

Understanding North Korea through Its Cities

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: WHY CITIES?

The purpose of this book is to understand and interpret North Korea from the perspective of the city. There are various objectives and approaches in studying North Korea. Some are intended to analyze the reality of the North at an academic level, and others to lead change and seek a profit in North Korea at a practical level. In other words, the former represents the “study of North Korea as science” and the latter the “study of North Korea as policy.” This book is primarily relevant to the former because it aims to gain a better understanding of North Korea and see the North in a new light.

In this research, cities are used as a window to look into North Korea. Cities have rarely been used as the subject matter for the study of North Korea. Under such a state-centered system like in North Korea, it is difficult to uncover the urban activity or existence of the city itself. Therefore, it is understandable that there has been no active research in the field of North Korean cities. In fact, even here in South Korea, research into cities has long been considered a subsidiary or non-mainstream area. This may be because the feature of a state-led or centralized society, meaning a lack of tradition in decentralization or municipality, has been reflected in academic research.

Another reason that this book focuses on North Korean cities is the expectation that cities are likely to serve as an important guide to identify the characteristics of and changes

in the North Korean regime. The urban system of North Korea, including space structure, not only helps understand the past and present of the North but also provide clues to predicting the future directions of North Korea such as accelerated urbanization and emerging urban problems. Historically, cities have often acted as a spatial breeding-ground for social change. In this context, Fernand Braudel remarked, “Towns are like electric transformers.”¹⁾

Cities are a historic invention of humankind. A city was created through the agricultural revolution and the industrial revolution. This explains why such words as planning, design, construction, renovation, regeneration, and reorganization are usually associated with the word “city.” Of course, the method and extent of artificial intervention in building a city vary depending on time and place. The urban planning of a capitalist society where people enjoy the freedom of residence and movement and the autonomous mechanism of the market works cannot be the same as that of a socialist society. Political iconography, which understands the characteristics of a system based on differences in urban form, has emerged in this context. Urban form expresses political meaning. It may be a symptom resulting from a certain political value or be an

1. Braudel (1995: 695) found the driving force behind the modernization of Europe in the development of municipality. He said that cities act like electric transformers because they increase social tension, accelerate exchanges, and continue to mix the lives of people.

intended symbol (Sonne, 2003: 29).²

In particular, North Korea has a plan-ideological state system. Planning is the goal in and of itself, not the means of national administration. North Korea's system goes beyond the "planned economy" of a socialist system as well as the "economic planning" of a capitalist nation. North Korea has thoroughly maintained the "command economy" or "controlled economy" which pursues the "Juche" (self-reliance) ideology. In a country like North Korea, which disapproves of the domain of the market and denies civil society in principle, everything becomes the subject of state-led social engineering. As it is, North Korean cities are inherently the result of engineering planning led by the state. Therefore, this book is not only a study on North Korean cities but also on the North's urban planning.

Cities are a social arena in which a number of people live together as well as a physical space. Although cities are the product of urban planning, the relationship between people and space is neither unilateral nor mechanical. In this regard, North Korea is no exception. According to Henri Lefebvre's

2. According to Georg Simmel, symmetrical planning is linked to despotism and asymmetrical design is interpreted as the result of a liberal society (Sonne, 2003: 30). Regarding the correlation between urban form and political system, Aristotle maintained that "As to strongholds, what is suitable to different forms of government varies: thus an acropolis is suited for an oligarchy or a monarchy but a plain to a democracy; neither to an aristocracy, but rather a number of strong places (Aristotle, 1981: 422).

Spatial Dialectics, people's substantive lives in urban space do not necessarily meet the intentions or goals of urban planning.³ Knowingly or unknowingly, the space norms and location rules imposed from above can be defied anywhere and at any time. Good examples of this are the creation of a private area and the generation of a market. For this reason, this book is not only a study on North Korea's physical urban planning but also a sociological study on the North's urban space.

Unfortunately, this book is not able to cover all North Korean cities. A few cities were chosen, and one of the criteria for selection was if there are available data or existing studies on such relevant cities. Another criterion was if such cities, albeit only a few, could represent North Korean cities as a whole and offer a bigger picture on the North's urban environment. As a result, this book places the greatest emphasis on Pyongyang. This is because Pyongyang is not only the city that North Korea discretionally granted the status of "capital" on the divided Korean Peninsula but also the North's overwhelmingly largest city in every aspect including economy, society, and culture. Other cities selected include Hamhung, the second-largest city in North Korea and

3. Lefebvre (2011) referred to the space created from above such as by the power group and the ruling class as the "representation of space," a majority of people's acceptance of this space as "spatial practice," and resisters' critical rejection and seeking an alternative space as "representational space."

an old industrial city; Kaesong, a historical city and the stage of inter-Korean economic cooperation; and Pyongsong, a new satellite city of Pyongyang

This book is organized as follows. Chapter 2 introduces North Korea's logic and background on architecture, the city, and the capital in terms of the principle of urban space formation in the country. Based on these theoretical discussions, Chapter 3 and 4 carry out case analyses of North Korean cities. Specifically, Chapter 3 examines the "capital" Pyongyang, and Chapter 4 explores Hamhung, Kaesong, and Pyongsong. The contents are broadly divided into the history of the city; space structure, urban landscape, and architecture; and the everyday lives of citizens living together in the city. Although Pyongyang was analyzed relatively in detail, the other provincial cities were analyzed on a limited basis and only partly explained due to the lack of available data. Chapter 5 concludes this book by describing the characteristics and future outlook of North Korean cities.

THE NORTH KOREAN REGIME AND SPACE THEORY

1. North Korea and Architectural Theory
2. North Korea and Urban (Planning) Theory
3. North Korea and "Capital Planning" Theory

North Korea and Architectural Theory

As a compound word comprising the prefix “archi,” meaning “chief, be first, etc.,” and “tecture,” meaning “technology,” architecture can be interpreted as the “best of all technologies” or “great technology.” In the cultural area of Chinese characters, “營造” (planning and building) may be an appropriate term for architecture, but since the modern era, “建築,” which combines “建” (erecting) and “築” (building), has been widely used. Architecture refers to the structures constructed to meet humans’ needs and practical and aesthetical demands with building materials, differentiating itself from a building, which is a structure that simply results from construction techniques (Academy of Korean Studies, 1991).

The meaning of architecture in North Korea goes far beyond these generalities. In North Korea, as specific representations of idea and system, architectural buildings have to offer ideological education in addition to the functionality and safety generally expected from architecture or a structure. North Korea defines architecture as the “means

that guarantees the psychological and physical conditions necessary for the lives and activities of people” (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1995: 548; Kim Jong-il, 1992: 3). North Korea maintains that architecture must include ideology and artistic value as well as practicality (Kim Jong-il, 1992: 11).

In this context, North Korea classifies structures into “construction buildings” and “architectural structures.” Construction buildings refer to residential, public, and production buildings, which are related to the lives of people. Architectural structures refer to memorial structures (monuments), decorative structures (fountains and light poles), sign structures (street signs, etc.), structures for rest and service (benches, structures for creepers, etc.), and propaganda structures (propaganda boards, boards for guide maps, etc.). Architectural structures “contribute to educating people and arousing artistic sensibility through formative processing,” having a higher status than construction buildings (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1995: 552).

In North Korea, architecture should reflect the profits of a specific class or serve the class (Kim Jong-il, 1992: 6). Development for the working masses is the characteristic feature of socialist architecture. This feature, which is the driving force behind architecture development and the most important guideline of architecture creation, serves as a revolutionary ideal for the working class. Accordingly, North Korea introduced the neoclassical style of Russia based on

socialist realism for its post-war reconstruction projects in the 1950s. This style is characterized by a strong symmetrical axis based on the front entrance, which is the center of building, and massive structural aesthetics and symmetry. Also, it stresses verticality by raising story height and exposing the columns of a colonnade, which is interpreted as intensive expressions of the superiority of the socialist system and the will of the popular masses who are constantly fighting (Lee Yoon-ha, 2010a).

From the 1960s, North Korea sought to emerge beyond the influence of the Soviet Union from which socialism originated. In particular, in the architecture field, North Korea began asserting the so-called “Juche architecture” from the 1970s. Through Juche architecture, North Korea attempted to fill socialist contents in the national form. Socialist contents refer to guaranteeing convenience, neatness, beauty, and solidity by reflecting the purposes and needs of the masses. The national form means carrying on the nationalistic aesthetics that suits the people’s unique psychology, sensibility, and taste. North Korea maintains that Juche architecture is the “most revolutionary and people-friendly architecture” or a “model of socialist and communist architecture” (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1995: 550).

According to the theory of Juche architecture, “Architecture shall be created and developed in line with the local and climate characteristics of a country and the everyday

sensibility and taste of people.” While taking precaution against capitalist architectural theory, it especially denies the Soviet Union-style architectural theory that the North once embraced. A representative criticism is as follows: “Those who espoused toadyism and dogmatism sought to introduce the style of architecture and even the lifestyle of a foreign country by mimicking the countryside landscape of a foreign country on the main streets of Pyongyang, which should be filled with modern and splendid buildings” (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993a: 337). As the theory of Juche architecture emerged, going abroad to study architecture in Eastern Europe was suspended altogether. The emergence of the monolithic ideology system led to the purge of most of the architecture-related technocrats who had studied abroad (Chang Se-hoon, 2004: 285).

North Korea’s architecture, which transformed into Juche architecture after socialist architecture, has the following theoretical features. First, it stresses visual balance (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1995: 556). That is, a structure shall not be tilted or lopsided to one side based on one axis. If it is not balanced, it cannot guarantee unity and harmony, causing people to feel uneasy. For this reason, North Korea recommends the use of symmetry and contrast methods in architecture. This may be because North Korea believes that visual balance implies social equality.

Second, North Korea’s architecture emphasizes the desired visibility and symbolism of a structure. North Korean

architecture must not only offer a sense of neatness and cleanness through balance but also make a monument-like impression. In particular, North Korea stresses “architectural emphasis” and an “axis of forming architecture” (Kim Jong-il, 1992: 142). “Architectural emphasis” refers to an element of architectural design which highlights the points that should attract people’s attention. Examples are wall lamps and decorations, a high-rise tower building on the street, a curve-shaped structure among straight-shaped buildings, the traditional Joseon-style roof among modern buildings, etc. An “axis of forming architecture,” which is virtually selected in architectural design, refers to a method that can offer both unity and symbolism by setting a clear master-servant relationship between main and ancillary elements of architectural design.

Third, North Korea’s architecture stresses “construction speed.” In North Korea, all projects should be pushed forward with, bringing about the best construction results, both in terms of quality and quantity, in the shortest period of time. Since Kim Il-sung emphasized the “standardization and specification of design, the industrialization of building material production, and the mechanization of construction” in 1956, construction speed has been a very useful means to show the superiority of the North Korean system (Lee Wang-ki, 2000: 37). The phrase “Pyongyang speed” emerged in this

context.⁴⁾ North Korea’s obsession with construction speed was noticeable once again in the 1980s when Kim Jong-il emerged as the official successor to his father, and Kim Jong-un, the successor to Kim Jong-il, is also stressing a “new socialist construction speed in the Kim Jong-un era.”

In North Korea, the architect’s role is relatively limited. The mission that the North hands down to the architect is to show the ability to realize the architectural plan that the Party pursues. Although the architect is in charge of architectural plan and design, he cannot assert his own ideas and expression. The priority is to perfectly realize the conception and intention of the Suryong (the supreme leader). For these reasons, the most important qualification required for an architect is to “learn the Party’s policies by experience” (Kim Jong-il, 1992: 151). An architect is a kind of political tool who should arm himself with socialism and Juche ideology by endlessly striving to become a “revolutionary fighter and the working class.”

4. In 1958, 28,000 houses were constructed in Pyongyang through prefabricated construction and standardized structural steel. One house could be built in just 14-16 minutes by fabricating a wall in 3 minutes. In North Korea, this is referred to as “Pyongyang speed” (Social Science Publishing House, 1986: 108). In addition, there are many other speeds named after a city or name of a place in North Korea.

2 North Korea and Urban (Planning) Theory

The word city is mixed with the meaning of the capital, or the center of politics or administration, and the meaning of the market, or the center of the economy. The city is the center, which means that many people live together in the city. However, an area's size and population density are not the only standards for deciding whether it is a city or not. The proportion of industry to agriculture or the extent to which urban districts are formed are some key elements of the city. This definition is not that different in North Korea as well. North Korea classifies cities into extra-large-sized, large-sized, medium-sized, and small-sized cities, and it stresses the city as a contrasting concept to the rural area. In this regard, city dwellers are characterized by working in non-agricultural sectors such as industry, administration, science, culture, and education, instead of using land as a means of production (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 256-257). North Korea divides cities by function into production city, consumer city, and commercial and transport city.

Table 1 Types of North Korean Cities and Criteria of Classification

Criteria	Types	
Function	Production City	Industrial city, mining city, fishery city, forestry city
	Consumer City	Administrative and cultural city, science city, citadel city, religious city, tourist city, medical care city, resort city, residential city
	Commercial and Transport City	Trade city, transport city
Size	Extra-large City	Population of over one million
	Large City	Population of 200,000-one million
	Medium City	Population of 50,000-200,000
	Small City	Population of less than 50,000

As mentioned above, the city is subject to planning even in the capitalist system because urban planning and management not only contribute to the efficient use of space for the accumulation of capital but also prevent and resolve the urban problems that threaten the stable reproduction of the system. The essence of urban planning lies in restricting private property rights in the name of the public. In socialist countries, the scope and intensity of urban planning is far broader and stronger than in capitalist countries. This is because in socialist countries there is no such concept as private property rights to lands and buildings in principle and society is ruled by state power, not by the market. North

Korea recognizes the city as the “representation that shows the level of development of a country’s science, technology, art, and culture comprehensively and intensively” (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 258). Therefore, urban planning there should contribute to the political purposes that the North Korean regime pursues.

Socialist urban planning has a preference for a small city, which has the production elements of a rural community, instead of an industrialized big city. It is opposed to urban redevelopment, which worsens the lives of the lower class, and seeks not separation but harmony between the urban and rural areas (Kim Won, 1998: 19-43). The ideal socialist city is a “city of production,” a “city of green,” and a “city of symbolism.” A city of production means that the city should have its own production function, instead of serving as a space for consumption. A city of green is aimed at reducing the gap between the urban and rural areas while controlling the expansion of the city. A city of symbolism refers to the city serving as a stage for political propaganda, revealing both ideology and the regime (Yim Dong-woo, 2011).

North Korea’s urban planning, on the one hand, reflects the above universal principles of the socialist city. On the other hand, the North’s urban planning is based on its own unique unitary leadership system. Urban planning, as a “matter of idea and ideology” (Kim Jong-il, 1995: 61) and a “political and economic task” (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 258), should

be completely based on the construction plan and policy of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il. Kim Il-sung said, “A country’s political and economic appearance is represented in city construction. If a city is built well, the country’s appearance will be improved. If not, the country will become down-at-heel” (Kim Il-sung, 1980b: 359). The city that North Korea aims to create is a “city which consistently represents a theory of revolutionary Suryong” and a “city which consistently realizes ideological and artistic needs” (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 259).

According to North Korea’s Urban Planning Act, urban planning refers to the “unified and comprehensive plan” to construct, renovate, and maintain buildings, facilities, and green spaces by using the given land. Houses, public buildings, monumental structures, streets, squares, urban traffic facilities, electric and telecommunications facilities, water supply and drainage facilities, heat supply facilities, parks, and amusement parks, etc., are all subject to urban planning. North Korea’s urban planning is further classified into a comprehensive plan, a detailed plan, urban block design, and consecutive and annual construction plans. The comprehensive plan is a long-term development plan looking ahead into the next 20 years, and the detailed plan is more specific than its comprehensive counterpart, including information for each zone by use or the sub-zone section.

The elements that must be reflected in urban planning are as follows: the forecast on population change; the size and boundary of urban planning, construction, and protection areas; the size and boundary of revolutionary battlefields, revolutionary historic sites, residential areas, public building areas, industrial zones, the railway, port, and airfield areas, warehouse sections, special zones, important institutions, and enterprise zones; the spread of the city center, roads and squares, traffic networks in the city, technical facility networks and accompanying facilities, green spaces, areas to be developed, and disaster and pollution prevention facilities, etc.

North Korea's urban planning theory has a few main characteristics. First, more than anything else, it exercises caution against the growth of a big city while seeking the balanced development of urban and rural areas. As defined in North Korea's Land Planning Act, "The size of a city shall not be too big" (Article 11) and "Instead of building a city too big, population density and building density shall be reduced and satellite cities shall be developed reasonably around big cities" (Article 12). The North argues that preventing a city from becoming too big is intended to create the "favorable conditions for the political, economic, and cultural lives of the people," and pursuing a small city is "based on the Juche-style principle of urban formation" (Lee Min-ju, 2005: 64; as cited

in Kong Min-dal, 2012: 414).⁵¹

Second, North Korea's urban planning tends to emphasize the city center. As a "certain zone which is the center from the perspectives of urban function and urban formation," the city center is considered to be constructed in a concerted effort to realize the "urban landscape of a socialist city" (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 266, 267). Kim Il-sung believed that once it is set, the location of the city center will not be changed as long as the social system or its nature does not change, thus requiring special caution in the selection process (Kim Il-sung, 1980a: 279). The reason that the city center is especially important in urban planning is that the North considers it as a place to educate citizens on ideas and ideology in order to promote propaganda and strengthen the regime. As a result, the Kim Il Sung Statue is built in the city's most prominent place and the statue is employed as the basic axis of the overall city, making good use of the natural environment such as rivers, seas, hills, and green spaces, which is the general principle of North Korea's urban planning (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 267, 559).

As a space to show the ideological symbolism of the

5. In fact, the urban policy of pursuing small cities has failed. As of 2008, the populations of Pyongyang, Hamhung, and Chongjin exceed 500,000 (Central Bureau of Statistics, the 2008 census). Pyongyang and Nampo have already become metropolitan areas, and Kaesong, Sinuiju, Chongjin, and Rajin are growing into major regional hub cities. Nonetheless, North Korean cities have far less population than those in South Korea on average.

regime as well as a place to educate citizens on the theory of revolutionary Suryong, the North's city center is home to public and cultural facilities such as museums, culture halls, and theatres, which is in contrast to the capitalist city center in which administration, commerce, business, and service-related facilities are concentrated. As Kim Il-sung maintained, "Instead of public offices on the main street or around the square in the city center, public and cultural buildings, public service buildings, and conveniences which are commonly used by workers as well as modern houses for workers should be deployed rationally according to the urban service network system (Kim Il-sung, 1980a: 280). Kim Jong-il said that while capitalist cities "construct buildings for authorities, entertainment facilities, luxurious houses, and high-rise buildings in the city center and scenic locations," the city center in a socialist country should be planned as a place "which is always crowded with people eating and drinking, and overflows with the joy and happiness of the people" (Kim Jong-il, 1992: 9-10).

Third, North Korea's urban planning stresses the role of the main streets. While considering the axis of the city as an important element, North Korea recognizes streets as a design element which should be prioritized. In particular, both ends of a street are stressed, clearly showing the beginning and end points of the street (Kim Ki-ho, 2006: 220-222), and important public domains are located at every node in the street network

(Lee Jong-ho, 2013: 20). Large-scale public buildings and high-rise apartment buildings are used to create a magnificent and splendid street. North Korea works to make a street more dynamic by varying the form of its buildings, the number of their storeys, and the arrangement of buildings. The reason that North Korea emphasizes street-based urban planning is that the North wants to spread the idea and ideology of the city center as far as possible through the street. In addition, this linear urban development serves as an effective means to show the superiority of the system at home and abroad and also as a visible propaganda instrument.

Fourth, North Korea's urban planning pursues the concept of a microdistrict, which is aimed at lowering the density of the city, controlling the expansion of the city, and closing the gap between urban and rural areas. This concept, first proposed by Nikolai Milyutin in 1935 when the Soviet Union carried out the Moscow reconstruction plan, seeks to bind the public life system together for each residential unit. A microdistrict is similar to the Neighborhood Unit proposed by Clarence Perry in the theory of capitalist urban planning. The urban-related academic fields in the Soviet Union were interested in the problems emerging in Western cities from the late 1950s and wanted to share their solutions to them (Nam Young-ho, 2014: 239-240; Yim Dong-woo, 2011: 45-46).

The socialist microdistrict system was more actively adopted by North Korea in the process of urban planning.

North Korea, which restricts the freedom of residence and movement in principle, seeks to deploy people in a certain local community in which they can enjoy production, residence, consumption, and leisure activities. The reason that the prefabricated apartment buildings and harmonica-type houses account for a majority of the North Korean urban residential housing types is closely related to the communal neighborhood relationship of the microdistrict system (Chang Se-hoon, 2005a).

Lastly, North Korea emphasizes “urban management” to manage, preserve, and maintain the buildings and facilities of the city as much as urban planning and construction. North Korea’s urban management is similar to the concept of city management in South Korea. North Korea enacted its Urban Management Act with the purposes of “protecting and managing the buildings and facilities in urban and rural areas and running cities and villages with prospects” in 1982, long before the North enacted the Urban Planning Act in 2003. North Korea carries out urban management as a national and social project by establishing the Ministry of Urban Management which organizes and implements an urban management project. All living environments such as buildings, water supply and drainage, roads, rivers, and parks are subject to urban management. Regular maintenance and management ensures the efficient and long-term use of these environments. North Korea enacted the City Beautification

Act as recently as 2013.

Urban management, a feature of North Korean-style urban planning, seems to be intended to complement the limits of state-led urban planning in its own way. Although the sole main agent of urban planning is the state in theory, in reality, it is impossible for the state to bear all the expenses of the plan. Therefore, the North forcibly mobilizes the voluntary efforts of residents living in the city for the maintenance and management of the city. There is neither citizen autonomy nor civic participation in the North’s urban management. Instead, North Korea stresses citizens’ participation in the urban management events designated by the state as residents’ moral obligation. For example, the North designated April and October as the months of city beautification, and the first Sunday of every month as the day of city beautification. By making citizens participate in such urban management activities, North Korea can strengthen patriotism on the one hand while reducing the state’s burden of city management on the other.

3

North Korea and “Capital Planning” Theory

The capital city is one of a number of cities located in a country. For a country like Korea, which has pursued a centralized, unified nation from its early history, the capital city has always existed throughout its history. However, there was no concept of a capital city under the decentralized feudal system of Europe. Under the feudal system, the political center was a rural community, not a city. As such, a capital city was not needed nor existed until a unified state was created as a ruling unit. The capital city then became important in the process of establishing modern nation states from the 16th century. While going through the era of absolute monarchy, the capital city, as the representative city of a country, became the spatial center of modern state power that controls and manages the entire territory.

Historically, the planning of capital cities has been a kind of urban planning and, at the same time, something separated from that (Gordon, 2006: 1). It is both cultural planning based on software as well as physical planning based on hardware. The planning of capital cities of modern nation states, which

was headed by the Paris renovation project by Haussmann under the reign of Napoleon III, was the process of building the main roads running in all directions and constructing grandiose public buildings, but at the same time, it served as an opportunity to symbolically decorate and show what a new modern nation-state pursued. This is because the symbolic spaces and ceremonies related to the history and people of a country are concentrated in capital cities (Takashi, 2003: 60-62). In general, the capital cities of modern states are the expression of nationalism but, in some cases, they may be the spatial representation of charismatic power (Vale, 2006: 30-31). As such, planned capital cities are more likely to become the explicit spatial symbol of ruling power (Sonne, 2003: 29).

The relationship between North Korea and its capital city of Pyongyang has more significance than that between the Republic of Korea and Seoul. The ROK did not establish special planning for the capital city of Seoul in the process of founding and developing a modern state after it was liberated from Japan. Seoul was simply the “capital city by custom,” which is in stark contrast to the fact that most modern states were especially interested in the planning of their capital cities. Meanwhile, North Korea describes the capital city as a “city in which the state’s supreme sovereign agency and the central government are located,” or a “country’s political, economic, and cultural center” (Encyclopedia Publisher, 2000: 478). North Korea states that the capital city is the “face

that characterizes everything of the country” (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 259).

As the North Korean regime was established, Kim Il-sung defined Pyongyang as the “heart of the Korean people, the capital city of the socialist fatherland, and the origin of our revolution” (Kim Il-sung, 1981: 622). In particular, Kim Il-sung placed much weight on the reconstruction of Pyongyang in the post-war restoration process. Kim Il-sung argued that Pyongyang should be a restoration priority, explaining that the “Party’s Central Committee and the DPRK government are located in Pyongyang, and thus all policy lines and plans for the construction of a self-reliant and independent country are established in the city, and people’s fighting to carry out the great task of founding a country is organized and led in the capital city” (as cited in Jo Dong-ho, 2013: 63). North Korea’s planning of Pyongyang as the capital city gained momentum again as Kim Jong-il emerged as the successor. In the process of the hereditary succession of power, the meaning of Pyongyang as the “capital city of revolution” became highlighted for political purposes (Jo Dong-ho, 2013: 67).

The relationship between the North Korean regime and Pyongyang can be compared to that of the theatre state and the stage. In general, a state is understood as an “institutional reality” based on coercive forces. However, anthropologist Geertz (Geertz, 1980) proposed the alternative state theory

of “theatre state” through his study on royal protocol in Bali in the late 19th century. In the theatre state, power works as “systems of interacting symbols” and “patterns of interworking meanings,” and the key principle of running the state is no other than a play. The ruler and the governed are not in conflict with each other but become actors participating in the play based on the same scenario. In general, totalitarian states tend to show strong features of the theatre state (see Takashi, 2003; Han Seok-jeong, 1999; Kwon Hyung-jin, 2011).

The North Korean regime can be classified as a typical theatre state because it has made the entire state into a theatre or a stage through the “pain of colonial rule and the memory of partisan fighting” and the “national epic story of the Manchurian era” (Kwon Heon-ik and Chung Byung-ho, 2013: 43-46). After the death of Kim Il-sung, North Korea maintained and strengthened its nature as a theatre state through “politics of funeral and memory.” Medlicott (2005) believed that “Symbolic performances constitute a grand mediating layer for the production of North Korean state sovereignty.” Wada Haruki argued, “The partisan state of North Korea, directed and designed by Kim Jong-il, takes on, partly but evidently, some characteristics of what Geertz calls the ‘theatre state’” (Wada, 2002: 156). If North Korea is a theatre state, Pyongyang is the key performance stage (Jun Sang-in, Kim Mee-young, and Jo Eun-hee, 2015).

PYONGYANG, THE NORTH KOREAN “CAPITAL”

1. History
2. Space Structure, Landscape, and Architecture
3. Urban Space and Civic Life

Urban (Planning) History of Pyongyang

Pyongyang, which was the capital city of Koguryo (Goguryeo), was the second-largest city on the Korean Peninsula during Japanese colonial rule. In 1946, a year after Korea's liberation from Japan, Pyongyang was designated as a "special city" by the Provisional People's Committee. In 1948, when the government was established, Pyongyang became the temporary capital city of the DPRK and was later designated as the "capital city" of North Korea in 1972.⁶⁾ As of 2012, as the only direct-administered city,⁷⁾ Pyongyang consists of two counties (gun) and 18 districts (guyok). The area of the capital city is 1,714 square kilometers, accounting for 1.4% of the entire North Korean territory and about 2.8

6. It was North Korea's arbitrary and unilateral decision that designated Pyongyang as its capital city. The Republic of Korea is the only legitimate country on the Korean Peninsula, and in this regard, no other capital city beyond Seoul is allowed. The understanding of this book is that the North Korean regime exists in reality and the North considers Pyongyang its capital.

7. In 1945, when Korea was liberated from Japan, North Korea's administrative division consisted of six provinces (do), nine cities (si), and 89 counties (gun). Through several revisions, as of 2012, it is composed of one direct-administered city (Pyongyang), two special cities (Rason and Nampo), and nine provinces (South Pyongan, North Pyongan, South Hamgyong, North Hamgyong, South Hwanghae, North Hwanghae, Kangwon, Jagang, and Yanggang Provinces) (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013).

times the size of Seoul (605 square kilometers) (National Statistical Office, 2014). Since liberation, the population of Pyongyang has continued to increase, reaching 3.255 million in the 2008 census. Pyongyang is the only city which has a population of more than one million residents,⁸⁾ and as of 2008, the population of Pyongyang reached 4.23 times that of Hamhung (769,000) and 10.6 times that of Kaesong (308,000), apparently becoming a "primate city" in North Korea.

Table 2 Population Change in Major North Korean Cities

(Unit: 1,000 people)

	1940	1967	1972	1980	1981	1987	1993	2008
Pyongyang	286	1,555	1,847	1,842	1,907	2,355	2,741	3,255
Hamhung	75	424	489	594	613	701	710	769
Kaesong	72	141	326	107	112	331	334	308
Pyongsong	9	28	109	199	212	239	273	284
Chongjin	198	226	407	509	531	520	585	668
Wonsan	79	226	272	233	242	274	300	363
Sinuiju	61	170	217	271	276	289	326	359
Sariwon	35	85	85	174	187	221	254	308

[Source: Jo Nam-hoon, 2013]

8. North Korea has two cities with a population of over 500,000 (Hamhung and Chongjin) and 18 cities with a population of over 100,000 (Nampo, Wonsan, Sinuiju, Tanchon, Kaecheon, Kaesong, Sariwon, Sunchon, Pyongsong, Haeju, Kanggye, Kimchaek, Huichon, Kusong, Rason, Hyesan, Sinpo, and Songrim) (Jo Nam-hoon, 2013).

Although population movement is quite limited in North Korea, the rate of population movement in Pyongyang is relatively higher than that of other regions. As of 2008, the percentage of the population that lives in the same residence as five years ago is 96.55% across the nation, meaning only 3.45% lives in a different residence than five years ago. By contrast, in Pyongyang, 91.43% has lived in the city for five years, showing a relatively high migration rate of 8.57%. Considering that North Korea regulates the freedom of residence and movement in principle, it is noteworthy that Pyongyang's population migration rate is two to three times higher than that of the local provinces.

Table 3 Percentage of the Population Living in Their Hometown (same residence as 5 years ago) and Settled Elsewhere (different residence from 5 years ago) by Region

(Unit: %)

Category	Same Residence as 5 Years Ago			Different Residence from 5 Years Ago		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Nationwide	96.55	96.87	96.27	3.45	3.13	3.73
Pyongyang	91.43	92.35	90.60	8.57	7.65	9.40
Yanggang	97.08	97.23	96.94	2.92	2.77	3.06
North Hamgyong	96.90	97.15	96.67	3.10	2.85	3.33
South Hamgyong	98.06	98.39	97.78	1.94	1.61	2.22
Kangwon	95.71	96.26	95.23	4.29	3.74	4.77
Jagang	98.36	98.28	98.43	1.64	1.72	1.57
North Pyongan	97.83	98.11	97.59	2.17	1.89	2.41

Category	Same Residence as 5 Years Ago			Different Residence from 5 Years Ago		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
South Pyongan	97.03	97.17	96.90	2.97	2.83	3.10
North Hwanghae	97.44	97.39	97.48	2.56	2.1	2.52
South Hwanghae	97.61	97.98	97.28	2.39	2.02	2.72

(Source: Chung Chang-moo, 2012)

Pyongyang was reduced to rubble during the Korean War. According to the data released by North Korea, 8,700 factories and enterprises, 600,000 houses, 5,000 schools, 1,000 hospitals and clinics, 260 theatres and cinemas, 670 science and research institutes and libraries, and thousands of cultural and welfare facilities were burned down or destroyed during the war (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993b: 329). In January 1951, during the war, Kim Il-sung began the Pyongyang restoration and reconstruction project and sought to rebuild Pyongyang the ideal socialist city. In December 1951, Kim established the Ministry of City Construction and prepared the "Comprehensive Plan to Restore and Reconstruct Pyongyang." However, there were limitations to the wartime Pyongyang restoration project to build the ideal socialist city because the U.S. military's bombing still continued (Lee Wang-ki, 2000: 136; Chang Se-hoon, 2005b: 233-234).

North Korea began the Pyongyang restoration project in earnest in July 1953 as the fighting was coming to an end.

After organizing the Pyongyang Restoration Committee, Kim Il-sung personally took charge of it (Chang Se-hoon, 2005b: 244). Kim Il-sung held that since Japanese colonial rule, Pyongyang had become a “deformed and non-cultural city” that was not suitable for socialist ideology, thus he sought to construct “Pyongyang, the capital city of democracy, as a more splendid, beautiful, magnificent, and modern city,” instead of restoring it to its original state (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993a: 341; Kim Il-sung, 1980a: 278). Ironically, Pyongyang was given the opportunity to be reborn as the ideal socialist city because it was totally destroyed during the Korean War (Chang Se-hoon, 2005b). In addition, Kim Il-sung wanted to show North Korea’s victory to the U.S. by reconstructing Pyongyang as quickly as possible (Kim Il-sung, 1980a: 276; Kim Jong-il, 1995: 59, 60-61).

In the process of reorganizing Pyongyang as the ideal socialist city, North Korea actively employed architects and city planners who were studying in the Soviet Union and the East-European bloc. Among them, Kim Jong-hee, who had trained at Moscow Architecture Academy, was a representative architect. Kim proposed the “Pyongyang Masterplan” based on the socialist urban planning ideology. Its key contents included an equal space hierarchy through a multi-centric city, sufficient green infrastructure to resolve the gap between urban and rural areas, and a city structure made up of grid-type microdistrict units. The construction of the ideal socialist

city in Pyongyang continued until the end of the 1960s. Main roads were extended, large public and cultural facilities were built, squares and monuments were set up, and an ample supply of apartment buildings were constructed.

In the 1970s and 1980s, North Korea, ideologically, emerged from Soviet-style socialism and turned to Kim Il-sung’s Juche ideology. In turn, North Korea’s urban planning ideology shifted from socialism-based to Juche ideology-based. However, the North, facing an economic downturn, was not able to carry out the simultaneous development of all its cities. As a result, North Korea, through a select-and-concentrate strategy, focused on the development of Pyongyang on the premise of sacrificing and delaying the development of provincial cities. The strategy of “self-reliant urbanization,” which refers to developing a city by its own capability, emerged. In the 1980s, Pyongyang became a symbolic space that reflected the theory of revolutionary Suryong and highlighted the superiority of the North Korean regime. In fact, after the establishment of Juche ideology, Pyongyang was developing markedly ahead of other cities.

At this time, symbolic squares and monumental public buildings sprang up in the city center in which mass rallies, military parades, and celebrations were held. Main streets spreading out far and wide from the city center and high-rise houses drastically increased solely in Pyongyang (Encyclopedia Publisher, 1998: 267-268). The construction

of premium hotels for foreigners actively began the push to emerge as an international city, especially ahead of the World Festival of Youth and Students in 1989. In the process of preparing for this event, all construction workers and building materials from the provinces were concentrated on Pyongyang to renovate the streets (Chang Se-hoon, 2006: 197).

Even during the “Arduous March” in the 1990s, brought about by unprecedented natural disasters and the collapse of the East-European bloc, special considerations for Pyongyang were not suspended but rather strengthened. A case in point was the enactment of the “Act on the Management of the Capital City Pyongyang” in 1998. The basis of the Act is expanding investment in the development of Pyongyang and encouraging the entire population to actively participate in the management of the capital city on the premise of sacrificing the provinces. There was a hidden agenda behind North Korea’s aggressive construction and reorganization of Pyongyang: North Korea wanted to show national dignity and authority as an independent and self-reliant powerhouse by decorating its capital Pyongyang. To outsiders, Pyongyang was a “huge symbol” that disguised the failure of the North Korean economy (Jo Dong-ho, 2013: 49).

Since that time, Pyongyang has maintained its privileged status. In 2002, Kim Jong-il proposed the “construction of a 21st-century capital city.” In 2012, the North raised the

“Department of Capital City Construction” under the Cabinet to the “Capital City Construction Command” under the National Defense Commission on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Kim Il-sung’s birth. Kim Jong-un, the successor to Kim Jong-il, established the “Committee of Capital City Construction” in April 2012 and appointed a chairperson who is equivalent to a deputy prime minister. In his New Year’s Speech for 2014, Kim Jong-un argued that North Koreans should do their best to continue developing Pyongyang through a joint army-civilian operation. While going through the third-generation hereditary power succession, Pyongyang has increasingly strengthened its role as the stage for the theatre state.

2 Space Structure, Landscape, and Architecture

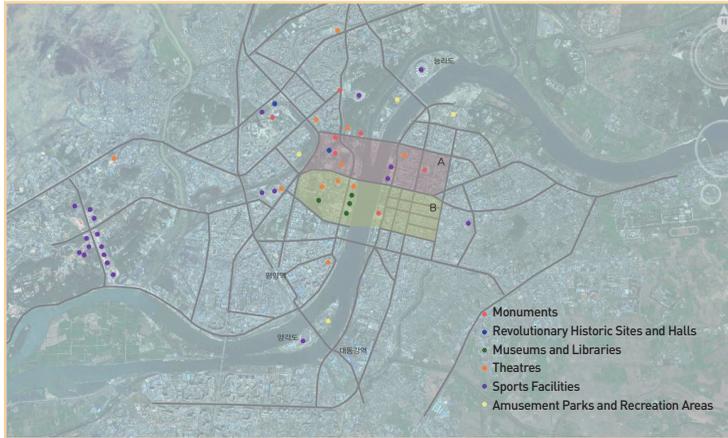
The direct-administered city of Pyongyang is divided into Central Pyongyang, East Pyongyang, and West Pyongyang based on the Taedong River. By administrative division, as of 2012, Pyongyang consists of 18 districts (guyok) and two counties (gun) (Kangdong County and Kangnam County). In accordance with the North Korean-style urban planning theory which focuses on the city center, spaces for cultural events for people such as squares, theatres, and museums as well as political and administrative buildings are concentrated in the Central District of Central Pyongyang, the center of Pyongyang. East Pyongyang is divided into Taedonggang, Songyo, Tongdaewon, Rakrang, Sadong and Ryokpo Districts. West Pyongyang is made up of Taesong, Sosong, Moranbong, Potonggang, Central, Pyongchon, and Mangyongdae Districts. There are islands such as Rungrado, Yanggakdo, and Turusom in the Taedong River. The bridges connecting East and West Pyongyang include Rungra, Okryu, Taedong, and Yanggak Bridges.

Figure 1 Administrative Division Map of Pyongyang



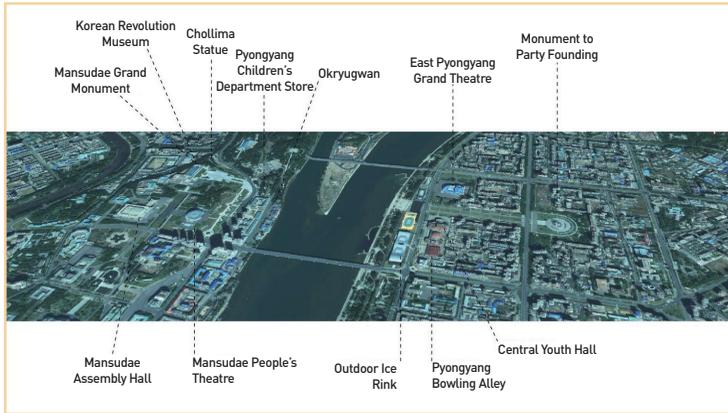
As Pyongyang's main streets were improved and extended, neighboring areas grew into new districts, resulting in the urbanization of Pyongyang (Yim Dong-woo, 2011: 103). This is because North Korea's urban planning puts greater emphasis on the streets than on the district. The space arrangement of Pyongyang shows that political and ideological symbolism in the city center spreads far and wide through the main streets. By location, there are Munsu Street, Tongdaewon Street, Saesalim Street, Chongnyon Street, and Daehak Street in East Pyongyang, and Kaesonmun Street connected to the Arch of Triumph, Moranbong Street, Sungri Street connected to the Kim Il Sung Square, and Mansudae Street in West Pyongyang. Changgwang Street, Chollima Street, and Rakwon Street are located along the Potonggang, a tributary stream of the Taedong River.

Figure 2 Space Structure and Major Spatial Elements of Pyongyang



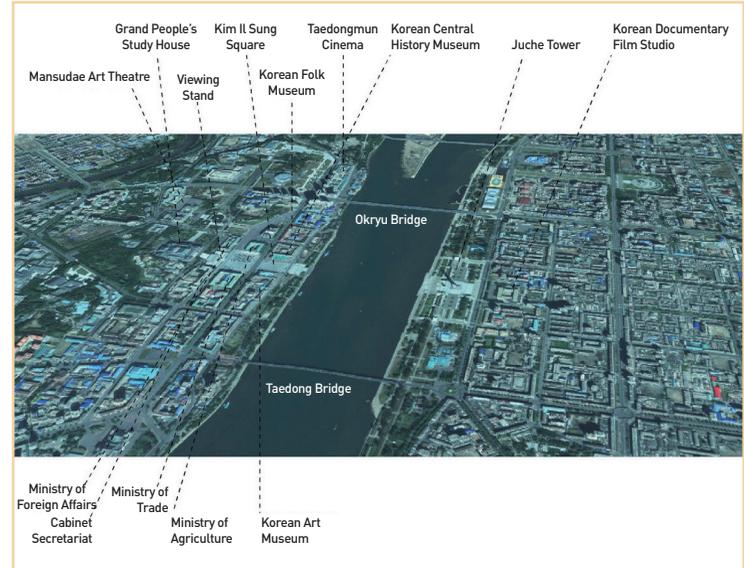
[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Figure 3 District A (Central District and Taedonggang District)



[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

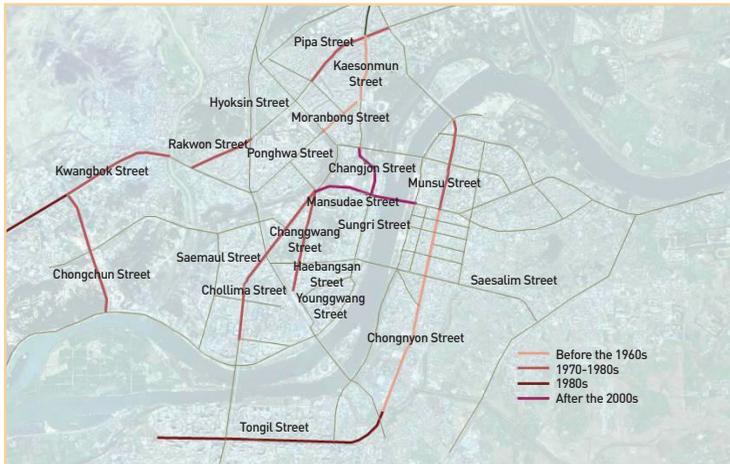
Figure 4 District B (Central District and Tongdaewon District)



[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Table 4 Streets Created in Pyongyang by Period

Period	Streets
1950s	Chongnyon Street, Kaesonmun Street
1960s	Moranbong Street
1970s	Chollima Street, Pipa Street, Rakwon Street
1980s	Changgwang Street, Munsu Street, the First Stage of Kwangbok Street, Chongchun Street
1990s	The Second Stage of Kwangbok Street, Tonggil Street
2000s	Mansudae Street, Changjon Street

Figure 5 Streets Created in Pyongyang by Period

[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Figure 6 Moranbong Street

[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Pyongyang's main streets and representative symbolic structures are as follows. Moranbong Street constructed in the 1960s is about 1km long from the Arch of Triumph to Mansu Bridge. It was called Kumsusan Street in the 1970s and renamed Moranbong Street in 1982 (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993b: 43). Moranbong Street is situated at an important location in the transportation system. The street was created in a way to emphasize the Arch of Triumph while not blocking the landscape of Moranbong. Large-scale buildings such as Kaeson Cinema were built along the space of Kaesonmun Square. The Korean People's Army (KPA) Circus Theatre with a dome and the 15-storey, twin-tower Moranbong Hotel are arranged to face each other in the space connected to Mansu Bridge, clearly showing the feature of the North Korean-style urban planning which marks the beginning and end of a street.

Pipa Street is 2.8km long, linking the center of Pyongyang to West Pyongyang. Pipa Street was built by taking full advantage of the given natural geographical features and site conditions (Kim Ki-ho, 2006: 226-228) and was intended to give a sense of splendour and grandeur through the arrangement of the April 25 Culture Hall, the 18-storey West Pyongyang Hotel, and the 10-storey, tower-style apartments. Chollima Street is 4.4km long stretching from Potongmun in the Central District to Tongsong Bridge and to Chungsong Bridge in Rakrang District. Chollima Street was built in

two phases of construction in the 1970s. The west side of Chollima Street, as the riverside of Potonggang, is arranged with relatively large-scale public buildings while leaving enough space between them. In particular, the People's Palace of Culture composed of 20 gable roofs, which is located at the entrance of Chollima Street, creates a dynamic street. The east side of the street is deployed mainly with 8-12-storey apartment buildings in a row and between them are arranged 12-storey and 15-storey apartment buildings, varying the height of the buildings. The consecutive arrangement of shops in the lower part of the apartment buildings is noticeable and seems to be intended to add vitality to the street (Kim Ki-ho, 2006: 224-226; Lee Hwa-sun, 1993b: 45-46).

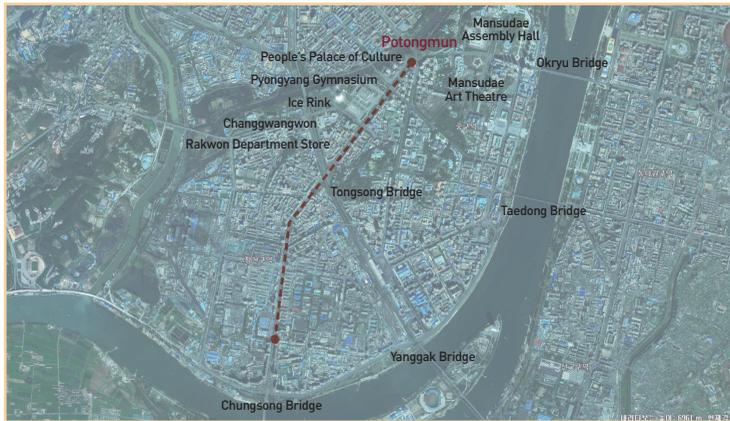
As in the case of Chollima Street, Rakwon Street was built in the 1970s. The street is 3km long, linking Potonggang Station to Rakwon Bridge. Buildings on Rakwon Street are 8-10 storeys high on average, with a 20-storey apartment situated at the entrance of Rakwon Bridge that constitutes a landmark, and a 18-storey, \wedge -shaped flat apartment was built at Potonggang Station (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993b: 173). Changgwang Street, located in the Central District, stretches from Pyongyang Station to Potongmun and is the busiest street in North Korea. This was an outdated region in which 2-3-storey studio buildings were concentrated before 1980.

Kim Jong-il considered the construction of Changgwang Street as the “starting point to bring about a new change in

the construction sector” (Lee Hwa-sun 1993b: 175). In fact, Changgwang Street displays a more audacious and modern landscape in the aspects of form and color. Major consumer facilities such as 30 15-40-storey apartment buildings, the twin-towered Koryo Hotel, Pyongyang Station Department Store, Rakwon Department Store, Changgwangwon, and the Air Koryo HQ are located on the street, and, in particular, “Changgwang Restaurant Street” was created in front of Koryo Hotel.

Munsu Street, built in the 1980s, is 3km long from the Munsu intersection to the parking lot of the trackless trams. A variety of commercial facilities and amenities such as apartment buildings of various heights, the Central Youth Hall, the East Pyongyang Grand Theatre, and Taesong Department Store are located on the street. Munsu Street was designed to be linked to the Mansudae Grand Monument and was built in harmony with nearby monumental structures such as the Juche Tower and the Monument to Party Founding. In October 2013, North Korea opened Munsu Water Park, the largest indoor and outdoor pool in the North, on the north end of Munsu Street.

Figure 7 Chollima Street



[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Figure 8 Landscape of Rakwon Street



Figure 9 Munsu Street



[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Figure 10 Apartments of District A

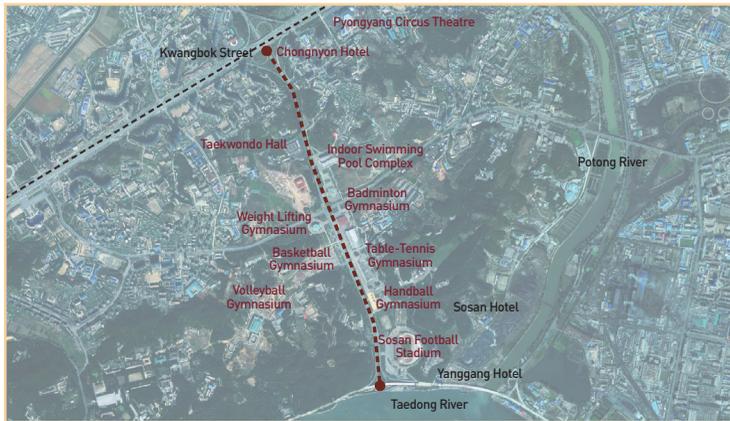


[Source: the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Figure 11 Apartments of District B



[Source: the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Figure 12 Chongchun Street

[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

Chongchun Street connects the Pyongyang-Nampo Highway and Kwangbok Street from north to south. A wide range of sports facilities are situated on the street. Chongchun Street was named to mark the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students in 1989. Since the 1970s, North Korea has greatly increased its investment in sports facilities, and as of today, the sports village in Chongchun Street constitutes the center of the general sports culture in the North. Meanwhile, Kwangbok Street is 5.4km long, stretching from the Palgol Intersection in front of Kwangbok Station to the entrance of the access road toward Mangyongdae, in which the birthplace of Kim Il-sung is located. Both sides of the street are lined with 12-30-storey apartment buildings, cultural facilities such as the Mangyongdae Children's Palace and the Pyongyang

Circus Theatre, and educational facilities such as Kang Pan Sok Revolutionary School. The street was extended and improved in the lead up to the World Festival of Youth and Students.

Mansudae Street is the representative street constructed after the 2000s. This street connecting Potongmun and Okryu Bridge of the Taedong River crosses the Central District, the center of Pyongyang. This street was part of the large-scale new town development project, or the development project of 100,000 housing units, which was carried out in Pyongyang in 2012, the year marking the centennial anniversary of Kim Il-sung's birth and that "opens the door to a strong and prosperous great country." Changjon Street runs from the crossroads in which Sungri Street, stretching out from the Pyongyang Grand Theatre to the Arch of Triumph, and Mansudae Street, from Mansudae to Okryu Bridge, intersect. Surrounded by the Korean Revolution Museum, the Mansudae Assembly Hall, the Chollima Statue, and Okryugwan, this street was built in the same time period. The construction of Changjon Street is known for its inclusion in the last will and testament left by Kim Jong-il. Recently, Changjon Street is emerging as a new wealthy village in Pyongyang. North Korea actively promotes the street, claiming, "The People's Theatre, high-rise apartment buildings, and health facilities shot straight up in an unusual way, perfectly realizing Juche-style architectural aesthetics in the aspect of structure, art, and green space" (KCNA, June 20, 2012).

Figure 13 Mansudae Street

[Source: drawn up by the researcher using the V-World 3D Map provided by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport]

The development of streets in Pyongyang was accompanied by the construction of apartment buildings. In South Korea, apartment housing accounts for around 60% of the entire housing market. North Korea has built a substantial number of apartments. North Korea's apartment buildings are concentrated in Pyongyang. As of 2009, Pyongyang's percentage of apartment housing stood at 35.2%, a stark contrast to the fact that apartments account for less than 10% of housing in most regions except for South Pyongan Province (Lee Jong-ho, 2013: 55).

While apartment buildings are a target of criticism from the perspective of the city landscape in South Korea, they are recognized as the structures that decorate the city and streets

in North Korea. This explains why apartment buildings in Pyongyang vary in their size and form depending on the time period when their street was built. In other words, streets and apartment buildings work together in the aspect of Pyongyang's urban landscape. High-rise apartment buildings in Pyongyang are considered good artifacts to promote the superiority of the North Korean regime by creating a massive urban landscape (Hong Min, 2014: 112). While most apartment building in South Korea are complex-type, those in North Korea are built along the streets in a horizontal fashion.

The early streets built right after the end of the Korean War were lined with 4-6-storey apartments and various convenience and health facilities were located consecutively in the lower floors of the apartments. However, in the case of the streets constructed in the 1950s and 1960s, buildings were deployed in a diagonal line or at a right angle, attempting to break the monotonous skyline with various street designs (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993a: 345-348). After the 1970s, apartment buildings, which were different in height, size, and the form of roof, began to be mixed. The North sought to create a more dynamic street landscape by building these structured in mixed manner, instead of arranging them in rows.

Apartment buildings over 20 storeys were constructed in \wedge -shaped, sawtooth-shaped, and ∇ -shaped floor plans, and these buildings were not only deployed unevenly but also through turning the buildings themselves a few times, making

the streets look more three-dimensional and magnificent. In particular, high-rise buildings were arranged in a group on one side and low-rise buildings were placed on the other side, thus raising the three dimensional effect through the contrast (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993b: 154-158). Mid-to-low-rise buildings are built on lowlands and high-rise buildings are constructed on high lands, maximizing their architectural contrast by using the natural geographical features. This shows a striking contrast from South Korea's street design which deploys low-rise buildings on high lands, preserving the natural landscape and refraining from fostering a sense of incompatibility (Kim Shin-won, 2007: 185-186; Lee Hwa-sun, 1993b: 163-170). In short, it is impossible to analyze the street landscape of Pyongyang without discussing the forms and roles of apartment buildings.

Table 5 Construction Status of Main Structures and Sculptures of Pyongyang by Period

Period	Main Structures and Sculptures
1950s	Pyongyang Railway Station (began construction in 1950), Moranbong Theatre (1954), Korean Central History Museum (1954), Korean Art Museum (1954), Taedongmun Cinema (September 1955)
1960s	Pyongyang Grand Theatre (1960), Okryugwan (August 1960), Chollima Statue (1961), Pyongyang Students' and Children's Palace (1963), Korean People's Army (KPA) Circus Theatre (1964)

Period	Main Structures and Sculptures
1970s	Korean Revolution Museum (1972), Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum (1974), Mansudae Monument (1972), Pyongyang Gymnasium (1973), People's Palace of Culture (1974), April 25 Culture Hall (1975), Mansudae Art Theatre (1976)
1980s	Ice Rink (1982), Grand People's Study House (1982), Arch of Triumph (1982), Kim Il Sung Stadium (1982), Juche Tower (1982), Mansudae Assembly Hall (1985), Koryo Hotel (1985), Pyongyang Circus Theatre (1989), Central Youth Hall (1989), East Pyongyang Grand Theatre (1989), Chongnyon Hotel (1989), Pyongyang International Cinema Hall (1989), May Day Stadium (1989)
1990s	Kumsusan Palace of the Sun, Three Revolution Exhibition Hall, Monument to Party Founding (1990), Monument to Victory in the Fatherland Liberation War (1993)

North Korea first focused on squares, the center of political and cultural events, in the process of carrying out its urban planning for Pyongyang. The squares, as places in which a wide range of cultural events, festivities, and mass rallies are held, play a pivotal role in the city in harmony with neighboring facilities such as administrative agencies, urban service facilities, and multi-family houses. The representative square in Pyongyang is Kim Il Sung Square, the central square. With a total area of 75,000 square meters, Kim Il Sung Square serves as the location of the starting point of mile posts. In this square, major significant national events are held such as mass rallies to celebrate the Party Congress and the Foundation Day of the DPRK, memorial ceremonies

for Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il, major political and cultural events, festivities, and military parades (National Tourism Bureau, 1999: 20).

In the 1950s, after the Korean War, a number of public buildings such as stations, schools, theatres, hospitals, and hotels as well as squares were constructed: Pyongyang Railway Station (1954), Mangyongdae Revolutionary Academy, Kim Il Sung University, Pyongyang Medical College Hospital at Kim Il Sung University, and Taedongmun Cinema (1955). These buildings were built using aid from socialist countries and in the architectural style of Eastern Europe, with neoclassicism in particular being introduced (Space Magazine, 2013: 28). However, North Korea soon began constructing the structures that reflected socialism in the national form in Pyongyang. The North assesses this period of time as the “time when the modernized Joseon-style architecture was newly created and realized.”⁹⁾

The Pyongyang Grand Theatre completed in 1960 represents the modernized “Joseon-style” building. While employing the traditional “Joseon-style” roof, the theatre uses modern materials such as steel and concrete with diversified internal functions (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993a: 385-386). Another

9. In North Korea, “Joseon-style architecture” means renovating and developing the national architectural style in line with the use of the building, modern materials, and up-to-date construction methods (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993a: 386).

representative example of the national architectural style is Okryugwan completed in 1960. For the restaurant located on the bank of the Taedong River, a foundation was built up high against the cliff and a 2-storey “Joseon-style” building was situated on the raised ground. North Korea is proud of the restaurant as a building displaying the three-dimensional harmony of the scenic beauty of the Taedong River and the “Joseon-style” architecture (Lee Hwa-sun, 1993a: 401-402).

Sculptures are also an important element of urban space in Pyongyang. Some are related to the Korean War and others encourage the construction of socialism. In the case of the former, the representative sculptures for the 1960s are the Tower of the Korean People’s Army (KPA) Martyr and the Friendship Tower. The Tower of the KPA Martyr honors the memory of the deceased military personnel in the Korean War and the Friendship Tower commemorates the Chinese People’s Volunteer Army’s entry into the Korean War. The representative sculpture meant to encourage socialist ideals is the Chollima Statue. The monument situated on Mansudae embodies the Chollima Movement which began in 1957. The statue, displaying a worker holding up a “red letter” and a female farmer carrying a sheaf of rice riding on the Chollima, was unveiled in time for the birthday of Kim Il-sung on April 15, 1961.

While North Korea sought the harmony between socialist style and traditional elements in the 1960s, the North

highlighted its political will to build urban space in “our style” in the 1970s (Lee Hwa-sun, 1989: 267). During the period of time, the Party’s monolithic ideological system was established and the idolization of Kim Il-sung and the decision on his successor emerged. North Korea stressed the development strategy of self-rehabilitation while not being swayed by the policy lines of other socialist countries such as the Soviet Union and China (Chang Se-hoon, 2004: 285). As a result, colossal monuments, revolutionary war sites, and revolutionary historic sites were constructed in large quantities across the country. Pyongyang was no exception. The representative monument of this period is the Mansudae Grand Monument built in 1972 in commemoration of the 60th birthday of Kim Il-sung. This monument, with its unprecedented size and width, has the Kim Il Sung Statue, one of the tallest statues in the world, in its center and depicts the Anti-Japanese Revolutionary Struggle on the left and the Socialist Revolution and Construction on the right.

The building of Kim Il Sung Statue began in 1946, but it spread across the nation in earnest in 1972 when the statue was erected on Mansudae. Successor Kim Jong-il supervised the production process of Kim Il Sung Statue (Kim Young-na, 2004: 159). After the death of Kim Jong-il in 2011, North Korea raised the Kim Jong Il Statue in the same size as the Kim Il Sung Statue at the Mansudae Grand Monument. The two statues are situated side-by-side. The Korean Revolution

Museum was first built in August 1948 and reopened in April 1972 when the Mansudae Grand Monument was established. The Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum was originally built in Haebangsan-dong, Central District in August 1953 and rebuilt as a modern building in Sosong District in April 1974.

The 1980s witnessed an era in which a number of monuments were most actively built under the leadership of the successor Kim Jong-il. Kim Jong-il called this the “present of royalty” dedicated to Kim Il-sung ahead of his 70th birthday. In addition, North Korea was the host city of the World Festival of Youth and Students in 1989. Kim Jong-il intended to show his capability as a successor by building monumental structures and wanted to promote Pyongyang as a city with artistic value. In the process, the symbolism of Pyongyang was further strengthened. The Juche Tower (Tower of Juche Idea), the Arch of Triumph, the Grand People’s Study House, and Kim Il Sung Stadium, boasting the greatest scale in the world, were all constructed during this time period.

The Juche Tower was built on the eastern bank of the Taedong River to commemorate Kim Il-sung’s 70th birthday in April 1982. The 170-meter structure consists of a torch, a spire, and three idealized figures. The torch is 20m high and weighs 46 tons. The 150m-high spire supplements the magnificent torch, and the word “Juche,” 4.2m wide, is inscribed on the front and back of the spire. The front of

the spire has a 30m-high statue consisting of three idealized figures that are each holding a tool – a hammer (the worker), a sickle (the peasant), and a writing brush (the working intellectual). The three tools form the insignia on the flag of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (Social Science Publishing House, 1986: 131-133).

In the same period, the Arch of Triumph was constructed at the foot of Moranbong. It stands 60m high, 50.1m wide, and 36.2m deep. This is 11 meters taller and 5 meters wider than the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, thus constituting the tallest triumphal arch in the world. Inscribed in the arch are "1925" and "1945" in golden lettering. The first, 1925, is the year when Kim Il-sung set out on his journey to liberate the country from Japan at the age of 14, and 1945 is the year when he returned home in triumph after realizing the liberation of Korea. The rainbow gate situated in the central part of the Arch of Triumph was decorated with 70 azalea flowers to mark the 70th birthday of Kim Il-sung.

The Grand People's Study House built in 1982, the largest library in the North, is a 63m-high, 10-storey "Joseon style" building with a total floor space of 100,000 square meters. The construction began on December 2, 1979 and was finished in one year and nine months. Kim Il-sung instructed that "The Grand People's Study House must be built in Joseon style." Accordingly, this edifice is assessed to display a modern aesthetic sense in a traditional architectural style

(Lee Yoon-ha, 2010c: 154). The Grand People's Study House represents the "grand hall where the entire people study" and can accommodate as many as 10,000 people a day (National Tourism Bureau, 1999: 20).

North Korea sought to make the city center of Pyongyang a central place where people gather and commune together while holding popular political and cultural events. The North argues that the establishment of the Grand People's Study House marked the completion of the city center of Pyongyang. On the basis of the Taedong River, on the west of Pyongyang stand Kim Il Sung Square and the Grand People's Study House, and on the east is the Juche Tower, thus creating an imposing urban landscape and strengthening its symbolism as a center of revolution. As the Grand People's Study House and the Juche Tower were constructed in the 1980s, the comprehensive plan for Kim Il Sung Square was finally completed 30 years after the square was built in 1953 (Lee Yoon-ha, 2010b: 149-150).

While the Juche Tower, the Grand People's Study House, and the Arch of Triumph were constructed as more direct political edifices, buildings related to people's lives or structures to attract international attention were built, such as the East Pyongyang Grand Theatre, Chongnyon Theatre, Rungrado Stadium, Yanggakdo Football Stadium, Circus Theatre, the Students' and Children's Palace, gymnasiums in Chongchun Street, the Ice Rink, and the Pyongyang

International Cinema Hall (Lee Joo-chul, 2003:104-105). In the process, the phenomenon of following international trends, instead of the theory of Juche architecture, emerged in part (Ahn Chang-mo, 2012:139). During this period of time, a number of deluxe hotels were built. For Pyongyang, which claimed its emergence as an international city in the 1980s, the twin-towered, 45-storey Koryo Hotel completed in 1985 became the iconic building. Yanggang Hotel and Chongnyon (Youth) Hotel were built, and the 105-storey Ryugyong Hotel began the construction scheduled for completion by 1989.

Figure 14 Rungrado Stadium



Figure 15 Ryugyong Hotel



However, at that time, North Korea was facing serious economic difficulties due to the collapse of the socialist bloc as represented in the suspension of the construction of Ryugyong Hotel. As mentioned above, however, North Korea did its best to build the city center of Pyongyang at the expense of provincial cities through the “Juche-style urbanization” strategy based on “selection and concentration.” This reflected the desire of the North Korean regime to show

to the outside world that the Kim Il-sung-Kim Jong-il system was thriving and expressed the North’s intention to unite the people with the system by using the role of Pyongyang as the stage of the theatre state of North Korea.

As the “Arduous March” ended in the mid-2000s, large-scale construction projects were resumed. The construction of Ryugyong Hotel was restarted and the Development Project of 100,000 Housing Units in Pyongyang kicked off in time for the construction of a strong and prosperous nation by 2012. To this end, college students as well as military personnel were mobilized across Pyongyang. However, the North has yet to make any visible progress in general. Nonetheless, the Kim Jong-un regime has promoted large-scale construction results in the recent two years as its major achievements, focusing on the architecture and construction sector. It is reported that these days, the popularity of Pyongyang University of Architecture is increasing and architecture-related jobs are preferred.¹⁰⁾

Since Kim Jong-un took office, North Korea has focused on architecture and construction in particular. A case in point is the construction project to modernize Pyongyang Railway

10. “The season of entrance exams in North Korea...This year’s popular universities” (Yonhap News on December 18, 2013). North Korea held a lesson for workers in the construction sector in Pyongyang from December 8 to 13, 2013, and encouraged construction engineers. KCNA praised architects through an article entitled “Heroes Leaving a Mark on the History of Juche Architecture” on December 16.

Station and Pyongyang Sunan International Airport.¹¹ The renovation project is considered to be the North's efforts to improve its global image by renewing the "gateways to the country." It is also an interesting change that Kim Jong-un is accelerating the construction of commercial and entertainment facilities. North Korea began building East Pyongyang Commercial Street in partnership with China in January 2015.¹² Amusement facilities such as the Mangyongdae Funfair, the Rungra People's Pleasure Ground, the Mirim Horse Riding Club, the Munsu Water Park, and the Masikryong Ski Resort were built under the direct instruction of Kim Jong-un. This is interpreted as the typical "bread and circus" dictatorship strategy as the North Korea regime tries to divert the latent discontent of the people toward food or entertainment.

11. The North Korean Ministry of Railways announced the development of science and technology in the railway sector as well as the renovation of the Pyongyang Railway Station. The Ministry also made it clear that it would push for the project of revamping and modernizing the railroads, saying that "North Korea is working on the research and development of modern railroad cars." The Choson Sinbo reported that North Korea begins the project to modernize the Pyongyang Railway Station this year. (Yonhap News on January 21, 2014).

12. "North Korea begins the construction of East Pyongyang Commercial Street in partnership with China" (Yonhap News on January 16, 2014).

Urban Space and Civic Life

3

The privileged status of Pyongyang is found not only in the aspect of space but also in the composition of the population and the residents' everyday lives. Pyongyang is home to the class closest to power in North Korea, and those in the lower class of Songbun (North Korea's social classification system) and the disabled are not allowed to live in the capital city. As seen in Table 8, North Korea has continued to conduct a Songbun survey of people since the Korean War. The Songbun system classifies North Koreans into the core loyal class, wavering class, and hostile class. Pyongyang has the highest proportion of the core loyal class among North Korean cities. In the case in which a person makes even a minor error, his/her entire family is ousted from Pyongyang, and if a person marries a person living in a province, he/she has to leave Pyongyang.

When they turn 17, North Korean residents are issued an identification card pursuant to the People's Registration Act enacted in 1997. However, citizens in Pyongyang are issued a Pyongyang citizenship card. The separate issuance of

Pyongyang citizenship is intended to distinguish Pyongyang citizens from those in provinces and prevent the population from flowing into the capital city. Pyongyang citizenship is the symbol of privilege in North Korea. Pyongyang citizens receive preferential treatment from the North Korean authorities. There is even a commonly known phrase, the “Republic of Pyongyang” (Lee Joo-chul, 2003: 106). Pyongyang citizens did not suffer serious hardships with their supply of food and necessities even during the “Arduous March” in the mid-1990s. It is no exaggeration to say that North Korea is divided into “Pyongyang receiving food rations” and the “rest of the country fending for itself” (Jo Dong-ho, 2013: 54). In terms of city gas, central heating, and cultural and leisure facilities, Pyongyang citizens enjoy benefits that are beyond imagination in the provinces.

In this way, Pyongyang citizens receive benefits and management from the state and feel a sense of superiority over the people in the provinces, leading to voluntary loyalty to the regime which serves as a driving force behind maintaining the North Korean regime (Lee Woo-young, 2013). However, Pyongyang citizens are obliged to participate in national political events in return for their privileges. Citizens in Pyongyang are given additional duties or daily work compared to the general public in North Korea (Lee Woo-young, 2013: 44). This is closely related to the symbolic function of urban space of Pyongyang.

Table 6 Songbun Survey Project (KINU, 2009: 331)

Category	Period	Description
Central party's concentrated guidance project	December 1958 - December 1960	Hunt down “impure elements” and deport them to remote countryside areas
Resident re-registration project	April 1966 – March 1967	Classify the Songbun of residents to unite the one million-strong Red Guards (carry out internal investigation on the three generations of immediate family, wife's family, and second cousins on mother's side)
Project of classifying citizens into 3 classes and 51 categories	April 1967 – June 1970	Classify all residents into the core loyal class, wavering class, and hostile class based on the results of the resident re-registration project and then subdivide the classes into 51 categories
Resident identification project	February 1972 - 1974	Investigate and grasp the movements of residents regarding the inter-Korean talks, and classify all residents into reliable people, dubious people, and traitors
Resident card inspection project	January 1980 –December 1980	Hunt down impure elements by checking and renewing the identification cards under the instruction of Kim Jong-il and strengthen the control function of the cards
Project of identifying naturalized citizens from foreign countries and those who defected from the South to the North	April 1981 – October 1980	Classify those who defected to the North from the outside including South Korea into 13 classes and systemize surveillance data

Category	Period	Description
Project of identifying Korean residents in Japan repatriated to the North	January 1981 – April 1981	Subdivide the data on Korean residents in Japan repatriated to the North and systemize the surveillance data on their movements
Resident card renewal project	November 1983 – March 1984	Renew the identification cards and organize the documents on residents
Resident re-registration project	October 1989 – December 1990	Organize the resident register again and fill out the identification cards of separated families
Adopted the People's Registration Act	November 1997	Issue birth certificates, identification cards, and Pyongyang citizenship
Identification card renewal project	February 1998 – October 1998	Replace notebook-type identification cards with vinyl-coated ones
Identification card replacement and issuance project	April 2004	Replace the vinyl-coated identification cards with notebook-type ones

The duties that Pyongyang citizens should perform in return for being allowed to live in the urban space of Pyongyang are classified as compulsory mobilization for regular and irregular events and obligatory volunteering in their daily lives. Those living in Pyongyang participate in all the state ritual events held in Pyongyang: the supreme leader as the producer and leading actor; the officials of the Party and the Army as directors; artists' groups dedicated to propaganda

as playwrights, choreographers, assistant directors, and supporting actors; and all other people including military personnel and students as extras, assistants for stage management, and the audience. All members of society attend the march of field investigations, memorial ceremonies, rites of passage symbolically structured at each stage of lifetime process, and symbolic rituals routinely repeated every day. In this way, residents experience the relationship between the individual and the leader and internalize the collective way of life and cultural identity (Chung Byung-ho, 2010: 8-9). This process is most clearly evident in Pyongyang.

A representative regular event is the one for the Day of the Sun (Taeyang-Jeol), which commemorates the birthday of Kim Il-sung (April 15), the main holiday in North Korea. The Day of the Sun was designated as the most important holiday in North Korea by a decree of the Central People's Committee in April 1974. It was promoted even further on July 8, 1997 when the North adopted the Juche calendar as it marked the 3rd anniversary of the death of Kim Il-sung. The celebration events for the Day of the Sun are concentrated in Pyongyang, such as the Pyongyang Art Festival, exhibitions of Kim Il Sung paintings, stamp exhibitions, the National Sports Festival for the Mangyongdae Prize, the oratorical contest of young military personnel of the KPA, the National Book Exhibition, the International Marathon Race for the Mangyongdae Cup, and the march of the youth to visit Kim Il-sung's home in Mangyongdae.

On the national holidays such as the Party Foundation Day (October 10), the KPA Foundation Day (April 25), the Day of Victory in the Great Fatherland Liberation War (July 27), and the Day of the Sun (April 15), large-scale parades are held in Pyongyang every year. Irregular events are frequently held in the capital city, such as the funeral of the supreme leader, ceremonies to celebrate a successful missile launch, rallies to denounce inter-Korean relations and relations between North Korea and the United States, and welcoming ceremonies for foreign guests. As for the various mass rallies held across the country, most of them begin in Pyongyang. In short, large-scale national rituals and events are held in the city center of Pyongyang all the year round and Pyongyang citizens are required to participate in these symbolic national ceremonies as leading actors or audience members.

These political rallies take place in the provinces as well. However, in terms of frequency, an overwhelmingly large number of events are held in Pyongyang. Citizens in the capital city participate in such events about once a week or 30-40 times a year on average. Most of the events are held in October. In the lead-up to these events, citizens are mobilized for the works to beautify the city, such as painting the exteriors of buildings and cleaning and renovating flowerbeds and playgrounds. As a result, Pyongyang citizens are mobilized throughout the year. They are obliged to participate in these political events. The North Korean authorities also

encourage citizens to attend such events by offering gift cards, fine restaurant vouchers, and tickets for amusement parks or cinemas. Citizens in Pyongyang have to participate in political events routinely, and so they keep fans for such events, bouquets of artificial flowers, and wigs at home (Lee Woo-young, 2013: 45-46).

Cultural and everyday events as well as the above political events are intentionally staged across Pyongyang, including at Kim Il Sung Square. Cultural activities such as a choir competitions, sports festivals, folk games, and fireworks eventually serve as the means of political socialization for the entire country and also to mislead the outside world about the reality of North Korea. The everyday lives of citizens in Pyongyang are different in relation with various events. They begin their day with the “Jongsong (meaning “devotion” or “sincerity”) work” of cleaning the portraits of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il. This is another everyday task for citizens in Pyongyang because, as seen above, there are an overwhelmingly large number of monumental structures in Pyongyang compared to the provinces.

Pyongyang citizens fulfill their political and social responsibilities by participating in a variety of rallies and events held across Pyongyang throughout the year in return for enjoying privileges compared to the general public. Pyongyang citizens’ frequent participation in various events seems to lead to uniting residents with the regime and

increasing the unity between residents (Lee Woo-young, 2013: 47). This means that social control through rituals has a more powerful influence on the residents in Pyongyang than those in other regions.

However, it may be asked if the everyday lives of citizens in Pyongyang proceed in the direction that the ruling power intended. Those in power plan a city through “space representation” to meet their own ideology and purposes. In particular, in the case of North Korea, most citizens perform “spatial practices” according to the intention handed down from above. However, there is still room for them to create “representational space” themselves by rejecting the top-down structure. An increase in the spatial mobility of the population, the expansion of cyber space, the formation of market space such as *jangmadang* (self-sustained markets), and an increase in private space caused by the privatization of the rights to use housing may bring about internal change in the North Korean regime.

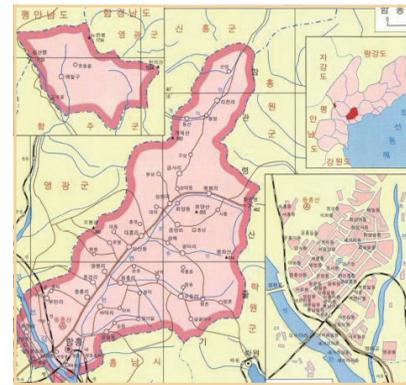
PROVINCIAL CITIES

1. Hamhung
2. Kaesong
3. Pyongsong

1) History of Hamhung

The reasons that Hamhung was chosen as one of the North Korean provincial cities analyzed here are as follows. First, as of 2008, Hamhung is the second-largest city in North Korea with a population of 770,000. Second, Hamhung is the representative city of Hamgyong Province and the provincial capital of South Hamgyong Province. The urban history of Hamhung attracts interest in that Hamgyong Province has been a rival of Pyongan Province in the modern history of North Korea. Third, Hamhung's urban development direction following national division is noteworthy as one of the traditional cities in North Korea. Lastly, the characteristics of North Korean industrial cities can be inferred from it because Hamhung is the largest chemical industry center in North Korea.

Figure 16 Location Map of Hamhung



[Source: Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 12, Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House, 2003c: 46]

Hamhung had been a major granary area in the Kwanbuk region since the Three Kingdoms era. Its original name of Hamju was changed to Hamhung, which means “be a prosperous town,” and it was promoted to Hamhung Province (bu) in 1416 during the reign of King Taejong in

the Joseon Dynasty. As the 13-province system was introduced across the nation in 1896, Hamhung County became the provincial capital of South Hamgyong Province. Hamhung began transforming itself into a modern city under Japanese colonial rule. Japan developed Hamhung as an administrative center in the Kwanbuk region and a logistics base from which to invade the continent. As many as five large factories were built in Hamhung, and four power plants for the factories were constructed in neighboring areas. Hamhung emerged early as a major urban center of the region and an industrial city.

Since the DPRK was established in September 1948, Hamhung has remained as the provincial capital of South Hamgyong Province. Most of its factories and houses were

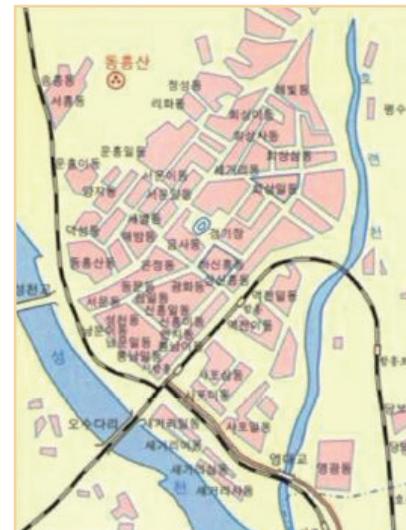
destroyed during the Korean War. The restoration of the city after the war was led by urban design engineers from East Germany. They turned Hamhung into a grid-patterned, planned city, and much of the exotic urban landscape of Eastern Europe has remained the same (Hong Min, 2012). In fact, the “German village” in which East German people lived at that time still remains in the city today.

Hamhung was developed as the largest heavy and chemical industrial area representing the “Chollima Era” of the 1950-1970s. In the process, Hamhung was promoted to a direct-administered city in 1960 and returned to the provincial capital of South Hamgyong Province in 1970. Hamhung experienced its golden age during the Chollima era when North Korea recorded rapid economic growth, followed by the rapid decline of the city, eventually hitting bottom during the urban famine due to the dire food shortages in the mid-1990s. In the modern history of North Korea, Hamhung has experienced both glory and misery (Hong Min, 2012). In the 2000s, Hamhung repeated its separation from and integration with Hungnam City. In August 2001, North Korea separated Hungnam District, Haean District, Hungduk District and part of Sapo District and collectively named them Hungnam City. Then, the North moved major industrial facilities to Hungnam City and abolished these administrative districts in Hamhung City. However, in 2005, Hungnam City was reintegrated into Hamhung City again.

2) Space Structure, Urban Landscape, and Architecture

Space structure and urban landscape are overlapped in Hamhung. The legacy of modernization during Japanese colonial rule, the vestiges of a socialist planned city in the Eastern European style, and the Juche style introduced by the North Korean regime all exist mixed together in Hamhung. As the city built two-lane roads and high-rise apartments during the Chollima Movement, new streets were created. Hamhung is surrounded by the east coast, the Songchon River flowing into the east coast, and Mount Tonghung. As seen in Figure 17, Hamhung is divided into an urban area and an industrial area.

Figure 17 City Center of Hamhung



[Source: Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 12, Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House, 2003c: 61]

The urban area is located between the two important infrastructures that form the axes of the city: the railroad tracks that traverse the Songchon River and the downtown, and the roads built in parallel with the railroad tracks (Yim Dong-woo and Luna, 2014: 24). Along these axes stand provincial and city administrative

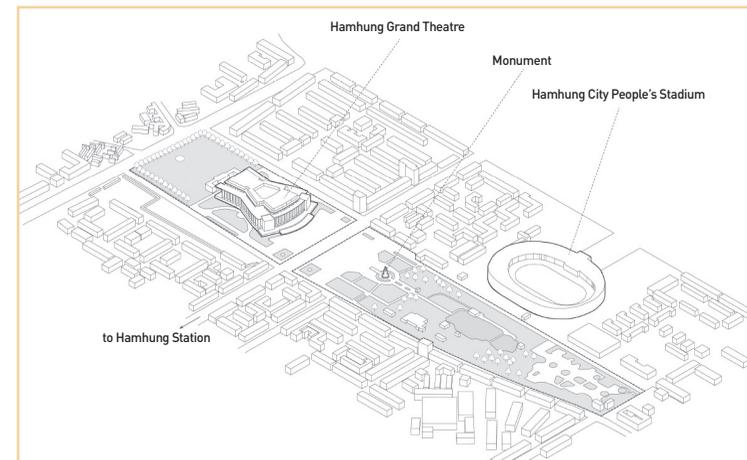
agencies, residential buildings such as apartments, and various cultural spaces and symbolic facilities. The administrative agencies of Hamhung City are mainly situated along “Pieck Street” built by the East German work unit during the restoration period after the Korean War (Park Hee-jin, 2014: 87-88). This area is home to the Kim Il Sung Statue and the Revolution Amusement Park, serving as a political center in Hamhung.

Among the symbolic spaces in the city center of Hamhung, the structure that plays the most important role is Hamhung Grand Theatre. The theatre built under the instruction of Kim Jong-il is big enough to perform “The Flower Girl” or “Sea of Blood.” Another cultural space that is no less important than the theatre is Hamhung Stadium, the city’s sports complex. A wide range of athletic games and even mass rallies are held in this stadium. Hamhung Grand Theater and Hamhung Stadium play an important role in various ceremonies and events.

Meanwhile, the production bases of major heavy and light industries such as chemical and machine factories are located in the industrial area of Hamhung (Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, 2003: 52-53). Hamhung City, which had already experienced industrialization under Japanese colonial rule, developed itself into an industrial city at the national level in the process of the industrialization of North Korea. The economy of Hamhung

City is based on industry, and the city serves as a large-scale chemical industry center with organic and inorganic chemical industries combined. The chemical industry is largely centered on the production of vinalon, chemical fertilizer, carbide, agricultural pesticides, synthetic resins, synthetic rubbers, paints, and basic medicines. The February 8 Vinalon Complex and the Hungnam Fertilizer Complex, which represent the self-reliant industrial production of North Korea, are both based in Hamhung. Another important industry beyond the chemical industry in Hamhung is the machine industry. The representative factory is the Ryongsong Machine Complex. Hamhung is famous for producing construction materials.

Figure 18 Symbolic Spaces in Hamhung



(Source: Hamhung and Pyongsong: The Urban History of Space, Everyday Life and Politics, Research Team on the Study of North Korean Urban History, 2014: 25)

The factories in Hamhung City are concentrated in Hungduk District and Hungnam District, away from the downtown area. This means that the symbolic and political spaces are separated from the main production spaces. For this reason, Hungnam District, the industrial area, became independent from Hamhung City for a while in the 2000s. As part of the measures to improve economic management, the policy to separately manage and operate the Hungnam area, the economic center, was overturned for unknown reasons.

Hamhung Grand Theater

Hamhung Grand Theatre, completed in April 1984, is located in Unjong-dong, Hamhung City. With a site area of 110,000 square meters, a building area of 15,000 square meters, and a total floor area of 58,000 square meters, the theatre features a 2,500-seat hall and a 700-seat hall. The height of the front and back of the building is 7 and 9 storeys, respectively. The interiors of a practice room, a recording studio, a dressing room, and technical rooms are decorated in light of formative arts. The theatre is equipped with modern facilities related to ventilation, heating, and sound. The front and back of the building were widened in a unique circular-trapezoidal style that meets the condition for street formation. The façade was built in a semicircular pillared corridor style, and the sides were constructed with reinforcing posts in the eaves style. The building was built to harmonize with the surrounding scenery by changing its size through the use of formative characteristics. Hamhung Grand Theatre was constructed in line with a modern aesthetic sense while maintaining a unique architectural form. (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 12, 2003c: 60).

Hamhung Stadium

Hamhung Stadium is located in Kumsa-dong, Hamhung City. The stadium was built as a baseball stadium before Korea was liberated from Japan in 1945 and was expanded to accommodate several sporting events including track-and-field, football, basketball, volleyball, and various military and national sports competitions at the same time. The project to build the large-scale sports complex was begun on May 20, 1973 and completed on July 30, 1975. It is equipped with stands that can accommodate 33,000 viewers, a large-scale facility for mass games, and a variety of convenience and service facilities. Various sporting events are held in this stadium on national holidays and anniversaries (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 12, 2003c: 60).

February 8 Vinalon Complex

As a synthetic fiber factory located in Sapo District, Hamhung City, South Hamgyong Province, the February 8 Vinalon Complex was named by integrating the Bongung Chemical Plant constructed during Japanese colonial rule, the February 8 Vinalon Factory completed in 1961, and other related chemical factories and mines in 1974. Bongung Chemical Plant constructed in 1935, which was operated as the Japanese Nitrogen Fertilizer Factory in Bongung in 1936, was built in the effort to make the Korean Peninsula a base to supply food to invade the continent. The chemical industry at that time, led by Japan, is believed to have reached a high level since Japan's science and technology had already developed to the highest level in the world and the large-scale complex was constructed to achieve its goals. However, at the end of Japanese colonial rule, the production facilities were outdated and Japan intentionally destroyed the equipment after losing the war. After it was liberated from Japan, North Korea strove to restore its facilities, and the chemical plant in Bongung was no exception. The repair and restoration of the main equipment of the chemical factory was followed

by the construction to expand the factory: the vinyl chloride factory was built in 1961 and the butanol workshop was constructed in 1962. The main production at the February 8 Vinalon Complex is as follows: 50,000 tons of vinalon, 50,000 tons of vinyl chloride, 57,000 tons of caustic soda, 3,000 tons of butanol, 9,000 tons of pesticide, 50,000 tons of lime nitrogen fertilizer, 900 tons of dye, 375,000 tons of carbide, 1,000 tons of sodium carbonate, and 1,000 tons of ethanol.

Kim Il-sung presided over an enlarged meeting of the Party in South Hamgyong Province from January 30 to February 2, 1991 and argued that North Korea would build a large-scale chemical complex in Hamhung City, instructing the construction of the oxygen separator workshop at the February 8 Vinalon Complex. The construction began in February 1991 and the first stage was completed in November 1991 [Source: The Academy of Korean Studies, The Encyclopedia of Local Korean Culture].

3) Urban Space and Civic Life

As the second-largest city in North Korea and the representative industrial city, Hamhung also mobilized citizens for political events, though to a lesser extent than Pyongyang. Political mobilization peaked in the 1970s when Hamhung was on the rise. Political events frequently took place in symbolic spaces in the city center of Hamhung. Tens of thousands of people were often mobilized to greet heads of state and inspection teams from foreign countries. In the 1970s, Hamhung rapidly grew while acting as the second political city beyond only Pyongyang. In August 2010, Chairman of the National Defense Commission Kim Jong-il

gave field guidance at the Vinalon Complex and participated in a mass rally in Hamhung City. Performances such as “The Flower Girl” and “Sea of Blood” were often held at Hamhung Grand Theatre. Hamhung Stadium was used for large-scale mass games. However, such instances of political mobilization in Hamhung were distinct from those in Pyongyang in that Hamhung citizens did not receive any privileges from the authorities.

In fact, residents’ lives in Hamhung were much poorer than those in Pyongyang. Since Hamhung was the largest industrial city in North Korea, most of the population was composed of workers who received rations. The food supply for Hamhung came from Hwanghae Province until the 1980s. At that time, Hwanghae Province in the western region supplied food to Hamhung in the eastern region and Hamhung supplied industrial goods to the western region. However, the food crisis in the 1990s hit Hamhung directly. During the so-called “Arduous March,” Hamhung suffered a dire urban famine, a stark contrast to the case of Pyongyang where citizens received relatively stable rations (Hong Min, 2012).

However, this situation paradoxically served as momentum for Hamhung to move in a different direction than Pyongyang. Historically, those from Hamgyong Province and those from Pyongan Province had been on bad terms under the North Korean regime. Moreover, as the food from the western region

was restricted from entering Hamgyong Province for political reasons, residents in Hamhung felt left out. These factors led Hamhung to become one of the cities with vibrant markets while suffering the food crisis in the 1990s (Hong Min, 2012). The market formation in Hamhung was a self-rescue measure. Hamhung was also known as a “drug city” at that time. Since Hamhung had long been a chemical industry center and was home to a branch of the National Academy of Sciences, there were a lot of people involved in this field who were able to manufacture drugs with ease. Although North Korea selected Hamhung as a major starting point of economic reconstruction as Kim Jong-un took office, the future of Hamhung and the choice of Hamhung citizens are expected to serve as important variables in the North’s attitude in the future.

Kaesong

2

1) History of Kaesong

As of 2008, Kaesong has a population of 310,000 and is a provincial city located in the mid-west of the Korean Peninsula. Kaesong is an ancient city that is home to the glory of the past as the capital of Koryo and the stage of inter-Korean economic cooperation through the Kaesong (Gaeseong) Industrial Complex. For this reason, despite its relatively small population, Kaesong deserves examination as one of the important provincial cities of North Korea.

The names of Kaesong and nearby regions trace back to the Three Kingdoms era (Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, 2004a: 246-247). This region was called Busogap and Dongbihol in the Koguryo era. Busogap referred to Mount Songak and Dongbihol referred to Kaesong. In the Late Silla era, these regions were called Mount Songak and Kaesong County, respectively. Kaesong means “opening the castle.” In 919, a year after Koryo was founded, Kaesong and Songak were integrated to become the capital city. At that time, Kaesong was also called Kaegyong,

Figure 19 Location Map of Kaesong

(Source: Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 12, Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House, 2003a: 246)

Hwangdo, Hwangsong, and Kyongdo.

Afterwards, Kaesong thrived as the capital of Koryŏ and the center of political ideas over 470 years (Park So-young, 2010: 50). All the buildings in Kaesong were constructed in an orderly manner in accordance with the national norms, revealing a dignified

landscape. In 950, Kaesong prospered as a trade and commercial center with a population of 700,000 through trade with foreign countries such as the Song Dynasty, Arabia, and Japan. At that time, Kaesong was a very “international” city. “Kaesong ginseng” and “Kaesong merchants” became the representative images of the city.

However, as the Joseon Dynasty was established, Kaesong lost its status as the capital. Kaesong was reorganized as Kaesong County and Kaepung County. Although it had lost its previous political standing, Kaesong continued to play a leading role as a trade center in the Joseon era. This history has two implications for the status of Kaesong. The first is the

historical experience and tradition of Kaesong as the window of foreign trade and market opening. The second is the possibility that the people of Kaesong internalized a sense of loss and a victim mentality in terms of politics after the capital was moved to Hanyang (Seoul). From the fall of the Joseon Dynasty to Japanese colonial rule and Korea’s liberation from Japan and even after the division of the Korean Peninsula, North Korea chose Pyongyang as its “capital” instead of Kaesong. In this sense, Kaesong failed to recover the status of the capital. Kaesong may be able to regain its pride after unification.

As Korea was liberated from Japan on August 15, 1945, Kaesong became one of the most tragic cities on the Korean Peninsula. Kaesong itself was divided into the south and the north following national division (Encyclopedia Publisher, 2009: 642). The leftists’ People’s Committee was established in the regions such as Kaepung County, Jangdan County, and Yonchon Country of Kaesong City. The U.S. Army was stationed in other regions. The left and the right stood in fierce confrontation with each other in the city itself. Then, during the Korean War, Kaesong belonged to North Korea. Four years after the end of the Korean War, Kaesong was promoted to a direct-administered city, a province-level administrative unit. The city’s importance had finally been recognized. North Korea specially managed residents in the “newly liberated area” of Kaesong.

North Korea carried out the restoration project of Kaesong immediately following the Korean War (Park So-young, 2014: 29-30). As soon as the Armistice Agreement was signed in 1953, North Korea first began restoring the city's cultural relics. The North restored and repaired the city's Namdaemun Gate, which had been destroyed during the war, as well as Manwoldae Palace, and Sonjuk Bridge. , Even today, Kaesong is one of the cities with the largest number of traditional Korean houses (hanok) on the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, the North made efforts to turn Kaesong into a city of "socialism." North Korea cleared away the remnants of Japanese colonial rule while deploying the administrative, educational, and production facilities under North Korean-style socialism.

2) Space Structure and Urban Landscape

Kaesong is surrounded by the Yesong River and the military demarcation line. The city faces Gimpo City and Ganghwa County of South Korea to the south. Its area is about 180 square kilometers and the urbanized area accounts for 13.3 square kilometers (Yim Dong-woo and Luna, 2014: 258). Until the 1960s, Kaesong was constructed as a historical city and a light industry center under the field guidance of Kim Il-sung (Park So-young, 2011: 257). First, while restoring the city's cultural relics, the North designated the Joseon-style houses

with tile roofs as a preservation area, building a folk street. North Korea also built traditional folk hotels and Tongilgwan (a large-scale restaurant). High-rise apartment buildings and cultural facilities such as theatres were deployed on Tongil Street, which passes through downtown Kaesong, and light industry facilities such as machine and food factories on the roads to Panmunjom.

Kaesong renewed itself as a "city of socialism" (Park So-young, 2014: 30-31). First, as Kaesong was reconstructed, a square was built. Various cultural events, celebrations, and mass rallies were held in the square. Administrative agencies, the press, and educational institutions were located around the square, such as the Administrative and Economic Committee, Kaesong Newspaper, Songdo University of Education, the Kaesong Students' and Children's Palace, and

Kaesong Communist University. They were concentrated within a one-kilometer radius based on Mount Janam.

This process greatly changed the spatial axis of Kaesong. In the past, the key street of Kaesong was a crossroads that linked

Figure 20 City Center of Kaesong

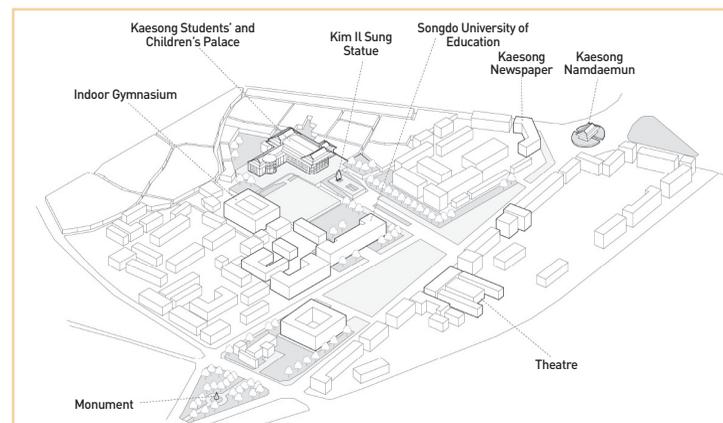


(Source: Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 2, Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House, 2003a: 246)

Kwanghwamun of the Koryo palace north-to-south and east-to-west outside of Namdaemun. However, as the Kim Il Sung Statue was built on the hill of Mount Janam in 1968 and high-rise buildings and administrative agencies were constructed on the street to the hill, the axis of Kaesong tilted to the east of Namdaemun (Park So-young, 2014: 31-32). North Korea completed the Pyongyang-Kaesong highway in 1992 and named the street between the Kim Il Sung Statue and the highway “Tongil Street,” which formed the central and symbolic space of Kaesong along with the square.

Tongil Street stretches 1.7km from the Kim Il Sung Statue at Mount Janam and meets the square vertically (Yim Dong-woo, 2014: 26). The Kim Il Sung Statue was built on the hill where Tongil Street ends and below the statue are deployed high-rise apartment buildings, cultural and educational facilities, and symbolic structures. As a space where residents prepare for and carry out various events, the square is located between the city’s Namdaemun and a monument. This shows a typical socialist urban square which uses the triangle space created by the misaligned axis of roads. It is unusual that Kim Il-sung is depicted with children at the Kim Il Sung Statue on Tongil Street. This seems to be due to the fact that the backdrop of the statue features the Students’ and Children’s Palace and Mount Janam.

Figure 21 Symbolic Spaces of Kaesong



(Source: Hamhung and Pyongsong: The Urban History of Space, Everyday Life and Politics, Research Team on the Study of North Korean Urban History, 2014: 27)

Kaesong Namdaemun

Kaesong Namdaemun is located in Bukan-dong and was built from 1391 to 1393 and repaired in 1899. Although it was destroyed by American bombing in December 1950, Namdaemun was restored in 1954. Kaesong Namdaemun consists of a rectangular-plane base built with smoothly cut granite blocks and a gate pavilion on top of the stone base. North Korea explains that Kaesong Namdaemun shows its feature of simplicity, representing the characteristics of Dougong (an architectural structural element that joins pillars and columns to the frame of a roof) at the end of the Koryo period. The Yonbok Bell is housed in the pavilion of the gate. (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 2, 2003a).

Taehung Fortress

Taehung Fortress is the site of an ancient castle in Pakyon-ri, Kaesong. The castle was built to defend the capital of Koryo. The castle is encircled by 10.1 kilometers of stone walls, encompassing Sansong Valley of Mount Taehung, Mount Chonma, Chonryang Peak, Mount Songgo, and Andal Peak. The height of the wall is 4-5 meters on average and some sections reach as high as 6-8 meters. The castle has large gates in all directions and small hidden gates between them. Among the four gates, the north gate by Pakyon Falls remains in good condition compared to the others.

Taehung Fortress is a valuable relic showing the capital defense system and the fortress-building technique in the Koryo period and the ancestors' patriotic spirit. (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 2, 2003a).

Kaesong Students' and Children's Palace

This is an extracurricular institution for students in Bukan-dong, Kaesong. The construction was begun in 1956 by cabinet decision and opened in 1961. With a site area of 50,000 square meters and a building area of 12,000 square meters, the palace has a 4-storey main building, a 3-storey gymnasium, 30 research rooms, 40 group work rooms, 120 laboratories, a 750-seat theatre, and a library. Currently, 60 study groups to learn general basic knowledge are in operation, and 3,000 students a day participate in various after-school activities. (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 2, 2003a).

Songdo University of Education

As a higher educational institution located in Bukan-dong, Kaesong, Songdo University of Education cultivates teachers for primary and secondary education. With a total floor space of 33,290 square meters, the University comprises dormitories, laboratories, libraries, a publishing house, a hall, and convenience facilities. The University is classified into the 3-year system to nurture teachers for kindergartens and primary schools, the 5-year system to train teachers for middle schools and some subjects of higher specialized schools, and the 6-year system for institutes for foreign languages. It is subdivided into the Division of Revolution History, the Division of Language and Literature, the Division of Physics and Mathematics, the Division of Biology and Chemistry, and the Division of Arts. (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 2, 2003a).

3) Urban Space and Civic Life

As mentioned above, the political, cultural, and symbolic buildings are concentrated in the city center around the square and Tongil Street according to the socialist renovation policy of urban space. Residents participate in important cultural events, celebrations, and mass rallies held in this space. The square and Tongil Street are not only a political and administrative center that has emerged in Kaesong after the founding of the DPRK but also a space for residents to carry out large-scale events and ceremonies.

However, this central space is likely to change in the future. This is because Kaesong is located adjacent to South Korea, exposing itself to the potential for various changes. First, in

the industrial aspect, Kaesong City is home to the Kaesong Industrial Complex, the inter-Korean economic cooperation site, to which many citizens commute. The industrial park affects the existing industrial facilities and living environment of Kaesong, which may cause a new change in the space structure of Kaesong itself. If economic exchanges and cooperation with the South increase further in the future, these changes will have greater ramifications. Although North Korea strives to prevent the inflow of foreign culture and institutions through the Kaesong Industrial Complex, it is fair to wonder how long the North can ward off the so-called “The Choco Pie Effect” or “The Choco Pieization of North Korea” (Chung Keun-sik and Kim Yoon-ae, 2015)

Second, in terms of culture, Kaesong was the capital of Koryo and has a number of cultural relics because the city remained relatively intact during the Korean War. In 2013, the city was listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO due to its historic value. Thus, Kaesong is likely to grow into an international tourist site in the future. The invasion of capitalist culture through the industrial park and the opening to the outside world as a World Heritage Site may lead to differences in the everyday lives of residents in Kaesong from those of other cities in North Korea. Kaesong, along with Hamhung, may become an important signal for change in North Korea in the future.

Pyongsong

1) History of Pyongsong

The reason that Pyongsong was chosen as one of the major provincial cities in this book is that it is a new satellite city adjacent to Pyongyang. Pyongsong was created as a new city by combining Ryongsong District, Pyongyang, and a portion of Suncheon County, South Pyongan Province, in 1965 (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, 2004b: 48). The name Pyongsong means that the city should serve as a fortress to defend Pyongyang. When it was established in 1965, Pyongsong was originally a district before being promoted to a city in 1969, becoming the provincial capital of South Pyongan Province. North Korea calls Pyongsong a “city of glory” because Kim Il-sung named the city.

As of 2008, Pyongsong has a population of 280,000 in an area of 381 square kilometers. As the west and south of the city adjoin Pyongyang, Pyongsong is an important traffic hub for Pyongyang. Pyongsong cannot be discussed without

Figure 22 Location Map of Pyongsong

[Source: Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 3, Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House, 2004b:48]

mentioning Pyongyang. As noted above, Kim Il-sung himself named Pyongsong City and provided field guidance on the city several times. Kim argued that the city had “revolutionary achievements” during Japanese colonial rule. As it is, Pyongsong is a new city created since North Korea was founded and plays an important role as the provincial capital of

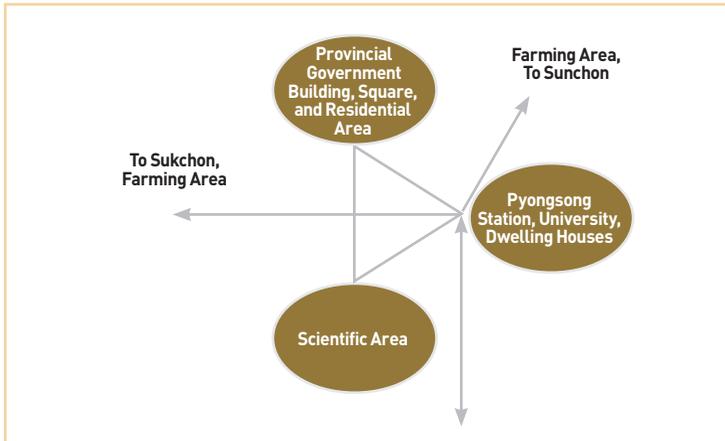
South Pyongan Province.

Pyongsong is a new city and a satellite city of Pyongyang. As shown in Figure 22, Pyongsong City adjoins Pyongyang to the north. Thanks to the success of its planned economy, North Korea began constructing satellite cities around big cities in order to meet the need to further increase its industrial facilities in the early 1960s. As for satellite cities, their relationships with their parent city are important. In the case of Pyongsong built at the end of the 1960s, it is relatively independent and big for a satellite city (Park Hee-jin, 2014:

155-156). North Korea intended to specialize Pyongsong as a science city. The North built science parks and colleges of science in Pyongsong, leading the brightest minds in North Korea to flock to the city. However, after the National Academy of Sciences was incorporated in Pyongyang again in 1994, Pyongsong remains more like an education city than a science city.

2) Space Structure, Urban Landscape, and Architecture

After it was promoted to a city in 1969, Pyongsong continued to expand its boundaries and increase its population, industrial facilities, research institutes, and educational institutions (Park Hee-jin, 2014: 157-159). In Pyongsong, the provincial capital of South Pyongan Province, various administrative agencies sprang up. Like any other city in North Korea, provincial administrative agencies, the Kim Il Sung Statue, and a square were built in the city center of Pyongsong. As an administrative and symbolic center of Pyongsong, this place serves as a symbolic urban landscape consisting of a square, high-rise buildings, and Unjongwon, a convenience and service facility (Domain of Provincial Government Building, Square, and Residential Area in Figure 23).

Figure 23 Space Structure of Pyongsong

[Source: Hamhung and Pyongsong: The Urban History of Space, Everyday Life and Politics, Research Team on the Study of North Korean Urban History, 2014: 27]

Pyongsong City has a research and education district. As Pyongsong Institute of Science was established in 1970, a “scientific area” was created in which the National Academy of Sciences and various science and research institutes were clustered.¹³ Another central place of the city was created near the administrative and symbolic center of the city. As mentioned above, the National Academy of Sciences is

13. “The Pyongsong scientific area consists of dozens of research institutes including electronic engineering, thermal engineering, and industrial microbiology within the Academy of Sciences, intermediate test factories, a science library, colleges of science and technology, and the statues and squares of scientists, thus forming the administrative and symbolic central space. As dwelling houses were clustered, the area established its status worthy of the name as a science city.” *Fatherland*, September 1992: 79-83; as cited in Park Hee-jin, op. cit.: 160

currently incorporated in Unjong District, Pyongyang City,¹⁴ but research and education institutions related to the National Academy of Sciences and the houses for researchers are important factors that form the city center of Pyongsong.

An important note for Pyongsong is the growth of the market. In the 1990s when North Korea suffered a severe economic crisis, the goods from China and other foreign countries were assembled in Pyongsong. The “Hacha Market” of Pyongsong emerged as the largest wholesale market in North Korea to supply necessities to citizens in Pyongyang since access to the capital was strictly controlled (Hong Min, 2012: 31). As the market has been activated, up to 100,000 people a day use it. Pyongsong is known for being home to a large group of newly rich residents through market economic activities.

As a new city adjacent to Pyongyang, a science city, and a city of newly rich, Pyongsong is characterized by apartment buildings which form an urban landscape as a key urban space. High-ranking officials of the Party and administrative agencies, elite scientists, and merchants who accumulated wealth through the market reside in these apartments, making Pyongsong one of the representative cities which form a differential residential space (Hong Min, 2014). In

14. ROK Ministry of Unification website, <http://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/overview/overviewPrint.do?sumryMenuId=EC222>

short, although the city center surrounded by provincial administrative agencies, the Kim Il Sung Statue, and a square constitutes the administrative and symbolic space of the city, the market and apartment buildings are emerging as the main center of the city.

Academy of Sciences

The Academy of Sciences (current National Academy of Sciences) is the leading science and research institute in North Korea. Located in Unjong District, Pyongyang, the Academy was established on October 9, 1952. North Korea promoted the Academy of Sciences to an administrative department of Jungmuwon (the Council of Ministries) in April 1982. In February 1994, the North renamed it the National Academy of Sciences and expanded the organization by integrating research institutes affiliated to each department and committee. In 2005, North Korea announced a decree that the Cabinet and relevant agencies should establish follow-up measures. Its organization consists of one office, 21 bureaus, and 21 committees' technical and administrative departments. Under the departments are the directly controlled branch of Unjong, the provincial branch of Hamhung, a factory that produces experiment tools, an observatory, and the Central Science Technology Intelligence. (Source: ROK Ministry of Unification website, <http://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/overview/overviewPrint.do?sumryMenuId=EC222>)

Pyongsong College of Science

The College, established in 1967, is located in Pyongsong, South Pyongan Province. There are over 40,000 researchers including faculty and 15,000 students. (Source: Wikipedia, Pyongsong College of Science)

Pyongsong Coal Industry College

As a higher educational institution in Pyongsong, the College is cultivating tech talents and scientists in the coal industry sector. In 1968, the coal and engineering-related departments were separated from Chongjin Metal and Mining University to create Pyongsong Coal Industry College, which was later renamed Pyongsong Coal Industry College in 1997.

Since its inception, the College has produced a number of technicians, scientists, educators, and mine managers. It consists of several divisions such as Coal and Geology Exploration, Anthracite Mining Engineering, Bituminous Coal Mining Engineering, Mine Mechanical Engineering, and Mine Automation Engineering, and dozens of courses, large-scale research labs and doctoral programs. The College is home to a library, a publishing house, laboratories, and factories and mines for training. Students here are guaranteed a high level of scholarship and good conditions. (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 3, 2003b:55).

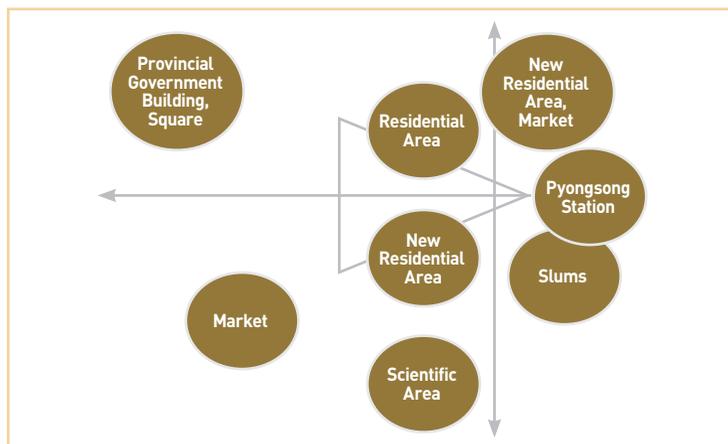
Institute of Industrial Microbiology

The Institute, situated in downtown Pyongsong, is in charge of carrying out research projects on science issues to use microbiology and applies the results to production. The Institute was established in 1962 and is affiliated to the National Academy of Sciences. It consists of several laboratories, state-of-the-art science and research facilities, and an intermediate test factory equipped with test devices for industrialization. It is making great contributions to the national economy by resolving science issues in the industrial microbiology field and introducing the results to production. (Source: Science and Encyclopedia Publishing House and Institute for Peace Affairs, Encyclopedia of North Korean Geography and Culture, Vol. 3, 2003b:53)

3) Urban Space and Civic Life

The cultural events and celebrations for citizens in Pyongsong seem to be held in the provincial capital where administrative agencies are concentrated. In terms of public tasks performed by citizens, there are no significant differences from any other North Korean city. However, in examining the hidden side of the city, the function of the market cannot be overlooked in the everyday lives of Pyongsong citizens. The Hacha Market of Pyongsong attracts merchants from across the country, not only allowing a wide range of trading but also resulting in an increase in the floating population (Park Hee-jin, 2014: 162-173). This market growth weakens its status as an administrative city and a science city and lowers the proportion of political participation or symbolic mobilization in urban spaces.

Figure 24 Spatial Separation of Pyongsong due to Hacha Market Activation



[Source: Hamhung and Pyongsong: The Urban History of Space, Everyday Life and Politics, Research Team on the Study of North Korean Urban History, 2014: 172]

Pyongsong has relatively more information than other regions because it is adjacent to Pyongyang. The traditional elite class that includes officials and scientists live in the city and the number of newly rich residents has increased. Instead of the squares or streets, the increasingly growing market and the apartments that are gradually being privatized are significant to the urban lives of Pyongsong citizens. In fact, Pyongsong is less likely to become a hub of urban spaces that triggers change in the North Korean regime any time soon. This is because the increasing “capitalization” of urban spaces in Pyongsong will strengthen the political surveillance from Pyongyang. However, in the long term, Pyongsong may emerge as a nucleus of change along with Hamhung and Kaesong.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The city is a process as well as a substance. North Korean cities are spaces that endlessly change and evolve, not remaining fixed. While understanding North Korea through its cities, the author has reached the following three conclusions. In fact, this book neither examined all the cities in North Korea in depth nor analyzed the above four cities at the same level. Most of all, considering that field observation is restricted in principle, it is understandable that any conclusions are provisional. In addition, the author may be lost in “wishful thinking” in that he sought to find any sign of change in North Korea as a person who longs for national unification and the reform and opening of North Korea.

The most noticeable aspect in understanding North Korea through its cities is the privileged status of Pyongyang. In the “theatre state” of North Korea, the status and significance of Pyongyang as the “stage” cannot be stressed enough. It is true in the aspect of space, urban landscape, and architecture and at the level of the rights and obligations of Pyongyang citizens. All the vested interests including the ideology, power, wealth, and status of the North Korean regime are condensed in Pyongyang. This extreme phenomenon that Pyongyang is becoming a “primate city” defies comparison with the status and proportion of Seoul in South Korea in terms of quality and quantity.

This phenomenon has further worsened as North Korea carried out its succession process under the Kim Dynasty.

It was much more serious in the Kim Jong-il era than in the Kim Il-sung era. Kim Jong-un recently stressed the specific task of growing and developing Pyongyang while emphasizing the “construction of a civilized socialist country” in his New Year’s Speech for 2013 (Chung Chang-hyun, 2014: 172-173). While Kim Jong-il focused on the construction of large-scale structures and monuments, Kim Jong-un seems to be investing heavily in the expansion of parks, amusement parks, sports facilities, and entertainment spaces. This may be part of his efforts to gain the heart of citizens in Pyongyang as a successor. However, the privileges of Pyongyang at the sacrifice of the other provinces and the “bread and circus” ruling strategy may become a “double-edged sword” in the long term. This is because North Korea may effectively raise the expectations of Pyongyang citizens who hope for a happier life while simultaneously triggering the discontent of those in regions outside Pyongyang.

The second feature of North Korean cities is that they are based on visual planning that is excessively focused on outward appearance. Visual planning is one of the characteristics of modern urban planning. Visual planning makes it easy to understand all spaces. The meaning of a city as an attraction or a spectacle becomes important in urban space. In addition, it is important to North Korea that the urban public sphere is basically a space of value (Lee Jong-ho, 2013: 23). North Korea overly stresses the importance of visual

scenery to expose a specific political value and ideology. The squares and streets valued by North Korean cities including Pyongyang are not the spaces that contain the everyday lives of citizens. North Korea's urban space is more like an "area to see than an area to stay" (Lee Jong-ho, 2013: 22).

Third, a small but significant sign of change is emerging in the public-space and visual-centered-space structure for events. This is largely due to the emergence of the market and the privatization of the rights to use some apartment buildings. The market not only increases the inflow and outflow of those moving around but also information circulation. Most importantly, it results in the effect of transforming a social network from an official to an unofficial one. As the socialist economic system based on the rationing system collapses, a private social network is activated for survival itself, which is represented in border cities such as Chongjin, Sinuiju, and Hyesan in particular (Chang Se-hoon, 2005). This phenomenon is also emerging in Pyongyang, Kaesong, and Pyongsong.

It is noteworthy that the center of urban space is changing: from the perspective of citizens, the official center of urban space is the square and streets but the substantial center is the market and alleys. As the privatization of the rights to occupy housing is increasing among traditional elites and the newly rich, apartments are highly likely to emerge as an important space that triggers change in North Korean society. It is said

that the reconstruction and remodeling of old apartment buildings constructed in the 1970-1980s has become the latest rage among the wealthy in Pyongyang. This trend is gathering steam from the expansion of cyber space through the spread of IT devices.

Unlike South Korea, in which apartment buildings are considered to be the locus of the closed and exclusive familism as represented by the severance of relations with neighbors, North Korea has recognized that apartment life can coexist with neighborhood relationships. This is because North Koreans usually keep their apartment doors open (Park Hyun-sun, 2003). However, it is still doubtful that apartment residents voluntarily open their doors.¹⁵ The more insecure the future of the North Korean regime becomes, the deeper the division of social classes reaches, and the more the state fails to play the role of providing houses, the more apartment residents in North Korean cities may lock their doors. A private social network inside the apartments that cannot be scrutinized from the outside may serve as an opportunity for a new change in North Korean cities. Historically, cities have played the role of electric transformers. It is hard to conclude that North Korea is an exception in this regard.

15. The most common type of housing under Stalinism was communal apartments (kommunalka). People living in this type of housing had to open their doors, resulting in residents being well aware of detailed knowledge about their neighbors such as their personal habits, visitors, friends, every item they bought, the foods they ate, what they talked about on the phone, and what they talked about in their rooms (Figs, 2013: 308).

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