her character, mythologized as an almost supernatural ability to endure pain in order to better support or to protect other people around her, is evident in the narrative of her final day. "On September 21, 1949 Kim Il-sŏng set out on the road of on-the-spot-guidance to meet the people of Thosan County…Kim Chŏng-suk sent him off at the front gate as usual.78 Her manner and parting words were as in ordinary times, but her health was in a critical condition…". Kim Chŏng-suk made precisely no mention of this and not only "said farewell to him with a bright smile", but "endured the pain she felt to finish a woollen jacket she had been knitting for Kim Il-sŏng…" (Biography 2005, 267).

[78] On-the-spot-guidance refers to the method of governance in North Korea. The Leader (Kim Il-sŏng, Kim Chŏng-il or Kim Chŏng-un) visits a facility or farm and announces new strategies or principles for particular development. This method was popular also in the Soviet Union, Cuba and China.

Kim Chŏng-suk as Charismatic Immortal

The celebration of the 97th anniversary of Kim Chŏng-suk in 2014 shows that as a seemingly immortal revolutionary, she still is a key part of North Korea's regime authority and legitimacy. In Chapter One, we have outlined the various analytic approaches to contemporary North Korean politics and ideology. This section briefly touches on the theoretical background, through which the authors of the present book encounter such ideology within the country's political and material landscapes.

Official North Korean ideology does not allow labeling its leaders as gods and immortals. However, traditional images of East Asian gods and immortals are ingrained in this ideology. The focus on the achievement of immortality, through self-development and transformation, is found not only in the written political narratives. Paintings and imagery of North Korea follow traditional examples of East Asian artistic expressions of immortality. Artistic claims and projections of immortality play a key role within the political culture and narrative of the nation. Images of Kim Il-sŏng and Kim Chŏng-il are to be found everywhere in North Korea, in most town and city squares, on the walls of important buildings, in each subway carriage, in offices and in every citizen's house. These images are cyphers for the power of politics in North Korea, the authority of its history, and the immortality of its founders and revolutionary heroes. Similar to religious artistic artefacts, these paintings are in some way inhabited by the personhood represented upon them; to damage these objects, desecrate or even to fail to prevent damage or insult, is to directly denigrate the leaders themselves (KCNA 2013).

Some scholars maintain that production of art is impossible under North Korea's totalitarian regime (Golomstock 1990; Portal 2005). We suggest that the art is mostly controlled by the state under totalitarian regime, yet it exists. De Ceuster notes the inherently political nature of North Korean art, contesting analysis which holds art undertaken or produced under totalitarian forms of politics to be impossible. De Ceuster frames such production within a more reflexive system, in which art and artists function as part of a collaborative, 'social body' (Golomstock 1990; De Ceuster 2014), marked and influenced by the nature of politics and ideology. Art within this corporate body serves purposes beyond individual production and creativity, helping to uplift and educate, to form a person toward a certain "ideal". Medieval East Asian paintings in a similar way embodied the immortality pursuits of the painters and the viewers,

educating and uplifting. Paintings produced within this context form part of political, cultural and historical narratives, and constitute technologies of the self in Michel Foucault's language.

The authors of this book follow De Ceuster's recent analysis of a number of North Korean paintings (2015), which notes important axes and configurations within the images. Figures within seemingly mundane paintings of families and home life are connected through invisible lines of power and energy to ideologically important elements found within the pictures. This is certainly true when it comes to paintings of our particular mountain immortal Kim Chŏng-suk. There is a famous painting of Kim Il-sŏng crossing the mountains to contest Japanese power during winter; fellow guerrillas struggle through waist-deep snow, yet the future Great Leader appears to rise above the drifts. Similarly, Kim Chŏng-suk features in a series of paintings unperturbed by the deep level of leaf litter, nimble in-spite of difficult ground, and able to resist and survive Japanese attack from multiple directions. Both Kim Il-sŏng and Kim Chŏng-suk are pictured as not being impacted by snow and leaves. They rise ethereally above the difficult landscape, while been deeply committed to the efforts of their comrades around them. The images suggest the radical difference in power of both Kims from normal participants, as mountain immortals they are somehow on a different plane of reality.

The battles represented by the paintings are important for North Korean history; these paintings stand as active elements of written constructed narratives. Kim Chŏng-suk is also featured in several portraits: a deeper view would reveal a landscape of cultural and political importance, vital to Kim Chŏng-suk's own history. There in the background is Mt. Paektu; Kim Chŏng-suk stands next to Lake Samjiyon, an important battle site during the colonial period; on her left are the birch trees under which her relationship with her future husband, Kim Il-sŏng, was acknowledged for the first time by North Korean historical narratives. Mt. Paektu, the lake and the birch trees thus become important elements participating in her depiction and immortalization. They remind us traditional paintings with elements of auspicious clouds, lone pine trees, vertical stone slabs, animals and birds (Munakata 1991, 36-41), which are usually drawn on the picture of a sacred mountain, a symbol and embodiment of immortality.

Along with the narratives presented within North Korean texts, the paintings of Kim Chŏng-suk serve multiple roles. First, they are commemorative material fitting within the wider structures of North Korean politics, which might be termed the personality cult underpinning the Kim dynasty. Secondly, they serve as educational material for North Korean historical narratives of the revolutionary period. However, in the light of De Ceuster's work, the writers

of this book suggest that the narratives, their emplacement and organization of the images, serve to emphasize elements of power and energy directed at the transformation of the self, just as traditional East Asian paintings of immortals and sacred mountains. The "self" transformed within the narrative is the self of Kim Chŏng-suk, changing from a young Korean girl into a revolutionary leader, from mortal into immortal. But there the transformation does not end but starts. The landscape involved is also transforming; the potential viewers become incorporated within this transformation, participate themselves in this powerful cultural and political production. Similar process happens when a dynamic representation of a sacred mountain on traditional East Asian paintings influences and transforms the viewer. The value and the goal of North Korean narratives and images is to transform the minds and bodies of the viewers, to take them down the path of revolution and ideological inspiration. This is how the images of Kim Chŏng-suk on Mt. Paektu adopt, continue and develop ancient East Asian tradition of depicting mountain immortality, directed at the transformation of the viewer. They also reflect the traditions of alchemy we have talked about in Chapter Three. This is a political or ideological alchemy, through which the mind or the will of the viewer is forged into a more precious or useful material, important to the needs of North Korea's revolution.

Noel Castree (2007), Denis Cosgrove (1996) and Benjamin Joinau's (2015) have already discussed the problem of constructed or created political landscapes in North Korea. We also bear in mind the landmark work of Heonik Kwon and Byung-ho Chung "Beyond Charismatic Politics" (Kwon and Chung 2012), on the theatricality of North Korean contemporary politics. We have utilised Kwon and Chung's thesis, along with analysis inspired by Cosgrove and Castree, that North Korean political form directed at strengthening the charismatic role of the leader, necessarily begets a mythological landscape, with a Kim dynasty as a primary actor within that landscape. Kim Chŏng-suk and Kim Il-sŏng's role in the narratives serves as a primary example of the action of the political charisma and theatrics within a landscape. In this charismatic frame, Kim Chŏng-suk's transformation follows traditional notions of human being becoming divine, achieving immortality, the notions we outlined before. The artefacts visually representing this culture are traditional East Asian paintings of mountains. The landscape in the pictures is represented as being in motion, it comes alive and transforms the viewer. Thus the process of producing and viewing the painting becomes technologies of the self directed at the achievement of immortality. The motifs of visually representing ki, traditional East Asian life energy, are key elements in painting sacred mountains, as we have described in Chapter Three. The vision of the universe as a dynamic function of ki, which is

also life itself, is in line with the traditional East Asian understanding of the universe as living and sentient. In contemporary times, similar ideas have been articulated and theorised by the philosopher Jane Bennett, who coined the term "vibrant matter" (Bennett 2012). In line with the idea that every thing is alive and every mountain and lake has a spirit of its own, Bennett suggests a 'thing power' in which material objects and forces maintain and generate their own sense of agency, their own energy, which is also political in a sense, that they act in their own interest. Kim Chŏng-suk co-opts some of the vibrancy of surrounding landscapes materiality, pre-projecting and reconfiguring it for own ends and means, just as an East Asian alchemist incorporates the energy of the sacred mountains into their own mind-heart and body.

The landscapes of contemporary North Korea, the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery, and the various places associated with military and ideological power, can be seen through a Cosgrovian lens as spaces in production, spaces of becoming, transformed and transforming through social practice. In Kim Chŏng-suk's case, this was a practice of resistance and war fighting, of violence, survival, abstinence, and combat. These transformations supported the invented traditions vital to the newly imagined community of North Korea, as much as the power of Kim Chŏng-suk's story. The transformation we have already seen in the young Kim Chŏng-suk through her interactions with the vibrant or lively physical, social, and cultural spaces of Korean colonialism and diasporic exploitation, essentially has been brought about by such praxis. Through these struggles Kim Chŏng-suk has been brought by the narrative to a charismatic, deified state, continuing and further developing Korean and East Asian cults of immortality.

Chapter Seven: Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ, the Woman of Heaven in GiCheon

In Chapter Two we analysed Mt. Paektu as a current and historical locus of mythology on the Korean peninsula. The power of this mountain is incorporated within the political charisma of North Korean leadership, both in its narrative and historiography. In North Korean political memory, such mythological power is bestowed upon the personages of Kim Il-sŏng, Kim Chŏng-suk, Kim Chŏng-il and Kim Chŏng-ŭn, and through them, upon the people of North

Korea themselves. In this sense, the Kim family became almost the priests or the shamans of Paektu, receiving the power of the mountain and transmitting it to the citizens of North Korea, with the founding couple - Kim Il-sŏng and Kim Chŏng-suk – achieving almost a divine status. However, within this Northern charismatic narrative, Kim Chŏng-suk, the female protagonist as encountered in the previous two chapters, remains merely a demi-god, still a real political figure, but not yet an absolutely divine being. In this chapter, we look at a character who has never been real, and exists solely within the mythology of a movement which is not overtly political, yet is constructed and practiced within a contemporary political culture. How might the political or spiritual charisma, as we have described it in this book, function in such a case? Accordingly, we now proceed, in this new chapter, towards an examination of the legend of Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and Bodhidharma, where in contrast to the North Korean legend, the female protagonist, a completely divine, and in a sense distant and intimidating being, takes the leading role.

GiCheon Legend: Bodhidharma and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ (天仙女, Immortal Woman of Heaven)

As recounted in Chapter Four, GiCheon practice is a classical technology of the self, in the sense that Michel Foucault uses this term, and has already generated a rich mythological tradition. This contemporary mythology, which developed mostly after 1980, became an additional method, or technology, for supporting the transformation of the mind-hearts and bodies of practitioners. This section documents one of the most important moments of GiCheon mythology.

As one expression of the vast mind-body culture in East Asia, GiCheon favors verbal articulation even less than other similar practices. As already mentioned, the motto of GiCheon is "Do not cling to words and letters just practice with your own body" [말과 글에 집착하지 말고 몸으로만 수행해라]. Nevertheless, since the 1970s, GiCheon teachers and practitioners have woven a tapestry of legends and lore, parts of which have been codified in written texts (Kim Hui-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun 1998; Kim Hui-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000). Korean mountains and mountainous landscapes figure vividly in GiCheon mythology, and the tale of Bodhidharma and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ (天仙女, Immortal Woman of Heaven) focuses specifically on the landscape of Mt. Paektu. Such landscapes serve as important vibrant

subjects in GiCheon mythology. Although most GiCheon stories feature male protagonists, the notion of the feminine also holds a special place in GiCheon, as we relate below.

We will analyse two alternative versions of this legend. The first one is from the "GiCheon Instructional DVD Volume One" by practitioner and instructor Lee Ki-t'ae (2002), appearing also on a website managed by him.79 Another version is provided by Kim Hui-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun in their book published in 2000.

First, we examine the version of the legend, as it appears in Lee's (2002) GiCheon DVD.80 According to GiCheon mythology, some very famous historical figures have studied GiCheon. Perhaps the most famous is Bodhidharma, the 18th generation heir of Mahakasyapa, founder of Chan Buddhism and the developer of Shaolin kung-fu.

Bodhidharma heard about the great strength and wisdom of the female GiCheon grandmaster known as Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ; he sought her out on Mt. Paektu and asked her to spar with him. It didn't take Bodhidharma much time to realize how formidable Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ was, and he begged her to teach him the art of GiCheon. She offered him one lesson, only if he could show her something special: a bouquet of red flowers in a pure red sky. Accordingly, to satisfy Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ's request, one snowy day in the mountains, Bodhidharma cut off his left arm to prove the sincerity of his desire to learn GiCheon. The blood gushing from the wound coloured the earth and the falling snow red. The grandmaster was appeased by the spectacle, which did indeed resemble a red bouquet, and she taught him the great secret of GiCheon: yŏkkŭn (易筋, Chinese).81

A book authored by Kim Hui-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun gives a marginally different version of a story, which we summarize as follows. Bodhidharma heard that ancient wisdom originates in the East, at Taep'ungsan (大風山, Mountain of Great Wind), also called Paektu Mountain, which is the Gate of Heaven. Having arrived at the mountain, Bodhidharma prayed: "Oh the great Paektu Sanshin (God of Paektu Mountain). I come searching for truth. Let me meet a chinin (眞人, a person of truth)." Twenty-one days passed and a secret valley opened. A beautiful woman was sitting there, with her eyes closed. Bodhidharma tried to approach her,

[79] www.gicheon.org

[80] The legend is reproduced here on the basis of the text on www.gicheon.org web-site, with a few slight changes, such as romanization etc.

[81] As we recounted in Chapter Four, *yŏkkŭn* is a principle of maximal bending the joints in GiCheon, which facilitates the flow of life energy (*ki* 氣) while enhancing physical, moralб and mental well-being. *Yŏkkŭn* is a concept existent in Chinese lore as well, as we recount later in the text of this chapter.

but a mysterious power was pushing him away. Bodhidharma called out to the woman with all of his might, and the woman opened her eyes. Bodhidharma begged her to take him as a student, and the woman replied: "If the red flowers bloom, and the red snow falls, then, following the will of Heaven, I will take you as my student." Bodhidharma waited and waited, in spring the flowers blossomed, but red snow did not fall. And so, when winter came, Bodhidharma cut off his left arm. The blood gushed from the wound and the falling snow turned red, coming to resemble crimson bouquets. The sincere devotion of Bodhidharma touched Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and she taught him the yŏkkŭn principle of GiCheon.82

The Woman of Heaven from the legend discussed here is a contemporary version of a traditional East Asian immortal. Immortals lead human adepts toward eternal life, serving as intermediaries, preceptors and counsellors on this path. Traditions of inner alchemy and nourishing life abound with stories about female celestial teachers leading male adepts toward perfection (Despeux and Kohn 2003, 111; Campany 2002, 192). This legend is yet another incarnation of the classic motif of a mystical union between a divine female figure and a mortal man. As mentioned in Chapter Three, traditional motifs of a shaman or a common person encountering a divinity, in later retellings of the story has gradually transformed into a king or a hero. In our legend, he appears as a cultural hero, the renowned Bodhidharma. Almost every element of the legend from the book by Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun, matches a traditional setting for such a mystical encounter, as described in medieval East Asian literature.

First of all, the mountain is called the Mountain of Great Wind. Strong wind, traditional symbol of ki, usually accompanies the manifestation of a goddess (Schafer 1980, 98). The classic motifs of mountains, winter and snow associated with a goddess (Schafer 1980, 114), as well as the themes of meeting a goddess in a dream or a separate world are found also in our legend (Schafer 1980, 148). The hero meets her in a secret valley separated from the rest of the universe; the goddess is difficult to approach and attain, as the mystical power is pushing Bodhidharma away. Similar to traditional East Asian goddesses, at a closer acquaintance, the goddess reveals her true colours as potentially lethal, pitiless, and cruel nature spirit, draining the hero of his blood (Schafer 1980, 188). Yet, the motifs of a fierce and bloody nature, as well as the motif of sexual union and reproduction, in our legend, are played out differently from the medieval canons.

[82] For a full version of this legend see Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000: 52-55.

The violent transformations in the narratives and the apparent pitiless aggression of the spiritual beings is not unique to GiCheon legends, nor to East Asian tradition. The violence of the Torah-Old Testament God, for example, is remarkable in its sometimes-gleeful annihilation of the Israelites' enemies (von Rad 1991). The violence of the New Testament, and the mythologies of the Gnostic or Essenes sects at the turn of the last millennium BC, and first millennium AD, became part of the worship and memorial traditions of Syriac Christianity, and a wide variety of monastic or ascetic traditions. Some of these traditions included such ascetic practices as wearing hairshirts, abstaining from food, and extremely rigorous prayer timetables. In the Shiite derivation of Islam, the martyrdom and torture of Iman Hussein (the movement's progenitor in 6th century, grandson of Mohammed, the founder of Islam), in 680 AD at Karbala (in contemporary Iraq), by forces of the Ummayad Caliphate, is commemorated on the day known as Ashura, by ritual self-flagellation with knives and swords. Through the cuts and pain, participants not only remember the death of the founder, but are themselves transformed to become like Hussein. Part of the powerful stream of spiritual energy is believed to be transmitted to the followers through adherence to Hussein's teachings and memory. Pain and violence in these traditions are by no means ends in themselves, but an active element in the worshipper or believer's self-transformation. The violence is a tool, or a technology of self, in that process. There is no such direct and determined physical violence in GiCheon practice, but the self-inflicted pain of GiCheon positions is sometimes perceived as dramatic. As we have outlined in Chapter Four, this connects to the ascetic character of GiCheon. The pain of yŏkkŭn plays a key role within this self-transformation, and it is metaphorically depicted in the legend as the pain of Bodhidharma willingly sacrificing his own arm.

The Context of the Legend

In the previous section we encountered an important legend, through which the GiCheon movement imagines and constructs its past and present authority or legitimacy. At first glance, the meeting of Bodhidharma with the Women of Heaven seems timeless, singular and unique. However, this legend is embedded in the context of East Asian culture in general, and GiCheon in particular. The legend of the Woman of Heaven and Bodhidharma is short, but contains a multiplicity of connotations. The initial friction between the two central protagonists, unfolding as the narrative proceeds into a relationship of cooperation or collaboration, has multiple

meanings. It is a contest between masculine and feminine, representing China and Korea respectively. The story contrasts Chinese Buddhism with Korean mountain worship. Buddhism represents classical and socially acknowledged spiritual contents, which counters GiCheon as an obscure and allegedly "secret", hence unknown, but actually a newly invented tradition. Besides, the bond arising between Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and Bodhidharma can be conceptualised not only as a master-disciple relationship, but also as spirit-human alliances, wilderness in opposition to civilization, and Us versus Others controversies. Interestingly, the link between GiCheon and Bodhidharma is operating not just in the mythic time of the legend, but today as well, as some GiCheon adepts take an active part in the popular Korean and East Asian practice of "drawing Bodhidharma portraits". The portraits drawn by GiCheon students, who gained special abilities through GiCheon practice, are believed to possess magical power, and bring good luck to the house when hanging on the wall.83

Ancient and contemporary myth and legend provide models, conveying ideas and instructions, which create, interpret and justify old and new forms of experience (Kim Daeyeol 2000, 57), thus also constituting technologies of the self. Not only North Korean, but also South Korean legend has a significant "educative" impact. In the case of the Northern Kim Chŏng-suk mythology, the experience modelled by the mythos is the nationalistic pro-Kim family sentiment and action, a technology of the self, molding and building a whole-hearted devotion to the Korean motherland and North Korean ideology. Kim Chŏng-suk commits herself totally to her general and chief Kim Il-sŏng, but also to her fellow guerrillas, whom she feeds, teaches and protects. This serves as the "model behaviour" and "exemplar emotions" she provides to the citizens of North Korea, for their imitation and replication. Kim Chŏng-suk becomes a subject of devotion to North Koreans, almost a goddess that they are instructed to worship. In the Southern legend, Bodhidharma demonstrates a similar instance of whole-hearted and absolute intensity. Like Kim Chŏng-suk, he is willing to sacrifice himself – or at least some parts of himself – in order to become a GiCheon disciple. He provides a specimen of an ideal "GiCheon student", who should be totally dedicated to the practice. Bodhidharma and his imagined encounter with the Woman of Heaven, which occurred in mythic past, constitute a contemporary technology of the self, directed at creating an ideal GiCheon disciple today. Additionally, Bodhidharma, the first Chan Buddhist patriarch in China and a founder of Shaolin

[83] Lee Ki-t'ae, 2010, personal communication.

kung-fu, becomes a subject of reverence and admiration as a "second GiCheon Master" after the Woman of Heaven.

The tendency to insert into the texts the names of famous historical and mythological figures is a common feature of many GiCheon legends. One example is including the name of a prominent Buddhist monk T'anhŏ Sŭnim (탄허 스님, 1913-1983) in the legend about the childhood of Pak Tae-yang, the first GiCheon initiator.[84] According to the story, it was the Buddhist monk T'anhŏ, who found an orphaned Pak Tae-yang and brought him to Wŏnhye Sangin (元慧上人), a mountain immortal who raised Pak Tae-yang and taught him the art of GiCheon. The gods of famous Korean mountains also figure in those stories. In one of the legends, the god of Mt. Sŏrak communicates with a Korean shaman Kang Ok-sŏn, who later becomes the adoptive mother of Pak Tae-yang.[85]

The inclusion of acknowledged historical and mythological figures in GiCheon narrative shows a desire and a drive for the "legitimization" or "authentication" of GiCheon. Those historical and mythological figures are recognized and respected. The adepts who construct the legends aspire for similar recognition and respect for the newly invented tradition of GiCheon. The fable of Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and Bodhidharma is a classic and clear example of this, as Bodhidharma is certainly famous and known to everybody in East Asia.

While distinct in time and space, but involving the same protagonist, this new legend borrows important motifs from Bodhidharma-related Buddhist legends in China. Hui-K'o, the disciple of Bodhidharma, cut off his arm to prove his sincerity, thus becoming the second Chinese patriarch of Chan Buddhism after Bodhidharma, the first patriarch (Maguire 2001, 58). According to a different version, Hui-K'o's arm was cut off by robbers (Broughton 1999, 62). The narrative structure of the GiCheon legend here clearly follows the Chinese legend: Hui-K'o is the disciple, Bodhidharma is the master. Hui-K'o amputates his arm in order to prove his sincerity to Bodhidharma, and as a result becomes the next acknowledged master, following Bodhidharma. In the GiCheon legend, Bodhidharma is the disciple and the Woman of Heaven is the master. Bodhidharma sacrifices his arm in order to prove his sincerity to the Woman of Heaven, and as a result becomes the next acknowledged GiCheon master after her. Within the constructed time and space of the legend, he becomes a "GiCheon propagator dispatched to

[84] *Sŭnim* (스님) means a Buddhist monk or nun in Korean, while *nim* (님) is an honorific suffix.
[85] Interview with Kim O-hyŏng, 05.10.2010, Seoul, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten.

China" – Bodhidharma will transmit the secret teaching to the Shaolin disciples, while the Woman of Heaven will continue teaching GiCheon in Korea.

Further to the connection of Bodhidharma legend to Chinese tradition, is the relationship of the legend with yŏkkŭn - the core principle of GiCheon practice. The Woman of Heaven allegedly taught Bodhidharma the yŏkkŭn, the principle of maximal bending the joints in GiCheon, discussed in Chapter Four, the basic GiCheon technology of the self. Chinese chronicles also mention that Bodhidharma wrote a book titled Yŏkkŭn Kyŏng (易筋經, Chinese Yijin Jing) (Shahar 2008, 12–19). Korean GiCheon adepts claim to possess the true understanding of this yŏkkŭn principle. According to their mythology, only an imperfect and distorted reflection of this principle was left with the Chinese Shaolin Monastery disciples, to whom Bodhidharma had allegedly passed his book. To assert the "correctness" of the legend, GiCheon practitioners point out that the Shaolin ceremonial bow involves the gesture of the right arm only. Because Bodhidharma lost his left arm, he used just his right arm, and his disciples followed the example. The Eighteen Principles of bending the joints practiced within Shaolin kung-fu are interpreted by GiCheon trainees as an application of a yŏkkŭn principle, originally taught by Bodhidharma but devolved during long years of subsequent history.86

The legends in question attempt to place GiCheon within the broader context of East Asian historical and mythological heritage. Simultaneously, they contribute toward nationalistic Korean identity, and build up the GiCheon identity, through clarification of the relationship with the Other. The Other – Bodhidharma coming from China - comes to signify "other nations," "other martial arts" and "other teachings", such as Shaolin kung-fu and Chan Buddhism. This is how "GiCheon identity" is built and the We (GiCheon practitioners and Koreans) versus Others relationship is explicated. On the other hand, the legend of Bodhidharma and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ creates a boundary of the "followers of the true Way", among which GiCheon adepts are the forefront as the vanguard. Bodhidharma and Shaolin kung-fu

[86] Notably, the arm-cutting and *Yŏkkŭn Kyŏng* narrations in Chinese Buddhist mythology do not contain leitmotifs relating to femininity or gender. These elements are, in fact, the contribution of GiCheon practitioners themselves. In a vein similar to Daoist inner alchemy (Schipper 1993), GiCheon ideology gives certain "preference" to females. GiCheon representatives declare that the 'highest known' GiCheon master, this legendary immortal Ch'ŏnsonnyŏ, who defeated Bodhidharma in battle, was female. Male GiCheon teachers often add that "men are stronger physically, but women are stronger spiritually. Women are better at GiCheon". However, these assumptions are not shared by male trainees, who represent more than a half of all GiCheon practitioners. (For example, interview with Mr. Ch'e Hyŏng-su, 10.11.2010, Puch'on, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten; interview with Mr. Mun Chŏng-hun, 09.12.2010, Pusan, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten).

are included and acknowledged, but their place is defined as secondary. Bodhidharma is the student of Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ; Korea is represented as teacher, China – as student.

North Korean Kim Chŏng-suk mythology utilizes similar technologies of the self in the development of a Korean nationalistic identity. The conception of Others – "hated Japanese" in this case – is employed for constructing and strengthening the conception of Us – Koreans, who oppose and fight the Japanese. However, explicating the Woman of Heaven and Bodhidharma as representing Us as Koreans, versus Others as Chinese, respectively, is just one part of the story, one particular perspective of viewing the legend. There is no doubt that within the legend Woman of Heaven dwells on Mt. Paektu, while Bodhidharma "comes from afar." Nevertheless, Bodhidharma is human, and he is a student. The Woman of Heaven, on the other hand, is a master and a divine being.

The mythologies, ancient or newly created, often provide models reflecting and directing actual spiritual and physical experience (Kim Daeyeol 2000, 57). GiCheon practice, as we have already described, consists of static and dynamic stances, practiced in the studio, at the workplace, at home and outside. The core of the practice is six static positions, maintenance of which brings physical and mental-emotional pain. Korean female adepts compare the pain experienced while maintaining GiCheon positions with the pain of childbirth. In their opinion, this pain is 30% as strong as the pain of childbirth. Accepting this scale as reflecting actual experience, the metaphor of Bodhidharma cutting away his own arm is no longer metaphorical. The pain of Bodhidharma becomes real. Adepts practicing GiCheon in the mountains have their actual pain abstracted from their own bodies, to be articulated through the allegorical body of Bodhidharma. In this case, the We, the people, the community of GiCheon practitioners, are recognizing ourselves in Bodhidharma, who "comes from afar searching for truth". Different incentives, such as health problems, issues with stress, desire for "enlightenment", drive people toward GiCheon. If Bodhidharma is a metaphoric portrayal of the community of GiCheon practitioners, then his "coming from afar searching for truth" is a symbolic expression of the various motivations bringing people to GiCheon practice.

If the "Us" are depicted in the legend as Bodhidharma, then the Woman of Heaven becomes the ultimate "Other", inspiring and personifying the feelings of fear, alienation and admiration, whom we eventually divinize. Through the language of the legend, we ascribe to the Other the attributes of danger and mystery, and even deny her humanity, both humanity in a sense of kindness, and humanity in a sense of being a human being. The Woman of Heaven is not just

an anti-woman in her lack of traditional feminine qualities such as kindness, warmth and compassion, which every woman under patriarchy is obliged to possess. She is also anti-human, a divine being.

GiCheon Connections to Sanshin (mountains gods) and Sŏnpŏp (techniques of immortality)

In the previous section of this chapter, we considered the context for the legend of the Woman of Heaven and Bodhidharma. In this section, we discuss the connection of the legend to the contemporary practices of the Korean Peninsula, in particular its relation to the ancient Korean traditions of sanshin and mountain practices that were explored in Chapter Three. As explained in Chapter Four, the notions of mountain gods and immortals are central to GiCheon. According to another legend, the first GiCheon initiator, Pak Tae-yang, was raised in the mountains by an immortal Wŏnhye Sangin (元慧上人), who taught him the art of GiCheon. Most GiCheon flyers, books and web-sites abound with images of mountainous places, frequently bringing up the term sanjung suryŏn (山中修練, training in the mountains). Retreats to GiCheon mountain centres are vital for the practice. This appropriation of mountainous spaces as "GiCheon spaces" draws upon Korean spiritual tradition of sinsŏn (神仙, divine mountain immortals).

The adepts of the older generation, whom Victoria Ten has interviewed, connect the yearning that makes them perform GiCheon practice today, with their memories of childhood fairy tales about sinsŏn stepping on clouds and flying. They allude to mountain related beliefs and practices as sŏndo (仙道, the way of immortality), sŏnpŏp (仙法, the techniques of immortality) and sanjung suryŏn. Many adherents say that they prefer performing GiCheon exercises at the mountain top.[87] In such a way they try to partake in mountain-related spirituality and purification, and maybe "re-enact" the mountainous explorations of Wŏnhye Sangin, Tae-yang Chinin, Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and Bodhidharma. This is their own sŏnpŏp. The mountains here are the symbol of sinsŏn, of immortality, of childhood fairy tales, and the whole "way of life in old Korea", when people pappŭge an saratta (바쁘게 안 살았다, did not lead busy lives [like today]).

[87] Interview with Mr. Ch'e Hyŏng-su, 10.11.2010, Puch'ŏn, South Korea, recorded by Victoria Ten. Mr. Ch'e Hyŏng-su gave Victoria Ten an explicit permission to mention his real name.

Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and other mountains-related figures from contemporary GiCheon mythology are such sinsŏn. The GiCheon mind-body techniques they teach, are identified by the adepts as a repertoire of "techniques of immortality", which are also the technologies of the self. Not daring to hope for final immortality, the practitioners aspire to advance at least a few steps upon this road, a journey of improvement of their physical-moral-mental state and life. This is how the idea of GiCheon practice is linked to a notion of self-transformation. Bodhidharma venturing into the mountains is an embodiment of such a transformation, which is hard, painful and requires extensive sacrifice.

As described in Chapter Three, Korean Buddhist Temples are also a home for sanshin, Korean traditional mountains gods. Though in a way a part of Buddhist pantheon nowadays, their relationship with Buddha himself is complicated. Golden statues of Buddha occupy a central pavilion of the Korean Buddhist temple complex. These golden statues represent the core of Buddhism. Sanshin, on the other hand, are prayed to and receive their due offerings in the sansingak (山神閣), a lesser pavilion situated higher on the hill.88 Yet, sansingak is also a part of the Buddhist temple complex. This way, sansingak is a space of contest and co-existence between Buddhism that came from China, and Korean indigenous mountains cults.

This conflicting collaboration is re-produced and re-established in the Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ legend. Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ represents Korean sanshin and sinsŏn. Bodhidharma stands for Chinese Buddhism. The first version of the legend pictures two stages in their relationship. Initially they are opponents, they battle, but eventually they become a master and a disciple. In the beginning they are in conflict, later they collaborate. Both are now GiCheon adepts and teachers.

On the basis of the long-years of his anthropological research, scholar David Mason suggested conceiving of the image of sanshin as a culmination of a whole chain of transformations starting with the ordinary person. This transformation from mortal into immortal involves a few intermediate steps. First, an ordinary person studies the true way and becomes a teacher. Then, they become an adept in the techniques of immortality. The following stages are becoming an immortal (sinsŏn), with a final aim of transforming into a sanshin, a mountain god (Mason 1999, 25). Understood as such, the symbols of sanshin and sinsŏn, visualising the progressive self-cultivation, or transmutation from mortal into immortal, reconstitute mountainous

[88] Korean Buddhist temples complexes usually consist of several pavilions situated on a mountain hill. Some pavilions are placed higher on the hill than others. Kim O-hyŏng, Tanhak and GiCheon teacher of over 60 years old, says that *sansingak* is always placed higher on the hill than the main pavilion with a golden Buddha, while the bathroom is always lower. He states that in this way Koreans express their respect for their "originally Korean" gods, whom they place "higher" than Buddha. (Conversation of 05.10.2010, Seoul, South Korea).

landscape as a space for the technology of the self. In the legend about the Woman of Heaven, Mt. Paektu is such a space, and it is there that Bodhidharma undergoes physical and spiritual transformation. He cuts off his arm, learns the art of GiCheon, and changes from an ordinary mortal into one initiated into the techniques of immortality. Mt. Paektu also constitutes such a space for our second heroine, Kim Chŏng-suk. She arrives there as a rather mortal human character still, but through the practices of extensive self-sacrifice for the sake of others, abstinence from food and sleep, martial arts, teaching and leadership, she emerges from there as a full-blown Goddess of Revolution.

Returning back to the Bodhidharma legend, the complex immortal-mortal and female-male interactions in this story have multiple meanings, and can be interpreted from various perspectives. This legend, composed by GiCheon adepts in 1980s, contains a strong aspect of a powerful, subjective, individual male agency, which acts upon the landscape, the deities, the spirits, and the will of Heaven itself. In this reading, the landscape of Mt. Paektu, other Korean mountains, the Paektu sanshin, and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ herself, are passive spectators rather than active protagonists. It is Bodhidharma, a stranger coming from afar, who awakens them to activation and actualisation. Bodhidharma comes to Korea from China, because he "heard that ancient wisdom originates in the East." Bodhidharma cannot find anyone on Mt. Paektu, so he prays to the Paektu Mountain God, who reacts by letting Bodhidharma meet Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ. The magic valley opens, but Bodhidharma has to persist with continuous effort to approach the Woman of Heaven, call out to her and to make her open her eyes. Then, when the "will of Heaven" does not bring any red flowers, Bodhidharma has to take matters into his own hands and amputates his arm. He succeeds in the "shaking" of Paektu Sanshin and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ out of their "sleep", and in altering the landscape of Mt. Paektu by "making red flowers blossom and red snow fall."89

From this perspective, the legend is rather "conventionally patriarchal" in its gender dynamics. Here, the male protagonist, looking for a female, calling the female, "awakening the female from her sleep", begging for something, finally getting his reward. Reacting to his advances, Mt. Paektu opens up to admit the persistent Bodhidharma, unfastens, as a woman's body in the act of sexual love. This motif is doubled when Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ opens her eyes responding to his call. The notions of a flower opening in spring evokes the themes of love, male-female union and sexual reproduction, encoded within the phrase "make red flowers blossom". However,

[89] We spell Paektu Sanshin with "sanshin" capitalized because here it is part of the proper name.

contrary to the prevailing gender dynamics, where the male sexually subdues the initial resistance of a female, the Woman of Heaven overpowers Bodhidharma in battle. His, and not her (virginal or vaginal) blood is spilled in the act of reproduction. Here we do not see sexual reproduction, but spiritual transmission of a secret sacred knowledge. Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ challenges the patriarchal conceptions of male strength and female weakness, she is the teacher, the stronger of the two. Unlike Kim Chŏng-suk, Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ is not at all "kind," but rather indifferent and ruthless, like the mountain landscape that she represents and embodies. The living flesh and blood Bodhidharma has to sacrifice willingly, reminds us of traditional sacrifices to spirits, in exchange for benefits, protection, and magical abilities.

The process of transformation in Bodhidharma includes the alteration of the landscape, when the blood gushing from his body transforms the scenery, colouring the snow red. Mountainous spaces acquire decisive historical and spiritual weight in this story, coming alive and being embodied in the forms of the deity of Mt. Paektu and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ herself. They are vibrant, energetic, lively terrains (Bennett 2012, Whatmore 2005). Mt. Paektu features in this legend not only as an altered space, but as a living being – listening, talking, moving and reacting. The legend does not explicitly reveal the identity of the Paektu Mountain God, and we are left in some doubt as to the possibility that the Woman of Heaven is herself the Goddess of Paektu.

The landscape, gods, spirits and immortals of Mt. Paektu witness the encounter between Bodhidharma and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ, and participate in it. All of them mutually stimulate, challenge and transform each other, being themselves transformed in the process, constituting not just technologies of the self, but also technologies of the mountain self. When the spiritual lineage of master-disciple is established between Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ and Bodhidharma, the symbolic linkage is confirmed through the dramatic act of spilling blood. Now one-armed Bodhidharma goes off to China to pass on the yŏkkŭn principle to Shaolin monks, and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ keeps "secretly disseminating GiCheon amidst the mountains of Korea."

The antagonism between the female Woman of Heaven and the male Bodhidharma echoes classical East Asian counteractions between the mainstream state religion and unofficial regional forms of worship and spirituality, which subsequently became associated with the term "Daoism". Starting with the rule of Emperor Wu (140-86 BC) of the Han dynasty, the Chinese imperial administration claimed the "Confucian" tradition for its own, and "Daoism" was relegated to the opposition. East Asian Confucian and Daoist institutions have tended to be male-dominated, but Daoism has traditionally allowed more prominence to women. As we

outlined in Chapter Three, within East Asian alchemical tradition, a female body following monthly and pregnancy cycles, is an allegory for the self-transforming body of an alchemist (Schipper 1993, 8-9, 125-129). Alchemical practices of achieving immortality are linked, in East Asia, with belief in mountain immortals. The Woman of Heaven from the legend embodies such alchemical traditions of mountain immortality.

An extensive discourse on the complex relationship between East Asian Buddhism, Daoism, and Korean indigenous religions, lies beyond the scope of this book. Yet, the South Korean legend clearly exemplifies an initial friction, and ensuing compromise, between the space of masculinity, "civilization", Buddhism and China, represented by Bodhidharma, and the space of femininity, "anti-civilizational" wilderness, alchemical practices of immortality and Korea, represented by the Woman of Heaven. Examining East Asian mind-body practices within a historical perspective, we notice a clear link connecting them to ancient traditions of sectarian, millenarian, secret societies which, time and time again, rebelled against the prevalent political order (Chesneaux 1972), and the survival of which sometimes depended on hiding in mountainous and wilderness areas. The mind-body practices, often including martial arts, embraced by these secret movements, aimed at producing a strong assertive self, potentially capable of challenging the established power of the government. This illustrates a contrast between "wilderness and freedom" as opposed to "civilization and hierarchy" (Verellen 1995, 268). Similar themes occur frequently in GiCheon legends, mentioning for instance "people in black", secret guardians descending from mountainous places, downward into the valleys, to stand up for the Korean nation in times of need (Kim Hŭi-sand and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000, 61). The motif of mountain-based resistance, against hegemonic social order, is taken up and developed in the mythology focused on Kim Chŏng-suk. Ironically, this mythology currently forms one of the cornerstones of the current totalitarian regime of North Korea. However, the authors wish to emphasize the origination of this narrative in an anti-colonial struggle against Imperial Japan, a struggle in which a young girl Kim Chŏng-suk took an active part, prior to her divinization within the Northern ideological narrative.

The Woman of Heaven and Kim Chŏng-suk against the Topography of Mt. Paektu

This chapter essentially concludes our review of the legendary stories of New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu. In very different cultural circumstances, both of these remarkable feminine images

have transformed the landscapes with which they have interacted, and have in turn been transformed themselves in the process. The main argument of this book is that these two legendary women are contemporary avatars of ancient East Asian immortals. They exemplify the pursuit of immortality, a technology of the self in the language of Michel Foucault, demonstrating different stages on this path. Kim Chŏng-suk is a human being, yet transitioning from mortality toward immortality, while the Woman of Heaven is already an immortal divine being. Both women also aspire to encourage the self-perfection of others. For this purpose, they apply various technologies of transformation, and their stories themselves serve as such technologies. This process, of pursuing the immortality for the self, and for the other, is directly connected to the transformation of topography.

As reviewed in Chapter Three, the special genre of painting sacred mountains is a part of an immortality culture in East Asia. Sacred mountains in East Asian paintings of immortals are alive and breathing. Despite the fact that the picture itself is static – a painting, not a video - the topography is presented as dynamic. The curves of the mountain connote the feeling of transformation, people ascending the mountain are in motion, the picture often shows the wind blowing, an attribute of divine presence. In the pictures a mountain symbolizes a human body as a microcosm i.e. a mini-model of the universe. The fluid, flowing, active topography of a mountain shows the changes in a human body, taking place as part of the usual functioning of a living organism. Simultaneously, this transforming topography represents the life of the universe, its never-ending change. However, the dynamic representation also has an additional meaning of the ascendance of a mortal body toward an immortal body. Here we see a technology of the self, a gradual change, altering the very nature and essence of a living being. Transposing this idea onto the universe as living and sentient, it connotes the motif that the universe itself aspires to self-perfect and to become a better place. East Asian sectarian, millenarian, secret societies thus often linked self-perfection with the aspiration toward a new and better world, a tendency vividly present in the North Korean lore of Kim Chŏng-suk, and also subtly distinct in South Korean GiCheon (Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000, 37-39, 83, 242).

The idea of a topographic transformation is clearly seen in the legend of the Woman of Heaven. The alteration of Bodhidharma's body occurs simultaneously with topographic transformation of Mt. Paektu, covered with red snow. A mountain is a symbol of the universe, so this is also a transformation of the universe itself. Here the transformation takes place instantly, in one given moment. In the case of North Korea, the transformation of landscape is a continuous

process. North Korean politics is constantly repackaging Kim Chŏng-suk's mythology, to suit new purposes and different situations. The landscape where she figures as the first wife of the national leader Kim Il-sŏng, and the mother of his successor Kim Chŏng-il, is also constantly recreated by North Korea's contemporary politics and practices. Through these processes, such spaces as the cooking facilities in the temporary camps, and the birch trees under which she is imagined to have met Kim Il-sŏng, become sacred architectures. Many of these particular pieces of topography form part of the actual landscape of the Mt. Paektu region. However, we have seen that other mountains in North Korea also have important roles to play within this political landscape and memory, they are equally re-imagined and reconstructed as places of the revolution.

In GiCheon practice and mythology, the mountains of the Korean peninsula are sacred for different reasons. It is obvious that a wilderness landscape is vital to the legend about the Woman of Heaven, which recalls and revitalizes East Asian motifs of fierce and lethal nature spirits. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the goddess meets the hero in a magical world, often on a mountain, and mountain imagery is used to describe her. However, mountainous terrains are also vital for other elements of GiCheon mythology. Mountains have been repositories of secret and inaccessible knowledge that gave rise to the GiCheon movement, as the GiCheon initiator is believed to have descended from the mountains, where GiCheon was supposedly kept for thousands of years (Kim Hŭi-sang and Kich'ŏnmun Ponmun eds. 2000, 13). GiCheon mythology reinforces East Asian traditions viewing mountains as places of rebellion against the existing social order, where the self can be cultivated, and made strong enough to resist. The fight for what is righteous and sacred, emerges in the mountains, offering alternatives to the present status quo. Those who engage in GiCheon use this discipline to buttress themselves against the difficulties presented by modern society and economic structures (Ten 2017a). These adherents are forced to respond to the challenges of the contemporary society by using GiCheon as a technology of the self and becoming stronger, more powerful human beings. While not all of them envisage themselves in tandem with the sanshin, sinsŏn or sŏnpŏp cultures, they present an interesting point on the spectrum of contemporary ascetics and aesthetics on the peninsula.90 At this point, our New Goddesses on Mt. Paektu are at an intersection of cultural development, which builds on these more ancient forms of mountain practices in the present, and takes them further.

[90] See note 70.

Contemporary Korea appears, at the first sight, as radically different from the traditional mountain practices of its past. However, a deeper analysis of Korean society shows that very little of these traditions has been fully abandoned. As mentioned in Chapter Three, in South Korea many mountain traditions have continued, in an almost unchanged state, since ancient times. Other mountain traditions are reshaped by the prerogatives of contemporary economics and social development. Korean history is marked by these traditions, and also by the practical and logistical impact of the peninsula's topography. The mountains of Korea were both a protector against external forces, and a drag on bureaucratic or economic exchange. The dramatic landscapes of the peninsula made travelling along or across difficult, made the exchange of goods and resources throughout the nation impractical, creating a real impact on the geo-spatial awareness of its citizens. Modernity does more than just flatten politics and economics; it flattens time and geo-spatiality. Technology and economic development began to make an impact on the Yi dynasty, which continued later during the Japanese colonial period. A key element of that impact was the transformation of spatial connections across the nation, through the building of railways and roads. Korean towns, villages and provinces were brought much closer together. Once impassable and treacherous mountains and wildernesses were made accessible and bridged by the infrastructures of modernity. This transformation of spatial awareness and connectivity brought about a new sensibility upon the mountains of Korea, directly tied to new forms of social and economic organisation. Yet, there is a friction at the very heart of this development. Korean mountain traditions have lived long in the body of the peninsula, and are not about to yield easily to even the strongest foe.

The following chapter explores the routes of these new forms, tracing them from their formative moments in the forge of colonialism and imperialism, to their appropriation in the context of East Asian imperial politics. These forms produced new categories of mountain practice, which are now familiar throughout the globe, but which were once innovative, new and shocking. These new forms held radically different aesthetic sensibilities, which have produced new landscapes in mountains. Korea has not been immune to the allure of this new ecosystem of ascetics, and Chapter Eight considers the absorption of these values and practices within the mountain spaces of contemporary Korea.

Chapter Eight: Korean Mountains and Modern Asceticism

This book traced the process of formation of contemporary mythology on the example of myth in South and North Korea. We investigated the dynamics of the creation of the myth; we traced how the newly invented tradition is constructed on the basis of the old, and came to see that the old culture does not die but is reborn in a different form. In this penultimate chapter we wish to extend the readers' gaze beyond the stories of our two characters and the topographies in which their altercations took place. Both Kim Chŏng-suk and Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ, the Woman of Heaven, represent contemporary practices in North and South Korea. The current chapter will connect our two heroines to humanity in a wider sense. Characters we have examined in this book are drivers of social practice in mountain spaces. For example, the commemoration of Kim Chŏng-suk in North Korea changed the face of the Northern side of Paektu, when her memorials were established on the mountain. The mythology of Kim Chŏng-suk is a key element of the processes of political and ideological commemoration in North Korea. Her life is constantly being re-used, especially the events which took place in the nation's northern mountains. Accordingly, contemporary North Korean political practice involves pilgrimages and visitations to these mountains. The Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ legend is an important part of GiCheon practice and mythology, manifesting vividly the focus on mountains, an element which it shares with other South Korean mind-body disciplines. These disciplines support the retreats of their practitioners to the mountains, extracting value from this topography and re-using it in their mythologies. Here a body of spiritual and political topography is rooted within the mountains themselves, sometimes oriented against capitalism and modernity, counteracting and healing the stress of contemporary life with power vested in the mountain. Mountains in this case are formulated as a place to draw strength from and return to, as explained in Chapter Four.

These topographic practices include the culture of hiking and mountain climbing so common around South Korean urban centres. New technologies of travel such as the network of KTX high speed railway lines help to develop such endeavours. To better understand such topography in the modern age it will be necessary to move for a few pages away from the Korean Peninsula, to Europe, historical engine for technological, economic and cultural

transformation, which produced the colonial and post-colonial world of consumption and capitalism that so marks the globe in the twenty-first century.

Within this book we have encountered East Asian mountain traditions which may seem esoteric as much as they are mythological. Similar processes happen also in other places around the world; their perception also modifies, demonstrating that the ascetic and aesthetic of mountains are processes very much in motion. The historical roots of mountain worship in European traditions might be distant and, in most cases, lost, but they are as remarkable as those of Asia. For example, in Iceland and other Scandinavian nations, Huldufólk ('hidden people'), Trolls and Jőtnar (giants) are embedded deeply in their mountains, rocks and wilderness landscapes (Arnarson 1972). The United Kingdom, vital locus of Enlightenment, rationalism, and progenitor of much of the philosophy of capitalism, which has driven recent changes in mountain culture across the globe, has historical mythologies of a similarly esoteric nature. British mountain places are particularly marked by mythologies which have come to underpin the nation's contemporary nationalism, such as those of Arthurian legend (Kennedy 2005). However, the island's mountains have also been influenced by Nordic and Celtic mythologies, which have left residual memories of cosmic forces and mythic creatures, such as dragons, trolls and witches. A number of mountains and hills across the country are recounted within these mythologies to be the resting sites or properties of dragons, such as Cnoc na-Cnoimh in Sutherland, northern Scotland, which was protected by a very jealous and violent dragon (Simpson 1978). Others, such as Caer Caradoc in the county of Shropshire, are themselves reputed to be sleeping, dormant or transformed dragons (Simpson 1978). Still other mountains are remembered in mythology as having been generated by the actions of giants. Cadair Idris, for example, one of the highest mountains of Wales, is recorded as the throne of one of semi-mythic giant kings, Idris Gawr (Idris the Giant), who in the 6th century AD used the mountain as a seat to gaze over his whole mountainous kingdom of Merionnydd (Williams 1860).

This rich mythic topography has been no protection against contemporary radical reconfiguration of mountain traditions. The majority of this mythology and its landscapes have been lost to the cultural and national memories of those nations. Accordingly, in Europe and the West, veneration of mountainous spaces entered contemporary consciousness through the tendencies of artists and poets to resist or counter modernity, but not to connect with these more ancient mythologies and mythographies.

The ascent of peaks would be conjoined in 19th century Britain as both romantic encounter with nature, and masculine conquering of challenging terrain by the middle-class, or upper-class men.91 The accumulation of wealth and extracting the labour value from the newly urban workers allowed the man of leisure a more sedentary life. This life could be made more authentic through the adoption of energetic, challenging exercise such as mountain climbing and hill walking (Bailey 1978).92

This landscape of commerce, commodification, and conquering is nowadays familiar to climbers and mountaineers of East Asia as well. The infrastructures that greet those who wish to ascend Mt. Fuji or other Japanese mountains, or Mt. Sŏrak and Mt. Suri in Korea, would be familiar to hillwalkers across the globe (Dax 2015). The aesthetic and ascetic of mountain practices in our age are both key products and drivers of globalisation in these mountains. Mountains as places of leisure are interwoven with political and economic modernity. Walking in mountains becomes defined and limited by the speed of modernity and globality. Tourists and visitors to the mountains have thus to return back to the city, according to the rigours and strictures of the public transport schedule. There must be food and services on the mountains to meet the needs of these modern pilgrims, along with opportunities for the consumption of products through which they encounter the mountain spaces, such as walking sticks, expensive clothing, GPS and satellite orientation equipment. These facilities and infrastructures, in a way, act as amplifiers for globalisation and capitalism on the mountains, drawing both topography and pilgrims into their logic. The chapters of this book have so far encountered mountain practices on the Korean peninsula. We now move to Japan, a vital site of mountain tradition, at one point a coloniser of the Korean peninsula. Japan is Korea's neighbour, and a very useful example of mountain practice, both in history and in the present.

Japan is a highly developed nation, one of the most technologically advanced in the world. The landscape of the larger islands, such as Honshu and Hokkaido, is an extraordinary product of

[91] Mountain spaces such as the Lake District in England were popularised and transformed in the public imagination of Imperial Britain by romantic artists and writers. Thomas Gray's 1769 account of his grand tour of the Lake District was just the first writing to reconfigure the once peripheral and underdeveloped landscape of mountains, moors and lakes. Before long, the romantic poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey, along with the paintings of the Cooper brothers, and the philosophy and craft of John Ruskin, would entice countless gentlemen of leisure. Later, with the coming of the railways, the working classes also came to imagine the area as an athletic and cultural utopia. This process of intersection between culture, imperial logics, leisure and upland spaces, would be reproduced across the British Empire and beyond. It would find its ultimate conclusion in the conquest of Mt. Everest and heroic failures in Antarctica by gentlemen amateurs. Hill walking, fell running and rambling would all become key activities in these landscapes, in part supported by mapping technology in Britain, derived from military efforts during the Napoleonic Wars of the turn of the 19th century.

[92] In a similar way, the economic rise of the 1980s contributed to the development of hiking culture in South Korea.

modernity, criss-crossed by high speed Shinkansen railway lines and towns, built according to an architecture of extremely high density. Japanese society is equally famed for its rigorous submission to the cultural-economic milieu generated by this terrain. Contemporary practices of hillwalking in Japan are also famous for their binding into the logics of consumerism, the landscapes accessible by complex public transport arrangements, and well served by impressive collections of food and catering facilities.

The Ainu or Ezo (蝦夷), who had once inhabited Aomori Province, at the far north of the Japanese main island Honshu, were exterminated from the area by the middle of the 18th century, but have left extensive cultural traces amongst its mountains. The area's mountains are renowned for their history of geological shift and volcanism, which have produced a rugged landscape, deeply affective to cultural traditions. The Nebuta festivals in Aomori and Hirosaki cities serve as a ritualization of a ninth century military victory by General Tamuramaro over Ainu. Enormous floats replete with lanterns in the shape of demonic characters, once important in Ainu culture, are key elements in the festival. The story of General Tamuramaro's victory over Ainu has connection to Mt. Iwaki (岩木山), which was a very active volcano during the last millennium, and has its explosive history memorialised in local traditions.

One side of Mt. Iwaki, known as Akakura, is described as the location of interaction between immortals, an ancient marriage between an indigenous female divinity and a foreign male conqueror (Schattschneider 2003, 33). The Dragon Princess resident at Mt. Iwaki gave the deity Utsushikunitama a precious stone as a confirmation of their union. However, traditional Edo texts replaced Utsushikunitama with a living official, General Tamuramaro, asserting that their marriage symbolises the new power of Yamato Japanese culture over Ainu. This marriage is now commemorated in the Akakura Mountain shrine by praxis, artistic production and architecture (Schattschneider 2003, 34).

Akakura and its shrine architectures are at first glance a product of spiritual and cultural history, yet they are tinged with political change. Similarly, the landscape of Mt. Paektu, examined in this book, is deeply ingrained with the political energy of North Korea. In South Korea, the topography of Mt. Paektu is constructed by practitioners of GiCheon as a meeting place of the Woman of Heaven and Bodhidharma, representing imagined cultural superiority of Korea over China. Similar to the Japanese legend describing the meeting of a goddess with a foreign male character at Akakura mountain, a GiCheon legend talks about a divine female meeting Bodhidharma "coming from afar." The Japanese legend describes the marriage between the

characters and a resulting military victory of the foreign male. Different from a Japanese narrative, a Korean goddess overpowers the foreign male. Here the spiritual victory is prior in time to the spiritual union, which consists not of actual marriage, but of establishment a spiritual lineage of master-disciple, as described in Chapter Seven.

We have seen that the architectures of North Korea's political memory at Mt. Paektu dramatically influence the ascetic practices of those who seek interaction with its topography. Likewise, the memories are projected upon Akakura's slopes and the immortals enshrined there. An elaborate ecosystem of ritual has been bestowed on Akakura, following a revival of practice upon the mountain in the 1920s. A number of mediums and sages recount spiritual visitations from Akakura deities, and the congregation of Akakura's shrine maintain complicated traditions (Schattschneider 2003, 50).

Akakura mountain is believed to be particularly important for women's health and well-being. For generations, women have conceived of Akakura's topography as therapeutic and revelatory. Women visit the shrines at the base of Akakura to pray for fertility and childbirth, and further up the mountain they activate their inner "heat" in order to triumph over mortal ills (Schattschneider 2003, 65). Similarly, the generation of inner heat is a known concept in bodily practices of self-cultivation, including GiCheon. Application of yŏkkŭn principle in GiCheon is perceived by the adepts as feelings of pain and heat, often accompanied by shaking and sweat. This may remind us of tapas, the magical Indian tradition, which was later absorbed by yoga practices. Tapas means "heat", "ardor", "zeal", and indicates ascetical austerities in general. One of the tantra-yoga practices consists of generating inner warmth ("mystical heat") in the body. (Eliade 1969, 106-108).

Moving to the intersection of ascetic practice and mountain traditions in South Korea, a scholar Jongheon Jin gives a useful analysis of the transformations of mountain landscape, ascetic practice, and ancient traditions within the developing social terrain. One of such ascetics was Huh Man-soo, who was even nicknamed 'Mt. Chiri Immortal'. While living in Japan, he had been heavily influenced by the modern mountain leisure practices there, and become a keen mountain climber. Having returned to Korea, he abandoned his family and lived as a hermit in a mud hut on the slopes of Mt. Chiri. As a mountain immortal, he was one of those who took part in building modern Korean mountain asceticism. Mt. Chiri, in Huh's hands, would be a terrain for leisure, as he made the first hiking maps of the area, erected signage and "rescued many people who were wounded, exhausted, or lost in the mountains…" (Jongheon 2005).

This person was active in the co-production of new mountain places, connected to civic mores and a developing democratic and consumptive asceticism. Huh was very much a part of a modern South Korea (Jongheon 2005).

Huh Man-soo deeply loved Mt. Chiri in his later life; this mountain influenced his sense of self and agency, even to the moment of his disappearance somewhere on the mountain in June 1976. This motif of the disappearance into the mountains of a person who dedicated to them his life clearly echoes the tendency of Korean traditional sanshin we have mentioned in Chapter Three. Merging with a mountain was one of the ways to become a mountain god or immortal. Against the background of modern Korea of democracy, civic organisation, functional bureaucracy, and consumption, the new ascetic generated by Huh fulfilled a need for present-day immortals. Due to institutional changes that would generate South Korea's first national parks in 1987, Mt. Chiri's shelters once inhabited by Huh Man-soo would fall under the control of the Korean National Parks Authority. There is a layering of older traditions of mountain immortals and contemporary practices of social engagement over Korean mountains, which co-exist with each other in creative collaboration. The new mountain topographies produced by political and economic modernity, such as Mt. Chiri, are entwined in new nationalism, their power and ancient authority projected onto new landscapes. Together with this new political formation involving mountainous spaces, the social mores of Korean society moved on, driven by the developing imperatives of capital and consumption.

South Korea in the 1980s saw a large growth in hiking, coinciding with the rise of leisure culture, sŏngin undong (成人運動, sports for adults) and ki suryŏn. The popularity of these practices was made possible by the thriving economy of the time, which contributed to the development of middle class with sufficient means to fund self-perfection in the industrial setting (Dax 2015, 83; Moon-Kyum Kim 2005, 80). In this way mountain culture and hiking were re-invented in a new context, serving to counterbalance "urbanization" (Dax 2015).

Commodification and swift development of transport infrastructure have produced enormous pressures on Korean environmental and social landscapes. However, there is a character, who almost in response to these pressures, connects contemporary mountain ascetics and aesthetics with the traditional mountain culture of Korea. The KTX high speed railway network is one of South Korea's most celebrated infrastructural achievements. The construction of the KTX in the early 2000s threatened to flatten time across the peninsula, and to flatten and eradicate many of the mountainous spaces along its route. Mt. Ch'ŏnsŏng in Kyŏngsang-namdo was

blessed, it seems, with extraordinary luck that it should be the home of Jiyul (知律, Chi-yul) Sŭnim.93 Jiyul is a Buddhist nun based at the Naewon-sa monastery on Mt. Ch'ŏnsŏng. When the mountain fell in the way of the KTX construction project, she undertook a series of protests that would serve as a challenge to South Korean developmental institutions. She later was treated by her supporters and opponents as something of a modern Korean priestess to a mountain god, or even sanshin herself.

"For some strange reason, I began to shed tears, tears that did not cease. I felt that the mountain was crying; I heard its pleas, begging for its life. These plead moved me to promise the mountain that I would help." (Jiyul quoted in Cho Eun-su 2013).

Jiyul raised awareness of the desecration of the mountain through sit-ins, prostrations, hunger strikes, and finally a court case on behalf of a particular species of salamander whose habitat would be destroyed by the construction. Ultimately unsuccessful, as the tunnel was built and the KTX trains now run at speed underneath the mountain, Jiyul nevertheless exploded the imperatives of contemporary ecological development and environmental consciousness. It appears that it was Jiyul's Korean Buddhist traditions which spurred her awareness of the unity and mutuality of all beings. Cho Eun-so suggests that Jiyul drew from the Buddhist concept of the interconnectedness of beings, described as dependent origination, an understanding that nothing exists independently of other things.94 In Jiyul's mind, she and other living beings, are at one not only with the inhabitants of the ecosystem, which she sought to protect, but with the landscape itself (Cho Eun-so 2013). Incorporation of the life of a mountain into a political protest made Jiyul a powerful figure in public life. The image of Jiyul as a modern mountain immortal was created by a public and press, confused, hostile or inspired by her actions. This image suggests new forms of mountain culture, new Korean mountain goddesses may yet be generated in future, a process which will happen in its own time, on its own terms.

Since ancient times, Koreans believed that mountains are alive and should be communicated with, respected, and worshiped. In contemporary times, this East Asian understanding of the universe as living and sentient have been termed by Jane Bennett as 'vibrant matter' (Bennett 2014). A great many spiritual traditions across the globe hold to concepts that the earth and things and beings on it are all alive. They live, breath, are active and energetic. On the Korean Peninsula, the traditions of sanshin and sinsŏn embody spiritual notions vital to the people who

[93] See note 84.
[94] Pratītyasamutpāda in Sanskrit, paṭiccasamuppāda in Pali.

live here. However, on the contemporary Korean Peninsula, the agencies of the state think nothing of driving a tunnel miles through a sacred mountain, smashing its rock, and degrading its ecosystem for progress sake. This is the violence and transformation enacted by the logics of Capital and modernity upon the landscapes of the nation, in spite of whatever traditions may lay beneath or alongside the non-human or more than human. Jiyul's campaigns, through their peacefulness and connection with past traditions, lay this violence abundantly clear. This transformative power of her mountain practice is essentially the point of connection between her and the other actors of this book.

In the following and concluding chapter we will harness the power of these connections to revisit the key themes of the book. We will connect transformations, mythologies, moments of violence and the gendering of the landscapes of nature and narrative, to reiterate some of the most important elements. Just as Jiyul's protest campaigns against the obliteration of her landscape suggest new processes at work within these ancient thematic structures and webs, in the final section of this book we aim to trace some of the potential of such processes within the landscapes of the myths we study. Both North and South Korea, GiCheon and Pyongyang's Songun politics and its commemorative practices are social-cultural terrains on the move, constantly reconfiguring themselves, as much as they seek to maintain authority and connection with the past.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

The history of governance and authority in Korean politics and culture is often thought of as focused on men. Those people who are familiar with Korea, know that it is not entirely true, and that in Korean history and contemporary Korean culture there are great figures of authority which are female. In contemporary Korea, for instance, the phenomenon of ajuma would not occur if the society was entirely patriarchal.95

The present book examined two powerful female figures in contemporary mythologies of political and spiritual movements on both sides of the Korean peninsula. These female characters are used to generate authority and legitimacy for the movements in which they develop. Their authority is associated with Korean landscape, particularly the mountainous landscape for which Korea is famous. The topography of mountains plays an important role in the creation of the powerful feminine images.

Our book is of interest for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of how female figures of power function in Korean society. Korea has been for some time in the process of change; and Korean people are being transformed by new economic, social and cultural pressures. The feminine images in the legends are also transformed by the landscape and mythology, and serve as potential inspiration to Koreans on either side of the peninsula, who seek their own transformation. In case of the Woman of Heaven, the Chinese legend about Hui-K'o, the disciple of Bodhidharma, cutting off his arm in order to prove his sincerity to Bodhidharma, has been transplanted into Korean soil, and transformed to match the magical landscape of Mt. Paektu. In case of Kim Chŏng-suk, the battles in which she participated in the relative vicinity of Mt. Paektu, in the mythical narrative were moved to Mt. Paektu itself. In such a way Mt. Paektu transforms old narratives and actually creates new ones.

For the first time in academic research we compare two important legendary figures from North and South Korea. Ki suryŏn of South Korea in general, and GiCheon in particular, have never been subjected to an academic analysis.96 Equally, the mythology behind GiCheon has not

[95] Ajuma culture occupies a significant amount of social space in South Korea. Ajuma culture gives women above certain age a privilege, for example, preferential access to seats in public transport, access to local government funding to maintain their community centers.

[96] Except the research on *ki suryŏn* and GiCheon published by Victoria Ten, one of the authors of this book (Ten 2017a, 2017b, 2017c).

been previously researched. Kim Chŏng-suk and her life have received some attention in previous scholarship, but the details of her mythological biography have often been overlooked in favour of the study of her husband's and son's lives. Neither of our two legendary characters have ever been analysed academically in terms of self-transformation, which constitutes one step on the journey from mortality to immortality. Each of the goddesses exemplifies a certain stage in this process, that is why it is important to consider them together, in comparison. Our book investigates how particular transformative power of Northern and Southern heroines correlates with the culture of self-development in contemporary Korea. The link between self-transformation of our two goddesses on Mt. Paektu, and the culture of self-improvement or personal betterment in contemporary Korea, has never previously been a focus of academic research.

We explored the role of Mt. Paektu in the history and culture of contemporary Northern and Southern Korea. Mt. Paektu is a hugely important space in Korean culture. For centuries Mt. Paektu has been rising and falling in importance depending on political climate. In spite of the split on the Korean peninsula, Paektu is vitally important to Korean mythology in the South and the North. Mt. Paektu has been subjected to much analysis, the development of its importance for Korean nationalism has been highlighted. Yet, never before has the history of Mt. Paektu been considered in relation to the mythologies of our two goddesses. Their legends constitute a new link of the history and mythology of the mountain. Such a landscape could certainly provide abundant space for transformation not only of individuals but of nation and history. Also, the genesis myths of Tan'gun has been recently connected to this mountain.

Mountains have always been vital to the development of Korean culture and Korean sense of nationalism. The idea of Paektu-taegan holds that the mountains serve as conduits for ki energy flowing through Korean peninsula. Korean cultural mythologies have it that in certain places, this energy takes transformative forms, manifesting as mountain gods and spirits. The mountain gods and spirits are still worshiped today; the places of their worship still transform the landscape of the mountains. Both of our legends are connected to the tradition of mountain gods, constituting new forms of an old tradition. Korean gods and immortals have been widely studied in Korean scholarship, and to a certain degree in English scholarship, but their connection to contemporary Korean mythology have not been sufficiently researched. The ways in which old Korean traditions of mountain gods and immortals come back and resurface in contemporary life have not been sufficiently studied. The mythology of GiCheon has not been studied academically (except for research previously done by one of the authors of this

book, Victoria Ten), nor compared with Korean traditions of mountain gods. Neither have connections been drawn between the cults of worship of contemporary North Korean leaders and traditional worship of Korean mountain gods. As to South Korea, we highlight that contemporary practices of ki suryŏn constitute new forms of mountain worship and practices of immortality.

Traditions of transformation and spiritual power require fertile cultural ground from which to spring. The authors of the present book considered the roots which enable transformation within the wider framework of Korean culture. Traditions of Korean mountain gods and immortals such as sanshin and sinsŏn have a great deal of potential energy: power which can well be used for the transformations described in this book. According to the concept of Paektu-taegan, Korea is a topographic ecosystem of lines of ki energy. This system transmits the energy across the territory of the peninsula and powers the transformations and practices of contemporary sŏndo culture. This culture further embeds itself in Korean artistic use of both mountains and mountain deities. Key processes in this embedding include imitation and embodiment. We imitate the immortals, and this is how we become as immortals. While drawing the mountains where immortals dwell, we imagine that we embody these mountains. Painting in this case is not only imitation, but also a bodily practice conducive to self-transformation. A painter of sacred mountains and of images of immortals partakes in the culture of immortality. The culture of immortality includes bodily practices, painting, constructing narratives, mythologies etc.

Ki suryŏn practices are a contemporary expression of ancient culture of immortality. They focus on self-transformation through renewal of the flow of ki energy. The transformation occurs in the course of physical and mental practice. GiCheon is one example of ki suryŏn, being based on the teachings of Pak Tae-yang in the 1970s, but transformed in recent decades by later acolytes. GiCheon finds access to ki energy and self-transformation in the harnessing of uncomfortable bodily positions to generate pain, through which the flow of ki energy can be stimulated. Beyond a repertoire of difficult movements and positions such as naegasinjang, the practitioners of GiCheon seek self-transformation against the background of the contemporary social, political and economic landscape of Korea and the wider world. Practitioners utilize GiCheon techniques for better functioning in various life roles.

The cultural practices that construct feminine divine images are of great importance to this book. The Woman of Heaven is a key figure in the constructed mythology of GiCheon, which

provides us texts for the comparison of our two main heroines. The image of the Woman of Heaven echoes traditional mountain spirit and cosmic interventions in upland areas of Korea. The story of Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ (天仙女, Immortal Woman of Heaven) derives from a number of East Asian mythologies; she is a contemporary avatar of traditional East Asian immortals. Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ's extraordinary engagement with Bodhidharma presents the power of the immortal or goddess over an ancient hero. The authors of this book have also suggested seeing Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ as a cypher for modern notions of Korean nationalism. We bring Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ into the present, asserting that she is part of the transformation of Korean national identity, as much as she is part of GiCheon mythologies and ambitions for self-transformation. Our book highlights the importance of GiCheon and ki suryŏn for contemporary South Korean mythology, and their wider implications for Korean society.

What concerns the second heroine of our book, Kim Chŏng-suk, the constructed narrative of her younger years and her political transformation have not been laid out in English language scholarship in an analytical way. Our book is first to consider the details of the life of Kim Chŏng-suk from the perspective of transformation, as it is imagined and related by official North Korean sources. Equally, the constructed image of a more mature Kim Chŏng-suk at the heart of North Korean national mythology, and her activity in and around Mt. Paektu, have received scant attention in previous academic scholarship. Her husband Kim Il-sŏng's various imagined victories, titanic struggles, and their contrast with documented reality, have been a subject of great amount of English language scholarship. Kim Chŏng-suk mostly has played merely a walk on part in that writing. We contribute considerably to the academic writing on this period of Kim Chŏng-suk's imagined life. The transformation of Kim Chŏng-suk up to and beyond the liberation of Korea has not been analysed in English scientific literature before. Our book explores as her transformation into a great figure in North Korean national mythology so the transformation of landscapes where she is remembered and memorialized.

The authors analysed the transformations of a young Kim Chŏng-suk against the background of Korean mountain culture and spirit worship in the context of contemporary North Korean history and politics. Kim's personal development relates to the structural violence of her childhood and her political awakening through education. According to the imagined narrative, Kim Chŏng-suk becomes transformed in the landscapes of the north of the peninsula, around Mt. Paektu. Through her transformations within North Korea's narrative, Kim Chŏng-suk becomes a mountain immortal, at least in the North Korean ideological mind.

For the first time Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ, the heroine of contemporary South Korean mythology, is being compared with a heroine of political establishment of North Korea. The process of formation of feminine images of immortality in the 20th century Korea has been noticed and mentioned in literature97, but has never been the subject of a full-scale book.

In our book we have demonstrated two steps in the process of acquiring immortality by a mortal. A mortal becomes an immortal through the process of transformation. The first stage is manifested by Kim Chŏng-suk, who engages in hard and difficult practices while transforming her body, mind and self. The second stage is exemplified by Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ, already a perfected mountain immortal, a Woman of Heaven. Though the Woman of Heaven and Kim Chŏng-suk harness ancient spiritual energies inherited by contemporary Korean culture, they also reflect new developments on the peninsula. Having considered two Korean goddesses and their transformative power in Northern and Southern traditions, we moved beyond and outside their mythological frames. Two mountain practitioners from Chapter Eight, Jiyul Sŭnim and Huh Man-soo, exemplify intersections between personal transformation and transformation of the landscape. They demonstrate the reality of contemporary mountain practice, responding to the pressures of modern political, social and economic life in Korea. Considering transformative traditions elsewhere in East Asia, such as the Akakura tradition in modern Japan, we again encountered narratives of interaction between mountain and people which are embedded in each other.

We consider two heroines of the present book, and their self-transformation, through the Foucauldian frame of technologies of self. Technologies of the self are usually understood as personal practices deployed directly at the individual level. In our book, we use this concept in a more comprehensive wide-ranging manner. Technologies of self are applied by the two goddesses in order to achieve their aims. Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ in GiCheon uses the body of Bodhidharma as a technology of self in order to turn him into a GiCheon practitioner. Equally, the writers of the narratives and myths utilize technologies of self in order to project and transform notions of Korean nationalism and selfhood. In the practices of GiCheon, the constructed memory and mythology of Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ is used as a technology to support the authority and legitimacy of the GiCheon movement. Bodhidharma's body is directly transformed in a painful and violent way. GiCheon practitioners themselves are not encouraged to engage in such a destructive practice. However, the movements and positions used in

[97] Baker 2007b, 511-513; David Mason, personal communication July 2014.

GiCheon are concrete technologies of self, designed to transform individual energies and capabilities. In seeking the powerful pain and discomfort of naegasinjang and other positions, and the ki energy behind that pain, GiCheon practitioners use powerful technologies of self.

Extending the mythology back into the mythic past, serves as a technology to underpin its place in the framework of spiritual movements in Korea. In the North Korean mythologies we have studied in this book, many technologies are deployed on the participants in the narratives. Kim Chŏng-suk herself uses educative practices as a technology of the self. She uses education to transform herself from an oppressed child to a fully-fledged revolutionary fighter. She applies technologies of the self to develop other fighters as characters in her own mythology. She inculcates the weak and uneducated, to become strong and ideologically worthy. Together, her band of female guerrillas are seen deploying practical transformative techniques to underpin their roles and capabilities in the field. When the liberation struggles are over in 1945, Kim Chŏng-suk is transformed again, into a different form of immortal for North Korean politics. Her own motherhood is used as a technological aspect in the history of the nation, she becomes the mother of the revolution, the mother of the second and future generations of revolution. Victory is given to her in a manner transformative to her own self, but degrading violence done to her is also used to transform her. Violence enacted by her on others is also transformative, and is co-produced by the landscapes in which she experiences combat.

The violent spaces of Mt. Paektu are constructed in tandem with the narratives of North Korean history and commemorative practice as a technology to embed its current population. Just as GiCheon practitioners must harness the energies of Ch'ŏnsŏnnyŏ to transform their selves through the power of ki, North Koreans can utilise the technologies of the self as demonstrated by Kim Chŏng-suk. These technologies are deployable at different temporal moments, in the past, present, and future. In contemporary North Korea, the moments of Kim Chŏng-suk's self-transformation, just as landscapes where she is active, become themselves special technologies. Her places of violence, places of care, places of education, are part of North Korea's commemorative and memorial architectures.

Such technologies of self and self transformations hark back to practices of the subtle body, as much as they do to ancient traditions of East Asian alchemy, immortality and powerful memories of Korean sanshin. They are rooted deeply in the cultural memories of East Asia and their various physical manifestations in the landscapes of its various nations. These landscapes are at the same time deeply important to the development of modern Asian nationalism. Mt.

Paektu, the mountain essential to the narratives of two goddesses, is just such a place. Mt. Paektu, once peripheral to Korea, beyond its national boundaries, has been reconfigured from the mythic past of the Tan'gun to a fundamental element of modern Korean national self-identity. Mt. Paektu is a vital piece of North Korean technology of the national self, demonstrated through the armed resistance on its slopes. It is important to South Korea and to inter-Korean relations as well. In the period of Korean reconciliation in 2018, Mt. Paektu played an important role in interactions between President of South Korea Moon Jae-in (文在寅, Mun Chae-in) and Supreme Leader of North Korea Kim Chŏng-un. Soil from Mt. Paektu at the Northern edge of the Korean peninsula, was mixed with soil from Mt. Halla at the Southern edge of Korea on Cheju island; the water from Taedong river in North Korea, was mixed with the water from Han river in South Korea, in a quasi-shamanic act of territorial unification.

Our goddesses act upon the landscape, and are themselves acted upon by the terrains where their mythologies are inscribed. As their stories revolve around one particular mountain, the authors would consider Mt. Paektu as a character in its own right. It is an active participant, in a way that the Debarbieux and Rudaz thought it possible for upland places to become completely enmeshed in human cultures. Even when Mt. Paektu was not technically part of Korea, it played a bounding role within the conceptualisation of Korean national territory. Mt. Paektu has been large beyond its actual physical size in the minds of the colonial adventurers, encountering Korea for the first time in the 19th century. It has been reimagined anew in the present. The energies and authorities produced around the mountain are rescaled throughout Korea's space and time. While no techno-natures are built upon its slopes, North Korea has constructed architectures and monuments upon the mountain which might constitute an ideologic-nature. Here history and mythology are written anew on the areas' physical topography, through the memories of Kim Chŏng-suk and her comrades.

Mt. Paektu and the landscapes around it are transformed into what Castree and Cosgrove would conceive of as political or symbolic nature. We have talked about charismatic politics and ideology in the present North Korea. Its contemporary ideology transforms people, landscapes and nature within the nation, into performers on the political stage. This stage has no bounds, but extends out into the physical terrain of the nation, becoming a charismatic landscape. Such a landscape consists of active, energetic, vibrant elements, which play and perform within the mythologies. These lively materials contribute to the charisma of the politics embedded within them. The boulders which protect Kim Chŏng-suk from harm, the trees which shelter her from

enemies, the wood used for building the cabin where she gives birth to Kim Chŏng-Il - are all within the web of charisma. The landscape of Mt. Paektu itself becomes immortal in the process of supporting our goddesses to become immortals, just as the ideology of North Korea also aims to become.

The immortality of our heroines across all the bounds of time and space is as much an invented tradition as it is one currently still in process, and under production. Whether Kim Chŏng-suk and her fellow female guerrillas will be historical figures of power and importance in decades to come is debateable. Whether GiCheon continues to spread its practices and mythologies in South Korea is yet to be seen. Whether even Mt. Paektu continues to develop in significance and accrue greater cultural and national energies, or whether it takes another new form in years to come is impossible to know. In part, all of these traditions are invented, which does not stop them from being powerful and useful in present and future. Our two goddesses, and the landscape with which they engage, are caught in a complex network of invented traditions, imagined communities and cultural productions. It is precisely because of that they are so useful to both North and South Korea.

What, however if North and South Korea no longer exist? What if there is, at some point in the future, only one Korea? Many readers will perhaps say that in fact there has only ever been one Korea, and that the current status quo, as far as sovereignty is concerned, is a glitch, or an aberration, generated by the outworking of the Cold War. The moment we write about these invented traditions seems quite special. 2018 has seen an unexpected rapprochement between the two Koreas and across the landscape this book is concerned with. Our writing, in a sense, is a work of mythological unification. We have studied traditions from across the peninsula, and united them in acts of self transformation in the place important for the Korean national self. The value of our work might again come to the fore during a concrete moment of actual unification of the peninsula.

How might our new goddesses be commemorated, remembered, or mythologised in a time when the politics and ideology which brought them to life disappear? Would unification diminish the importance of our goddesses? Would their powerful technologies and energies be forgotten or negated? Or would they turn into cultural icons, particularly Kim Chŏng-suk, with her contribution to the struggle for the independence of Korea? In these essentially unanswerable questions are the limits of our book. The key point for the authors is the living nature of our goddesses, their vibrancy and energy in the present narratives. While they are a

great distance in the past and mythic in tone, they are still accessible through the practices, narrative techniques, and technologies of self we have described in this book. Mt. Paektu is the primary site of memory, or rather a place of memory, brought forward and actualized. For North Korea, it is a site where imagined past turns into a working present, becoming an instrument of ideological education through actual interaction with the people.

New goddesses on Mt. Paektu create a landscape of technology, self-transformation, violence, myth and power, as for our time so for all times. Practices of self-cultivation in the South including GiCheon, ideology and commemorative practices in the North of Korean peninsula, are still social-cultural terrains on the move. They are constantly reconfiguring themselves, as much as they seek to maintain authority and connection with the past. These Korean transformative and mythic histories are in active dialectic with past, present and future. It will be for readers in the future to consider whether the dialectic of these technologies and practices continue to be useful and functional.

Index

Bibliography

Anonymous. 1991. Biography of Kim Jong-suk. Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Anonymous. 2005. Biography of Kim Jong-suk. Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Bainbridge, Simon. 2013. “Writing from the ‘Perilous Edge’: Romanticism and the Invention of Rock Climbing.” Romanticism, 19 (3): 246-260.

Bailey, Peter. 1978. Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885. London: Routledge.

Baker, Don. 2007. “Internal Alchemy in the Dahn World School.” In Religions of Korea in Practice, edited by Robert E. Buswell Jr, 508-513. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Barth, J. Robert. 2003. Romanticism and Transcendence: Wordsworth, Coleridge and the Religious Imagination. Columbus, MI: University of Missouri Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 2006. Liquid Fear. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bennett, Jane. 2010. Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bergin, Sean. 2009. The Khmer Rouge and the Cambodian Genocide. New York City, NY: Rosen Publishing.

Berthelier, B. 2014. “Paektu Mountain and Revolutionary Mystique in North Korea since 1945”. Presentation at Royal Geographical Society Annual Conference in London, 2014.

Birmingham, David. 1988. Kwame Nkrumah: The Father of African Nationalism. Columbus, OH: Ohio University Press.

Broughton, Jeffrey. 1999. The Bodhidharma Anthology: The Earliest Records of Zen. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Campany, Robert. 2002. To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Divine Transcendents. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Campbell, Charles. 1892. “A Journey Through North Korea to the Chang-pai Shan,” Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and the Monthly Record of Geography, 14 (3): 141-161.

Caprio, Mark. 2014. Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910-1945. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

Castree, Noel. 2001. Social Nature. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Cavendish, Alfred Edward John and Goold-Adams, Henry Edward. 1894. Korea and the Sacred White Mountain, Being a Brief Account of a Journey in Korea in 1891, Together with an Account of an Ascent of the White Mountain. London: George Philip and Son.

Chakravati, Sudeep. 2009. Red Sun: Travels in Naxalite Country. New Delhi: Penguin India.

Chang, Ju-Ho. 2002. “Korea: The Various Roles of Sport for All in Society.” In World-wide Experiences and Trends in Sport for All, edited by Lamartine DaCosta and Ana Miragaya, 133-174. Oxford: Meyer and Meyer Sport.

Chang Na (張娜). 2012. “Han Chung Paektusan chŏnsŏl ŭi pikyo yŏn’gu” (韓 中 백두산 전설의 배교 연구) (Comparative research of Korean and Chinese Mt. Paektu legends). Master Dissertation, Chŏnnam University, Department of Korean Language Education,

South Korea.

Chang Wŏn-sŏk (장원석), 2010. "Minjok ŭi sangjin, Paektusan ŭi t’ansaeng” (민족의 상징, 백두산의 탄생) (The symbol of the nation, the birth of Mt. Paektu). In Kim, Chŏng-bae (김정배); Yi, Sŏ-haeng (이서행) et al. Paektusan: hyŏnjae wa mirae rŭl marhanda (백두산: 현재와 미래를 말한다) (Mt. Paektu: speaking the present and the future), 378-391. Kyŏnggi-do Sŏnnam-si: Chŏnjŏggil.

Chesneaux, Jean. 1972. “Secret Societies in China’s Historical Evolution.” In Popular Movements and Secret Societies in China, 1840-1950, edited by Jean Chesneaux, 1-28. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Chesnokova, Nataliya. 2014. “The Concept of Phungsu Chiri Seol 風水地理說 in Yi Chunghwan’s “T’aengniji,” paper delivered at 12th Biennial Conference of Asian Studies in Israel, University of Haifa, Israel, 26th May, 2014.

Chesnokova, Nataliya. 2018. “Spatial Views and Self-Conciousness of Culture in Korea in the 18th century. Based on the “T’aengniji” (1751) by Yi Chung-hwan (1690-1756?).” Doctoral Dissertation, Russian State University of the Humanities, Institute for Oriental and Classical Studies.

Chi, Hŭng-kil (지홍길). 2004. Paektusan chonsŏljip 4: Singihan paljaguk (백두산 전설집 4: 신기한 발자국) (Anthology of Mt. Paektu Legends Volume 4: Mysterious Footprints). Pyongyang: Munhak Yesuk chulp’ansa (문학예술출판사).

Cho, Eun-so. 2013. “From Ascetic to Activist: Jiyul Sunim’s Korean Buddhist Eco-Movement.” In Nature, Environment and Culture in East Asia: The Challenge of Climate Change, edited by Carmen Meinert, 259-280. Leiden: Brill.

Cho, Hyun-soul. 2010. “The Significance of Perceptions of Baekdusan in Baekdu-related Myths.” The Review of Korean Studies, 13 (4): 33-52.

Cho, Pŏp-chong (조법종). "Paektusan kwa Changpaeksan, kŭrigo Manju" (백두산과 장백산, 그리고 만주) (Mt. Paektu and Mt. Changpaek, and Manchuria). In Kim, Chŏng-bae (김정배); Yi, Sŏ-haeng (이서행) et al. Paektusan: hyŏnjae wa mirae rŭl marhanda (백두산: 현재와 미래를 말한다) (Mt. Paektu: speaking the present and the future), 35-64. Kyŏnggi-do Sŏnnam-si: Chŏnjŏggil.

Ch’oe, Chin-gu (최진구). 2013. “Silla Oak kwa Pulgyŏ ŭi sansin sinang yŏn’gu” (신라 五岳과 불교의 산신신앙 연구) (The Study on Five Mountains and Buddhist Beliefs in Mountain Spirits). Silla munhwa (新羅文化) (The Journal of the Center of Research for Silla Culture) 42: 243-268.

Ch’oe, Sŏng-jin (최성진). 2006. Paektu kwangmyŏngsŏng chonsŏl chip 5: Hanŭl man i anda (백두광명성전설집 5: 하늘만이 안다) (Anthology of Paektu bright light legends Volume 5: only the Heaven knows). Pyongyang: Munhak Yesul Ch’ulp’ansa (문학예술출판사).

Ch’oe, Un-sik (최운식). 2004. “Chunnyŏng sansindang tang sinhwa ‘Tajagu Halmŏni’ wa

Chunnyŏng sansinje” (죽령 산신당 당신화 「다자구 할머니」와 죽령 산신제) (Chunnyŏng sansin mythology: Tajagu Grandmother goddess and Chunnyŏng sansinje). Han’guk minsokhak (韓國民俗學) (Journal of Korean Folklore) 39 (2004): 381-410.

Chŏng, Kyŏnghŭi. 2015. "Hyŏndae Tan'gun undong ŭi saeroun chŏn'gae wa Tanhak" (현대 '단군운동'의 새로운 전개와 '丹學') (New Developments of Tan'gun Movement and Tanhak in contemporary Korea). Sŏndo munhwa (Journal of Korean sŏndo culture) 19 (2015.08): 143-194.

Clayton, Thomas. 1998. "Building the New Cambodia: Educational Destruction and Construction under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-1979." History of Education Quarterly, 38 (1): 1-16.

Cosgrove, Denis. 1984. Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Cosgrove, Denis. 2008. High Places, Cultural Geographies of Mountains and Ice. London: IB Tauris.

Cressey, George. 1963. Asia's Lands and Peoples: A Geography of One-Third of the Earth and Two-Thirds of Its People. New York City, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Cumings, Bruce. 1981. Origins of the Korean War: Vol 1. Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cumings, Bruce. 2005. Korea's Place in the Sun. New York City, NY: W.W Norton.

David-Fox, Michael. 1997. Revolution of the Mind: Higher Learning Among the Bolsheviks, 1918-1928. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Dax, Frank. 2015. "Recreational Hiking in South Korea: Transforming the Body, Transforming the Land." Korea Journal, 55 (3): 80-102.

De Ceuster, Koen. 2011. "To Be an Artist in North Korea, "Talent and Then Some More." In Exploring North Korean Arts, edited by Rudiger Frank, 51-71. Vienna: MAK Verlag.

De Ceuster, Koen. 2013. "South Korea's Encounter with North Korean Art: Eetween Barbershop Painting and True Art". In De-Bordering Korea: Tangible and Intangible Legacies of the Sunshine Policy, edited by Valérie Gelézeau, Koen De Ceuster and Alain Delissen, 155-171. London: Routledge.

De Ceuster, Koen. 2015. "Lost Without the Leader: Visual Narratives in North Korean Propaganda Art," paper delivered at AKSE 2015 Biannual Conference, Bochum, Germany, 11th July, 2015.

Debarbieux, Bernard and Rudaz, Gilles. 2015. “The Mountain: A Political History from the Enlightenment to the Present.” Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Despeux, Catherine. 1990. Immortelles de la Chine Ancienne. Taoïsme et Alchimie Féminine. Puiseaux: Pardès.

Despeux, Catherine. 1997. “Le Qigong, une Expression de la Modernité Chinoise.” In En Suivant la Voie Royale. Mélanges en Homage à Léon Vandermeersch, edited by J. Gernet and M. Kalinowski, 267–281. Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient.

Despeux, Catherine and Kohn, Livia. 2003. Women in Daoism. Dunedin: Three Pines Press.

Despeux, Catherine. 2008. “Yangshen 養生 Nourishing Life.” In The Encyclopedia of Taoism, edited by Fabrizio Pregadio, 1148-1150. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Dorrestijn, Steven. 2012. The Design of Our Own Lives: Technical Mediation and Subjectivation after Foucault, PhD thesis, University of Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands.

Doty, William. 2000. Mythography: The Study of Myths and Rituals. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press.

Duus, Peter. 1998. The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Eliade, Mircea. 1969. Yoga, Immortality and Freedom. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Elmes, Michael and Frame, Bob. 2008. “Into Hot Air: A Critical Perspective on Everest,” Human Relations, 61 (2): 213-241.

Em, Henry. 2013. The Great Enterprise: Sovereignty and Historiography in Modern Korea. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Fedman, David. 2015. The Saw and the Seed: Japanese Forestry in Colonial Korea 1895-1945. Doctoral Dissertation, Stanford University.

Flood, Gavin. 2004. The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory and Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Foucault, Michel. 2001. L'Hermeneutique du sujet : Cours au Collège de France (1981-1982). Paris: Gallimard.

Foucault, Michel. 1994. “Les Techniques de Soi.” In Dits et Écrits 1954-1988. IV: 1980-1988, 783-813. Paris: Gallimard.

Foucault, Michel. 1988. “Technologies of the Self.” In Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault, edited by Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton, 16-49. London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, Michel. Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la Prison. Paris: Gallimard, 1975.

Gandy, Mathew. 2014. The Fabric of Space. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Geertz, Clifford. 1980. Negara, The Theatre State in 19th Century Bali. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gélezéau, Valerie; De Ceuster, Koen and Delissen, Alain, eds. 2013. (De) Bordering Korea: Tangible and Intangible Legacies of the Sunshine Policy. London: Routledge.

GiCheon.org. 2008. “YeokGeun, Unique method of GiCheon.” www.gicheon.org/. Accessed August 6th, 2019.

Golomstock, Igor. 1990. Totalitarian Art. New York City, NY: Overlook Press.

Gorriti, Gustavo. 2000. The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Gragert, Edwin. 1994. Landownership Under Japanese Rule: Korea’s Colonial Experience 1910-1935. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Harraway, Donna. 1991. Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Hŏ, Yong-ho (허용호) 2009. “’T’aebaeksan sillyŏng Tanjong bonp’uri’ ŭi kusong kwa ‘kongdond ŭ sinbi chehŏm’ ŭl wihayŏ” (‘태백산 신령 단종본풀이’의 구성과 ‘공동의 신비체험’을 위하여) (On the structure of the Mt. T’aebaek God Tanjong bonp’uri and collective mystery experience). Silch’ŏn minsokhak yŏn’gu (실천민속학연구) (Research on folklore practices) 14: 369 – 402.

Ilyon. 1972. Samguk Yusa: Legends and History of the Three Kingdoms of Ancient Korea. Seoul: Yonsei University Press.

Im, Chae-hae (임재해), and Pak, Chong-sŏng (박종성). 2005. “Sansin sŏrhwa ŭi chŏnsŭng yangsang kwa sansin sungbae ŭi munhwa” (산신설화의 전승양상과 산신숭배의 문화) (The transmission of mountain gods folktales and the culture of mountain gods worship). Pikyo minsokhak (比較民俗學) (Asian Comparative Folklore) 29: 379-423.

James, Henry. 1888. The Long White Mountain, Or, A Journey in Manchuria: With Some Account of the History, People, Administration and Religion of that Country. London: Longman, Green and Company.

Jo, Yoong-hee, 2008. “Pecerptions of Choson Korea in West Travelogues.” SOAS-AKS Working Papers in Korean Studies, 8. London: SOAS, University of London.

Joinau, Benjamin. 2014. “The Sun and the Arrow: A Topomyth-analysis of Pyongyang.” Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies, 14 (1): 65-92.

Johnston, Jay. 2013. “Subtle subjects and ethics: the subtle bodies of post-structuralist and feminist philosophy.” In Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body, edited by Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston, 239-266. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Jongheon, Jin. 2005. “The Transforming Sacredness of Mt. Chirisan from an Utopian Shelter into a Modern National Park: Focused on the Escapist Lives of ‘Mountain Men’.” Journal of the Korean Geographical Society, 40 (2): 172-186.

Kang, Sŏk-hwa (강석화). 2011. "Chŏson hugi Paektusan e taehan insik ŭi pyŏnhwa" (조선 후기 백두산에 대한 인식의 변화) (Changes in the perception of Paektu mountain in late Chŏson). Chŏson sidae sa hakpo (The Journal of Chosŏn Dynasty History) 30(0): 195-224.

Kang, Sŏng-bok (강성복). 2011. “Kongju Tonghaeri sanhyangkye ŭi sŏngnip kwa sansinje ŭi pyŏnhwa” (공주 동해리 산향계의 성립과 산신제의 변화) (Establishment of sanhyangkye in Kongju Tonghaeri and the changes in sansinje). Han’guk minsokhak (韓國民俗學) (Journal of Korean Folklore), 54: 7-36.

Kang, Tong-gu (강동구). 2000. “Saeroun sinhwa mandŭlgi – chaeya sahak e taehan tto tarŭn ihae” (새로운 신화 만들기 – 재야사학에 대한 또 드른 이해 (Making a new myth: another view on chaya sahak). Chŏngsin munhwa yŏn’gu (정신문화연구) (Korean Studies Quarterly) 23(1): 3-16.

KCNA. 2013. “DPRK Hero Title Awarded to Traffic Controller.” KCNA, May 5, 2013 (accessed July 24, 2015).

Kendall, Laurel. 2009. “The Global Reach of Gods and the Travels of Korean Shamans.” In Transnational Transcendence: Essays on Religion and Globalization, edited by Thomas J. Csordas. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kendall, Laurel. 1987. Shamans, Housewives, and Other Restless Spirits. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Kennedy, Mike-Dixon. 2005. A Companion to Arthurian and Celtic Myths and Legends. Cheltenham: The History Press.

Keum, Jang-tae. 1994. “Mountains: Home of Korean Thought”. Koreana, 8 (4), 10-17.

Kim, Chŏng-bae (김정배); Yi, Sŏ-haeng (이서행) et al. Paektusan: hyŏnjae wa mirae rŭl marhanda (백두산: 현재와 미래를 말한다) (Mt. Paektu: speaking the present and the future). Kyŏnggi-do Sŏnnam-si: Chŏnjŏggil.

Kim, Chŏng-ha (김정하). 2007. “Injegun sansinje ŭi sigi mit kusŏng wŏlli koch’al” (인제군 산신제(山神祭)의 시기 및 구성 원리 고찰) (A study on the structure of sansinje in Inje county). Kangwŏn minsokhak (강원민속학) (The Kangwŏn Province Folklore) 21: 145-166.

Kim Chŏng-il, 2012. Anecdotes of Kim Chŏng-il’s Life. Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Kim, Daeyeol, 2000. “Symbolisme de la force vitale en Chine ancienne : Modèles et significations dans l’alchimie taoïste opératoire (études des pratiques alchimiques du Baopuzi neipian 抱朴子內篇 (4e siècle après J.-C. en Chine) ”. Doctoral thesis, Ecole doctorale d’Histoire des religions et anthropologie religieuse, Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris 4).

Kim, Duk-muk. 2004. “Bukhansan Keeps Alive Shaman Traditions”. Koreana, Vol. 18 (1): 10-11.

Kim, Hŭi-sang (김희상) and Kich’ŏnmun Ponmun (기천문 본문). 1998. Kich’ŏnmun immun (기천문 입문) (Introduction to Kich’ŏnmun). Seoul: Yŏn’gusa (연구사).

Kim, Hŭi-sang (김희상) and Kich’ŏnmun Ponmun (氣天門 本門) eds. 2000. Kich’ŏn (氣天). Seoul: Ch‘orokpaemaejiksŭ (초록배매직스).

Kim Il-sŏng. 1964. Works, Vol 18. Pyongyang : Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Kim, Kang-san (김강산). 2006. “T’aebaek sansin i toen Tanjong” (태백산신이 된 단종) (King Tanjong becoming a god of T’aebak mountain). Kangwŏn minsokhak (강원민속학) (The Kangwŏn Province Folklore), 20: 361-385.

Kim, Nayeon. 2012. “Indoctrinating Female Virture: the Social use of Chosŏn Woodblock Prints.” Paper presented at Eighth Worldwide Consortium of Korean Studies Centers Workshop, July 4-7, 2012, Seoul, South Korea.

Kim, Sŏn-p’ung (김선풍). 2003. “Tan’gun sinhwa wa T’aebaeksan, Mokmyŏksan, Samgaksan sinhwa ŭi taebi punsŏk” (단군신화와 태백산・목멱산・삼각산신화의 대비분석) (A comparative study on Tan’gun legend and the legends of T’aebaek, Mokmyŏk and Samgak mountains). Kangwŏn minsokhak (강원민속학) (The Kangwŏn Province Folklore) 17: 73-102.

Kim, Suzy. 2013. Everyday Life in the North Korea Revolution: 1945-1950. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Kim, Yŏng-ja (김영자). 2005. “Sansindo e p’yohyŏntoen sansin ŭi yuhyŏng” (산신도(山神圖)에 표현된 산신(山神)의 유형) (Various types of mountain gods depicted in paintings). Han’guk minsokhak (韓國民俗學) (Journal of Korean Folklore) 41: 187-223.

Kim Ŭn-t’aek (김은택), Yun Sin-yŏng (윤신영), Chu Ŭn-sun (주은순). 2014. Yet chido ro pon Paektusan (옛 지도로 본 백두산) (Mt. Paektu seen through the prism of ancient maps). Pyongyang: Paekkwasajŏn (백과사전), Pyŏngyang chonghap inswae kongjang (평양종합인쇄공장).

Kirkland, Russell. 1991. “The Making of an Immortal: The Exaltation of Ho Chih-chang.” Numen 38(2) (December 1991): 214-230.

Kirkland, Russell. 2008. “Transcendence and Immortality.” In The Encyclopedia of Taoism, edited by Fabrizio Pregadio, 91-93. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Kohn, Livia. 2013. “The Daoist body of qi.” In Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body, edited by Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston, 16-32. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Kwon, Heonik and Chung, Byung-ho. 2012. North Korea: Beyond Charismatic Politics. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Kwŏn, T'ae-hyo (권태효). 1998. "Hoguk yŏsansin sŏrhwa ŭi sangbantoen sin'gyŏk insik yangsang yŏn'gu" (호국여산신설화의 상반된 신격 인식 양상 연구) (A Study on a contradictory character of the legends depicting goddesses protecting the state). Han'guk minsokhak (韓國民俗學) (Journal of Korean Folklore) 30: 221-243.

Kyle, Gerard et al. 2003. "An Examination of the Relationship Between Leisure Activity and Place Attachment among Hikers along the Appalachian Trail," Journal of Leisure Research, 35 (3): 249-273.

Lankov, Andrei. 2007. North of the DMZ: Essays on Daily Life in North Korea. Jefferson, NC: Macfarland.

Lee, Chong-Sik. 1982. "Evolution of the Korean Workers' Party and the Rise of Kim Chŏng-il." Asian Survey 22 (5): 434-448.

Lee, Ki-baik. 1984. A New History of Korea. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Lee, Peter and de Bary, Wm. Theodore eds. 1997. Sources of Korean Tradition. Volume One: From Early Times Through the Sixteenth Century. New York City, NY: Columbia University Press.

Lee, Su-hoon. 1999. "Environmental Movements in South Korea." In Asian Environmental Movements, edited by Lee Yok-shiu and A. Armonk So, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Lefebvre, Henri. 1991. The Production of Space. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Lim, Jae-Cheon. 2015. Leader Symbols and Personality Cult in North Korea. London: Routledge.

Lett, Denise. 1998. In Pursuit of Status: The Making of South Korea's "New" Urban Middle Class. Cambridge, MASS: Harvard University Asia Center.

Lobetti, Tullio. 2014. Ascetic Practices in Japanese Religion. London: Routledge.

Lorimer, Jamie. 2007. "Non-human Charisma," Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 25 (5): 911-932.

Maguire, Jack. 2001. Essential Buddhism. New York City, NY: Pocket Books.

Marston, Sallie. 2000. “The Social Construction of Scale.” Progress in Human Geography, 24 (2): 219-241.

Mason, David. 1999. “Spirit of the Mountains.” Seoul: Hollym.

Miller, Carl. 1963. “Korean Mountains.” Korea Journal 3 (9): 26-28.

Miura, Kunio. 2008a. “Shenren 神人 Divine Man; Spirit Man.” In The Encyclopedia of Taoism, edited by Fabrizio Pregadio, 885-886. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Miura, Kunio, 2008b. “Xianren 仙人 Immortal; Transcendent.” In The Encyclopedia of Taoism, edited by Fabrizio Pregadio, 1092-1094. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Morin, Karen; Longhurst, Robyn and Johnston, Lynda. 2010. “(Troubling) Spaces of Mountains and Men: New Zealand’s Mount Cook and Hermitage Lodge.” Social and Cultural Geography, 2 (2): 117-139.

Munakata, Kiyohiko. 1991. Sacred mountains in Chinese art : an exhibition organized by the Krannert Art Museum [at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign] and curated by Kiyohiko Munakata : Krannert Art Museum, Nov. 9-Dec. 16, 1990, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jan. 25-Ma. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Myers, Brian. 2011. The Cleanest Race: How North Korean’s See Themselves and Why it Matters. New York City, NY: Melville House.

Na, Kwŏn-su, (나권수). 2012. “Han’guk sinjonggyŏ ŭi sŏndo sasang yŏn’gu” (한국 신종교의 선도사상 연구) (A study on sŏndo thought in Korean new religions). Sŏndo munhwa (선도문화) (Journal of Korean Sŏndo Culture) 12: 409-443.

Naess, Arne, 2013. The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint.

Nelson, John. 2015. A Year in the Life of a Shinto Shrine. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

Nyŏjanggun (녀장군). 2007. Pyongyang: Social Sciences Publishing House and Foreign Languages Publishing House.

Ortner, Sherry. 1999. Life and Death on Mt. Everest: Sherpas and Himalayan Mountaineering. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Pai, Hyung-il. 2000. Constructing “Korean” Origins: A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State-Formation Theories. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Pak, Ch’an-sŭng (박찬승). "Paektusan ŭi ‘minjok yŏngsan’ ŭro ŭi p’yŏsanghwa" (백두산의 ‘민족 영산’으로의 표상화) (Depicting Mt. Paektu as a ‘national sacred mountain’). Tongasia munhwa yŏn’gu (Journal of East Asian Cultures), 55 (2013): 9-36.

Pak, Chong-ik (박종익). 2009. “Musŏngsan sansinje ŭi hyŏngsŏng kwa pyŏnch’ŏn” (무성산 산신제의 형성과 변천) (The establishment and transformation of Musŏng mountain sansinje). Han’guk minsokhak (韓國民俗學) (Journal of Korean Folklore) 49: 247-274.

Pak, Kye-ri (박계리). 2011. “Paektusan: mandŭrŏjin chŏnt’ong kwa p’yŏsang” (백두산: 만들어진 전통과 표상) (Paektu Mountain: the invention of tradition and the symbolism). Misulsa Hakpo (Korean Journal of Art History(36:43-74.

Pak, Tae-yang (박대양), and Ch’oe, Hyŏn-gyu (최현규). Sosŏl Kich’ŏnmun (Kich’ŏnmun novel). Unpublished manuscript.

Palais, James. 1996. Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyŏngwŏn and the Late Chŏson Dynasty. Seattle, Wa: University of Washington Press.

Palmer, David. 2007. Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China. New York City, NY: Columbia University Press.

Park, Han S. 2012. North Korea: The Politics of Unconventional Wisdom. Boulder, Co: Lynne Reinner.

Park, Hyun-ok. 2005. Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life and the Origins of the North Korean Revolution in Manchuria. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Poole, Janet. 2014. When the Future Disappears: The Modernist Imagination in Late Colonial Korea. New York City, NY: Columbia University Press.

Portal, Jane. 2005. Art Under Control in North Korea. London: Reaktion Books.

Pregadio, Fabrizio. 2008. “Dantian 丹田 Cinnabar field(s); Fields of the Elixir.” In The Encyclopedia of Taoism, edited by Fabrizio Pregadio, 302-303. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Pregadio, Fabrizio, ed 2008. The Encyclopedia of Taoism. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Reader, Ian. 2013. Pilgrimage in the Marketplace. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Rodong Sinmun. 2015. “The 250 Mile Schoolchildren’s March,” Rodong Sinmun, January 23rd, 2015. http://www.rodong.rep.kp/en/index.php?strPageID=SF01_02_01&newsID=2015-01-23-0004&chAction=S.

Rodong Sinmun. 2016. “Kim Jong Suk Library Opens to the Public in Cuba”, Rodong Sinmun, December 2nd, 2016. http://rodong.rep.kp/en/index.php?strPageID=SF01_02_01&newsID=2016-12-02-0005.

Rodong Sinmun. 2018. “Officials and Members of Agricultural Workers Union Tour Area of Mt Paektu,” Rodong Sinmun, 16th August, 2018. http://rodong.rep.kp/en/index.php?strPageID=SF01_02_01&newsID=2018-08-16-0020.

Róna-Tas, András. 1999. "Chuvash and historical morphology." Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 52 (1): 1-15.

Rose, Deborah. 1996. Nourishing Terrains: Australian Aboriginal Views of Landscape and Wilderness. Canberra: Australian Heritage Commission.

Ryu, Je-Hun; Won, Doo-Hee. 2013. “The Modern Production of Multiple Meanings of the Baekdudaegan Mountain System,” Korea Journal, 53 (3): 103-32.

Schafer, Edward. 1980. The Divine Woman : Dragon Ladies and Rain Maidens in Tʿang Literature. San Francisco, CA: North Point Press.

Schattschneider, Ellen. 2003. Immortal Wishes: Labour and Transcendence on a Japanese Sacred Mountain. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Samuel, Geoffrey. 2013. “Introduction to Part One.” In Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body, edited by Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston, 13-15. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Samuel Geoffrey, and Johnston Jay. 2013. “General introduction.” In Religion and the Subtle Body in Asia and the West: Between Mind and Body, edited by Geoffrey Samuel and Jay Johnston, 1-10. New York City, NY: Routledge.

Scheid, Volker. 2002. Chinese Medicine in Contemporary China: Plurality and Synthesis. Durhan and London: Duke University Press.

Schipper, Kristofer. 1993. The Taoist Body. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Schmid, Andre. 2007. "Tributary Relations and the Qing-Chosun Frontier on Mount Paektu." In The Chinese State at the Borders, edited by Diana Lary, 126-149. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Seth, Michael. 2006. A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period through the Nineteenth Century. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Shahar, Meir. 2008. The Shaolin Monastery: History, Religion and the Chinese Martial Arts. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Shapiro, Judith. 2001. Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and Environment in Revolutionary China. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shepherd, Roger. 2010. "Rediscovering Korean Mountain Spirituality". Seoul Magazine, June: 25-26.

Shim, David. 2014. Visual Politics and North Korea: Seeing is Believing. London: Routledge.

Shin, Gi-wook. 2014. Peasant Protest and Social Change in Colonial Korea. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

Arnason, Jon. 1972. Icelandic Folktales and Legends. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Simpson, Jacqueline. 1978. "Fifty British Dragon Tales: An Analysis." Folklore 89(1): 79-93.

Smith, Pamela. 2014. "Knowledge in Motion." In Cultures in Motion, edited by D. Rodgers, B. Raman and H. Reimitz, 109-133. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Smith, Pamela. 2002. The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in Scientific Revolution. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Smith, Hazel. 2015. North Korea: Markets and Military Rule. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Snyder, Gary. 1980. "Foreword." In The Divine Woman: Dragon Ladies and Rain Maidens in Tʿang Literature, by Edward Schafer, i-xvi. San Francisco, CA: North Point Press.

Sondŏ munhwa yŏn'guwŏn (선도문화연구원) (Research institute of sŏndo culture) ed, 2006. Han'guk sŏndo ŭi yŏksa wa munhwa (한국선도의 역사와 문화) (History and Culture of Korean Sŏndo). Ch'ŏnan: International Graduate University for Peace Press.

Song, Nianshen. 2017. "Imagined Territory: Paektusan in late Chosŏn maps and writings." Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes 37 (2): 157-173.

Song, Yong-tŏk, 2007. "The Recognition of Mountain Baekdu in the Koryo Dynasty and Early Times of the Joseon Dynasty." History and Reality, 64.

Sorensen, Clark W. 1988. Over the Mountains are Mountains: Korean Peasant Households and Their Adaptations to Rapid Industrialization. Seattle, University of Washington Press.

Squire, Shelach. 1988. "Wordsworth and Lake District Tourism: Romantic Reshaping of Landscape." The Canadian Geographer, 32 (3): 237-247.

Swyngedouw, Erik. 1997. "Excluding the Other: the Production of Scale and Scaled Politics" in Geographies of Economies, edited by Roger Lee and Jane Wills, 167-176. London: Arnold.

Swyngedouw, Erik. 2015. Liquid Power. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Talbot, J; Self, S and Wilson, C. 1994. "Dilute gravity current and rain-flushed ash deposits in the 1.8 ka Hatepe Plinian deposit, Taupo, New Zealand." Bulletin of Volcanology, 56 (6): 538-551.

Ten, Victoria. 2017a. Body and Ki in GiCheon: Practices of Self-Cultivation in Contemporary Korea, Doctoral Dissertation, Leiden University.

Ten, Victoria. 2017b. "Mt. Paektu and Sŏndo (仙道) in Contemporary South Korea: The Case of GiCheon (氣天)." Situations: Cultural Studies in the Asian Context, 10 (2): 145-170.

Ten, Victoria. 2020. "Transforming the Self in Contemporary Korean Ki Suryŏn (氣修練): Water, Wood, and Stone in Two GiCheon (氣天) DVDs". In Contemporary Practices of Citizenship in Asia and the West: Care of the Self, edited by Gregory Bracken, 67-88. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Toby, Ronald. 1974. "Education in Korea under the Japanese: Attitudes and Manifestations," Occasional Papers on Korea, Center for Korean Research in the Weatherhead East Asian Studies Institute, 1: 55-64.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. 1998. Escapism. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Turner, Victor. 1969. The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure. Chicago: Aldine.

U, Hye-ran (우혜란). 2006a. “Ki suryŏn tanch’e ŭi minjŏkjuŭi chŏk sŏnghyang kwa segyehwa kihoek: tanwŏldŭ rŭl chungsim ŭro” (기수련 단체의 민족주의적 성향과 세계화 기획: 단월드를 중심으로) (Nationalistic orientation and globalization plan of ki suryŏn groups: focusing on Dahn World). Inmun kwahak yŏn’gu (人文科學硏究) (Korean Journal of Humanities) 11: 37-63.

U, Hye-ran (우혜란). 2006b. “Tong side Han’guk ŭi ki suryŏn munhwa wa musok” (동시대 한국의 기수련 문화와 무속) (Contemporary Korean ki suryŏn culture and shamanism). Chongkyo yŏn’gu (종교연구) (Korean Study of Religion) 9: 71-113.

Valantasis, Richard. 1995. “A Theory of the Social Function of Asceticism.” In Asceticism, edited by Vincent L. Wimbush and Richard Valantis, 544-552. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Van der Veer, Peter. 2007. “Global Breathing: Religious Utopias in India and China.” Anthropological Theory, 7 (3): 315-329.

Vasilyev, L. S. 1970. Kulti, religii i tradizii v Kitae (Культы, религии и традиции в Китае) (Cults, religions and traditions in China). Moscow: Nauka (Наука).

Verellen, Franciscus. 1995. “The Beyond Within: Grotto-Heavens (dongtian) in Taoist Ritual”. Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie, 8: 265-290.

Von Rad, Gerhard. 1991. Holy War in Ancient Israel. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Weber, Max. 1967. The Theory of Economic and Social Organisation. New York City, NY: The Free Press.

Welz, Martin. 2013. Integrating Africa: Decolonization’s Legacy, Sovereignty and the African Union. London: Routledge.

Whatmore, Sarah. 2005. Hybrid Geographies: Natures, Cultures, Spaces. London: Sage.

Winichakul, Thongchai. 1994. Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press.

Williams, John. 1860. Annales Cambriae. London: Longman, Green and Company.

Winstanley-Chesters, Robert. 2014. Environment, Politics and Ideology in North Korea: Landscape as Political Project. Lanham, MD: Lexington Press.

Winstanley-Chesters, Robert. 2015. "'Patriotism Begins with a Love of Courtyard': Rescaling Charismatic Landscapes in North Korea." Tiempo Devorado (Consumed Time), 2(2): 116-138.

Winstanley-Chesters, Robert and Ten, Victoria. 2016. "New Goddesses at Mt Paektu: Two Contemporary Korean Myths." S/N Korean Humanities, 2 (1): 151-179.

Women of Korea, 1986. "Daughter of Korea", Women of Korea, 4 (1986).

Women of Korea. 1987. "Woman Revolutionary Fighter Pak Rok Gum", Women of Korea,1 (1987).

Women of Korea. 1987. "The Brilliant Last: Anti-Japanese Revolutionary Fighter Li Gye Sun, Women of Korea, 1 (1987).

Women of Korea. 1987. "Pak Su Hwan: Woman Anti-Japanese Revolutionary Fighter", Women of Korea, 4 (1987).

Women of Korea. 1988. "Chon Hui, Anti-Japanese Revolutionary Martyr", Women of Korea, 4 (1988).

Women of Korea. 1990. "A Guerrilla Amazon: on Kim Hwak Sil, An Anti-Japanese Revolutionary Fighter", Women of Korea, 1, (1990).

Women of Korea. 1990. "Eternity", Women of Korea, 2, (1990).

Women of Korea. 1991. "Liberty, then Life Counts," Women of Korea, 3, (1991).

Xu, Jiandong et al. 2013. "Climatic impact of the Millennium eruption of Changbaishan volcano in China: New insights from high-precision radiocarbon wiggle-match dating." Geophysical Research Letters, 40 (1): 54-59.

Xue Juzheng. 1976. Jiu Wi Dai Shi (Old History of the Five Dynasties). Beijing: Zhonghua Shu Ju.

Yanpeng, Janpeng; Waley, Paul and Gonzalez, Sara. 2016. "Shifting Land-Based Coalitions in Shanghai's Second Hub," Cities 52 (March 2016): 30-38.

Yecies, Brian and Shim, Ae-gyung. 2011. Korea's Occupied Cinemas 1893-1948: The Untold History of the Film Industry. London: Routledge.

Yi, Chung-hwan. 1998. Taengniji: Korean Classic for Choosing Settlements. Translated by Inshil Choe Yoon. Sydney: Wild Peony.

Yi Chung-hwan. 2019. A Place to Live: A New Translaton of Yi Chung-hwan's T'aengniji, the Korean Classic for Choosing Settlements. Translated by Inshil Choe Yoon. Honolulu, HI: Hawaii University Press.

Yi, Kyŏng-yŏp (이경엽). 2000. "Sunch'ŏn ŭi Sŏnghwang sinang, sansin sinang kwa yŏksa chŏk inmul ŭi singyŏkhwa" (순천의 성황신앙・산신신앙과 역사적 인물의 신격화) (The cult of Sŏnghwang, sansin sinang and the divinization of historical figures). Namdo minsok yŏn'gu (남도민속연구) (Namdo Folklore Research) 6: 165-193.

Yi, Myŏng-bok (이명복). 1988. Tanhak haksŭppŏp (단학 학습법) (The Study of Tanhak). Seoul: Taeyang (대양).

Yi, Sŏ-haeng (이서행). 2010. "Paektusan ŭi hyŏndaejŏk ŭiŭi" (백두산의 현대적 의의) (Contemporary significanse of Mt. Paektu). In Kim, Chŏng-bae (김정배); Yi, Sŏ-haeng (이서행) et al. Paektusan: hyŏnjae wa mirae rŭl marhanda (백두산: 현재와 미래를 말한다) (Mt. Paektu: speaking the present and the future), 108-127. Kyŏnggi-do Sŏnnam-si: Chŏnjŏggil.

Yi, Sŭng-ho (이승호). 2015. Han'guk sŏndo wa hyŏndae Tanhak (한국 선도와 현대 단학) (Korean sŏndo and contemporary tanhak). Seoul: Kukhak charyowŏn (국학 자료원).

Yi, Yo-han (이요한). 1987. "Han'gukin ŭi san sinang e taehan ihae" (한국인의 산 신앙에 대한 이해) (Understanding Korean mountain cults). Kidokkyo Sasang (기독교사상) (Korean Christian Thought), 343: 146-155.

Yi, Yŏng-hun (이영훈). 2006. "Woe tasi haebang chŏnhusa inka" (왜 다시 해방 전후사인가) (Why again pre- and post-liberation history?). In Haebang Chŏnhusa Cheinsik 1 (해방 전후사의 재인식 1) (New perception of pre- and post-liberation history Volume 1), edited by Pak Chi-hyang (박지향), Kim Il-yŏng (김일영), Kim Ch'ŏl (김철) and Yi Yŏng-hun (이영훈), 25-63. Seoul: Ch'aeksesang.

Young, Benjamin. 2015. “Juche in the United States: The Black Panther Party’s Relations with North Korea, 1969-1971.” Asia Pacific Journal (Japan Focus), 13, (3), http://apjjf.org/2015/13/12/Benjamin-Young/4303.html.

Yu, Jong-ho. 1994. “The Mountain in Contemporary Fiction”. Koreana, 8 (4): 34-37.