The Invention of Anti-American Sentiment – Why North Korea Shifted the Blame for the Sinchon Massacre to the United States – *

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Introduction

“It will heal eventually. At least, between us it will heal. It is the foreign powers that are ultimately to blame for all of this—let’s just leave it at that.”

- From The Guest by Hwang Sok-yong
Translated by Kyung-ja Chun and Maya West

From October to December 1950, a large-scale massacre took place in Sinchon (Sinch’ŏn), Hwanghae Province. North Korea refers to this incident as the “Sinchon Massacre” and claims that 35,383 people were slaughtered by the United States military.¹ In times of internal and external crises, North Korea has harked back to the memory of bombings and massacres committed by the US military during the

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Korean War to reinforce anti-American sentiment and ideology. Among them, the Sinchon Massacre is considered a prominent means of summoning the memory of the war and intensifying anti-American sentiment.

The Sinchon Massacre gained significant attention in South Korea through the novel *The Guest* (Sonnim) by Hwang Sŏgyŏng(Hwang Sok-yong) in 2001. Hwang defined Christianity and socialism as heteronomous modernity, which was not achieved by Koreans themselves, and portrayed the Sinchon Massacre as a massacre committed between the conflicting forces that have contracted “The Guest” (smallpox) in extrapolated modernity. Contrary to North Korea’s claims, Hwang depicted the Sinchon Massacre not as an act committed by the US military but as a tragedy that unfolded between the Christian factions and socialist forces, primarily perpetrated by the right-wing Christian forces.

The Sinchon Massacre became known to the public more widely through the MBC documentary TV show titled *Ijenŭn marhal su itta* (Now I Can Talk about It) in 2002. The episode on the Sinchon Massacre presented the various memories and experiences of individuals from South Korea, North Korea, and the United States regarding the incident, revealing through conflicting voices that the wounds from the massacre have not yet healed.

The MBC production crew discovered materials from the US National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and found that a portion of the US Army’s 3rd Battalion, 19th

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The 139th Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, was stationed in Sinchon. However, the Sinchon Massacre was not directly perpetrated by the US military, as claimed by North Korea, but primarily carried out by the right-wing peace preservation corps (ch’iandae), as revealed through interviews with North Korean defectors.

With the novel and the broadcast shedding light on the Sinchon Massacre, it began to draw attention from academia as well. In the context of the ongoing “reassessment of the past” at that time, Yi Sinch’ŏl examined the Sinchon Massacre as one of the cases where massacres were carried out by both left-wing and right-wing forces in North Korea. Han Monikka focused on the different naming of the Sinchon Massacre, referred to as the Great Sinchon Massacre in North Korea and the October 13 Anti-Communist Movement in South Korea, and analyzed that it was a massacre committed by the right-wing peace preservation corps in retaliation for North Korea’s preventive custody measures. While North Korea viewed the incident as a “massacre” committed by the right-wing peace preservation corps during the time the US military was stationed in the area, South Korea focused on the aspect of an “uprising” committed by the right-wing forces in response to the North Korean regime’s preventive custody measures.

Contrary to North Korea’s claim that the Sinchon Massacre was committed by the US military, both Yi Sinch’ŏl and Han Monikka saw


6 Mun’gyobu [Ministry of Education], Minju t’ongil ŭi kil (chunghakkyoyong) [The Path of Democratic Unification (For Middle School)], (Seoul: Mun’gyobu, 1965), 94-95; Mun’gyobu, Sŭnggong t’ongil ŭi kil (chunghakkyoyong) [The Path to Unification by Defeating Communism (For Middle School)], (Seoul: Mun’gyobu, 1971), 169-171.

the Sinchon Massacre as an incident perpetrated by the right-wing peace preservation corps. Their perspectives led to research on how North Korea used the Sinchon Massacre to enhance social cohesion and cultivate anti-American sentiment among its people. Notably Han Sŏnghun (Han Sunghoon) analyzed that North Korea deliberately heightened anti-American incident whenever North Korea faced internal or external crisis and asserted that the Sinchon Massacre was the material foundation for shaping the anti-American consciousness of the North Korean people. Moreover, he argued that North Korea used the Sinchon Museum of American War Atrocities to preserve the memory of the war and promote anti-American consciousness into practical ideology in an attempt to unify the nation and its people.

Existing research shows that the Sinchon Massacre was not perpetrated by the US military but by the right-wing peace preservation corps. There may be indirect responsibility on the part of the US military as the governing authority that occupied North Korea at the time for not taking any action despite being aware of the killings. However,

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they were not the direct perpetrators of the massacre, contrary to North Korea’s claims. Nevertheless, North Korea continues to attribute the responsibility for the mass killings to the US military and reproduces the memory of the Sinchon Massacre to foster anti-American sentiment during internal and external crises. Kim T’aeu reviewed the activities of the Women’s International Democratic Federation (WIDF), which visited North Korea during the Korean War, and proposed the possibility of the interpreters, who were acting as representatives of the North Korean regime, making errors while translating between the WIDF and the victims of the massacre. He argued that the North Korean authorities shifted the blame for the massacre to the US military out of fear that their political power would be weakened if they acknowledged the activities of anti-government forces.11

Then why did North Korea decide to blame the US military for the Sinchon Massacre? This paper proposes another perspective to understand the reason North Korea shifted the blame for the massacre from the right-wing peace preservation corps to the US military. To this end, this paper first focuses on the difference between existing studies and North Korea’s idea of what constitutes a massacre. While North Korea defined the air raids and other damage that occurred in and around Sinchon as part of the massacre, existing studies only focused on the damage inflicted on the ground as Sinchon Massacre. Secondly, this study explains that the reason for North Korea’s shift in blame was necessitated for social cohesion and economic development in the post-war period. During the Korean War, most North Koreans cooperated with the UN forces under their occupation. Unless the North Korea regime wanted to ostracize them and turn them into non-citizens, it needed to absorb them into the regime and send a message of integration. The solution to this problem was to shift the blame for

the massacre and other atrocities to the invisible and imaginary enemy – the US military.

**Inclusion of the US Military’s Air Raids as Part of the Massacre**

North Korea claims that as much as 35,383 people were killed by the US military in Sinchon, Hwanghae Province, within 52 days, from October 17 to December 7, 1950. *Chosŏnjŏnsa* (Complete History of Korea), the official North Korean history book, states that the Sinchon Massacre was “deliberately perpetrated under the command of Haerisŭn (rendered Harrison in English), the head of the US imperialist invaders.” It further records that on the first day of Sinchon’s occupation, Harrison remarked, “My command is the law. Anyone who violates the law will be shot to death without an exception,” and adds that he rounded up “fallen landlords, wicked religious figures, loan sharks, and gangsters” to perpetrate the massacre.\(^\text{12}\)

However, North Korea did not blame the US military for the massacre initially. Although the words “US imperialist invaders and the Rhee Syngman’s (Yi Sŭngman) puppet army” appears in an article published in the state-run North Korean government newspaper *Minju Chosŏn*, the same article states that the physical act was committed by “mass-slaughtering, terrorist groups such as the ‘police force,’ ‘peace preservation corps,’ and the ‘Great Korean Youth Corps’ (Taehan Ch’ŏngnyŏndan).”\(^\text{13}\) Around the same time, another newspaper *Rodong Sinmun* referred to the perpetrators of the massacre as “enemies

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(wŏnssu nomdŭl)” and “murderous demons (sari’ngwi nomdŭl)” but never directly mentioned the US military.\(^{14}\)

Then why did North Korea first point to the right-wing peace preservation corps as the direct perpetrators of the massacre and then shifted the blame onto the US military?

To find an answer to this question, it is necessary to first examine the situation in which North Korea came to point to Harrison as the person responsible for the massacre. In North Korean sources, the name of the US military officer responsible for the massacre appears in various forms such as Harrison (해리슨), Harison (해리슨), and Halison (할리슨). The first official mention of this man in official documents was in a report drafted by the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) in March 1952.\(^{15}\) The IADL was one of the NGOs that visited North Korea during the Korean War.

The IADL report includes Harrison’s name, because the name was mentioned in a trial about the Sinchon Massacre immediately prior to their visit to North Korea. In January and February of 1952, preliminary trials were held for Hŏ P’ilsun, Ch’oe Hanu, Yun Myŏngwŏn, and Ri Tuhyŏn. The only individuals who received legal punishment in relation to the Sinchon Massacre, they had received espionage training from the US military on Paengnyŏng Island and surrounding areas and had infiltrated North Korea to engage in intelligence activities before they were apprehended.\(^{16}\) During this process, Hŏ P’ilsun, who was identified as the leader, mentioned Harrison for the first time.\(^{17}\)

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14 “Hyungakhan wŏnssudŭl ŭi manhaeng, Sinch’on’gun Sanch’ŏnmyŏn esŏ sach’onmyŏng haksal [The Atrocities of Evil Enemy and the Massacre of Four Thousand People in Sanch’on, Sinchon County],” Rodong Sinmun, April 12, 1951.


16 Ch’ögojaep’anso [North Korean Supreme Court], Sinch’on taejung haksal saģŏn gongi’an munheon [Documents on the Official Trial of the Sinchon Civilian Massacre] (Pyŏngyang: Kungnip Ch’ulp’ansa, 1952), 20.
It is unclear whether Hŏ P’ilsun first mentioned the name Harrison of his own accord or whether the law enforcement authorities prompted Hŏ to say the name. In any event, their interests were aligned—from the North Korea authorities’ perspective, it was necessary to identify the commander to make the US military out to be the perpetrators of the massacre; from the defendant’s standpoint, he could hope for leniency by asserting that he was simply following the orders of the US military. In fact, Hŏ P’ilsun’s defense attorney, Chi Yongdae, used this latter reasoning to defend Hŏ.  

Then, who exactly was Harrison? According to the North Korean trial records, Harrison’s title was “Commander of the US military stationed in Sinchon.” All available sources from South Korea, North Korea, and the United States record the date of the US military’s entry into Sinchon as October 17, 1950. According to the US military records, the US Army 19th Regiment, which was the main unit of the 24th Infantry Division, arrived at Chaeryŏng, and one company from the regiment’s 3rd Battalion, entered Sinchon. However, until now, Harrison’s name has not been found in the documents of the US Army 24th Infantry Division. Yet, given that documents from 1964 that were left by North Korean defectors who had served in the right-wing peace preservation corps mention “Commander Hyerisŭn (Hyerrison),” it

17 Ch’oegeojaep’anso [North Korean Supreme Court], Sinch’ŏn taejung haksal sagŏn, 160-161.
18 Ch’oegeojaep’anso [North Korean Supreme Court], Sinch’ŏn taejung haksal sagŏn, 158.
19 Ch’oegeojaep’anso [North Korean Supreme Court], Sinch’ŏn taejung haksal sagŏn, 39.
seems that there was an American soldier named Harrison.

The mere existence of an individual named Harrison, however, does not necessarily imply that the direct responsibility for the massacre lies with the US military, as claimed by North Korea. Defectors to South Korea who had been former members of the peace preservation corps have consistently testified that the US military was only briefly stationed in Sinchon before moving north.\(^\text{22}\) In fact, the 3rd Battalion, 19th Regiment, 24th Division entered Sinchon on October 17, 1950, and headed to Sariwŏn the following day. Afterward, the 3rd Battalion, 21st Regiment, entered Sinchon, which was later replaced by Company L of the 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment, and Company C of the 1st Battalion. At that time, US military units were competitively advancing northward with the priority of occupying Pyongyang (P’yŏngyang), which led to frequent rotations and replacements.\(^\text{23}\)

However, the Civil Affairs Officer of the US Army 24th Infantry Division was consistently reporting to higher authorities regarding the situation in Hwanghae Province, including what was happening in Sinchon.\(^\text{24}\) Accordingly, some speculate that Harrison might have been associated with the Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) or another intelligence unit, rather than a regular combat unit.\(^\text{25}\) It has been confirmed that there was a Lieutenant William Harrison, who served as

\(^{22}\) Munhwabangsong Sisajejakguk [Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) Current Affairs Department], *Ijenŭn malhal su itta – Manggak ŭi chŏnjaeng Hwanghaedо Sinch’ŏn sagŏn* [Now I Can Talk About It – The Forgotten War, Sinchon Incident in Hwanghae Province] (Seoul: Munhwabangsong Sisajejakguk, 2002), 358, 371, 394. After the broadcasting of the TV show “*Ijenŭn marhal su itta* [Now I Can Talk about It]”, MBC compiled records from NARA, international organizations’ reports, resources from North Korea, and oral recordings, and other documents into an over 500-page sourcebook.

\(^{23}\) Han, “Ponggi wa haksal,” 118.


\(^{25}\) Ch’oe Chaeyŏng, “Haksal ch’aegimja Haerisŏn ŭn wigwan’gŭbin’ga? Changsŏnggŭbin’ga? [Is Harrison, responsible for the massacre, a company grade officer or a general officer?],” *T’ongil Nyusŭ*, January 12, 2015.
the commanding officer of Task Force Kirkland under the 8240th US Army Unit, operated by the CIA, was active in Chumunjin.\textsuperscript{26} Unfortunately, based on the level of information uncovered so far, it is difficult to determine whether these two individuals are the same person or if they are two different individuals with the same name.

The crucial issue, regardless of Harrison’s existence, is whether the massacre was carried out under the command of the US military, as claimed by North Korea. In this regard, former members of the peace preservation corps who defected to the South admitted that the massacre was carried out by their own hands in retaliation to North Korea’s preventive custody measures. They consistently recalled that there were no US military personnel at the massacre sites and that the incidents were tragedies that unfolded among “people from the neighborhood” or “people from the hometown.”\textsuperscript{27}

Then, what reasons and evidence does North Korea have to accuse the US military as the culprit of the massacre? By closely examining North Korea’s historical texts and court documents, we can catch a glimpse of the initial clues as to why they blame the US military as responsible for the massacre.

American imperialist mercenaries threatened and coerced residents to lead them southward, claiming that they would drop atomic bombs. As the escape routes were blocked and it became difficult for even themselves to flee, they savagely massacred a considerable number of people along the

\textsuperscript{26} Han’guk chŏnjaeng ŭi yugyŏkchŏnsa [Guerrilla Warfare in the Korean War] (Seoul: Kukbangbu Kunsap’yŏnch’an Yŏn’guso [Military History Institute at the Ministry of National Defense], 2003), 488-489.

\textsuperscript{27} Munhwabangsong Sisajejakguk, “Kwak Pokhyŏn kusul [Kwak Pokhyŏn’s Oral Testimony],” in Ijenŭn marhal su itta: pangsong ŭl t’onghae pon Han’guk hyŏndaesa ŭi chaënsik [Now I Can Talk About It: New Understanding of Contemporary Korean History Seen Through Broadcasts], ed. Han’gukŏllonchŏngbohakhoe (Seoul: Kŏmyunikeisyŏn Puksū, 2002), 358.
way. On December 5, 1950, the US imperialist forces deployed around 20 aircrafts and indiscriminately bombed and strafed the people who were being forcibly taken away by the wind of atomic bombs, resulting in the brutal killing of over 4,000 individuals over the Taedong Bridge and on the frozen surface of the Taedong River. ... They carried out despicable acts like savages, mass murdering over 30,000 innocent people they were forcibly taking away by threatening to drop atomic bombs on them along the road between Sariwŏn and Haeju in early December 1950. Indeed, the mass killings and atrocities perpetrated by the American imperialist invaders in the areas of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea that they had temporarily occupied were far more atrocious and brutal in terms of the scale, magnitude, and barbarity of the massacres than the despicable acts committed by the fascist Hitler’s henchmen in Europe during the Second World War.28 [emphasis added]

Haerisŭn... issued orders to force all residents to relocate to the South, leaving no one behind and preventing the emergence of new communist sympathizers, by propagating the rumor that the US military would use atomic bombs to annihilate the Chinese People’s Liberation Army and the North Korean Red Army after the US military retreats. ... Since the residents were forcibly relocated, they were traveling with their possessions in ox carts toward the South when nearly all of them were gunned down by machine gun fire from US military airplanes.”29 [emphasis added]

29 Ch’oegojaep’anso [North Korean Supreme Court], Sinch’ŏn taejung haksal
According to North Korea, “mass killings and atrocities” included not only the acts of murder, arson, rape, and torture that took place on the ground but also aerial bombings, including strafing attacks. North Korea claimed that Harrison used the pretext of using atomic bombs to forcibly relocate Sinchon residents to the south, and during the process, numerous people were killed by large-scale strafing attacks and air bombing. Sinchon was a strategic point for refugees escaping from Pyongyang to the southern regions, as they had to pass by Sinchon when traveling from Sariwŏn to Haeju—if that route was blocked, they could make a detour to Ongjin. Over 30,000 people were said to have been killed as a result of the US military’s airstrikes along this escape route.

In the North Korean documentary film titled “Let’s Not Forget the Grudge of Blood in Sinchon” (Itchi malja Sinchŏn ttang ŭi p’i’iũ wŏnhamūl) about the Sinchon Massacre produced in 1999, the narrator states, “The American bastards... during the 52-day occupation of Sinchon, savagely murdered not only its residents but also... 35,383 innocent people... who were traveling between Pyongyang, Sariwŏn, Haeju, and other regions.”30 A former member of the right-wing peace preservation corps who defected to South Korea recalled the horrors of the bombings, saying, “When we fled, we had to step over corpses for 40 li (Korean unit of distance equivalent to about 393 meters). For 40 li, we trod on corpses. It was unbelievable. The most tragic thing was that a mother died while holding her child, but the child survived. The child cried in the dead mother’s embrace. But there was no one to help. Because everyone had to save themselves.”31

30 This film is currently available to watch on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwYKaDXhqX0
In other words, the 35,383 victims of the Sinchon Massacre as claimed by North Korea includes not only the victims of massacres carried out by the peace preservation corps on the ground but also those who perished in the aerial bombings. The Sinchon Massacre involved killings, arson, rape, and torture perpetrated by the right-wing peace preservation corps on the ground, and aerial bombings carried out by the US military in the sky. In actuality, the US military’s air raid was an evident war crime and inhumane military action, in that it was an indiscriminate bombing of innocent civilians. In this regard, North Korea’s claim that the Sinchon Massacre was perpetrated by the US military could hold some validity, particularly when considering specific context of attempting to define the Sinchon Massacre. A significant number of civilian victims were killed in aerial bombings perpetrated by the US military, which provided evident grounds for North Korea to attribute responsibility to them.

The Task of Post-War Regime Integration and the Historicization of the Sinchon Massacre

1) Ban on Retaliation and the Need to Embrace Anti-Government Forces

To examine the reason North Korea blamed the US army for the Sinchon Massacre, it is necessary to look at the situation that unfolded within North Korea after the UN occupation of North Korea. From October to mid-December 1950, North Korea was occupied by the US and South Korean forces. The North Korean regime failed to respond systematically to this crisis, and members of the Workers’ Party were

busy burying their party certificates in the ground and retreating. Although North Korea started the war with the goal of “liberating South Korea,” it faced a “counterrevolutionary” situation after four months.

When the UN forces withdrew from North Korean territory, victims who lived through massacres began to retaliate against the right-wing peace preservation corps. Some members of the peace preservation corps defected to South Korea, but others remained in the North to observe the situation due to the stalemate on the frontlines. In particular, members of the peace preservation corps from Sinchon sought refuge in Mount Kuwŏl or on nearby islands such as Paengnyŏngdo. However, those who were unable to escape or had minimal involvement in the incident and remained in the villages faced private retaliation.

On December 21, 1950, during the 3rd Central Committee Meeting of the Workers’ Party of Korea, Kim Il Sung (Kim Ilsŏng) announced a ban on private retaliation without legal procedures. He remarked that “It is entirely reasonable for the victims in the liberated areas to take revenge against such wicked reactionaries,” but it would be a serious mistake to arbitrarily punish those responsible without any legal procedures or investigation. He then ordered people to “generously forgive

33 Pak Ch’angok, “Hyŏndan’gye e issŏsŏ taejung chŏngch’il saop ŭi kanghwa [The Strengthening of Popular Political Business in the Current Phase],” Kŭlloja 2, no. 63 (1951): 96-97.
34 “Pokssu e pul’t’anŭn inmin tŭl [People Burning with Revenge],” Minju Chosŏn, January 31, 1951.
them, if they did not actively engage in wicked acts.”

On January 5, 1951, Kim Il Sung made this issue an official one through a meeting of the Military Commission which was the highest decision-making body during wartime. He ordered that “Not all individuals involved in counterrevolutionary organizations should be treated uniformly, but instead, differentiate between active instigators (chudongbunja) and passive participants (p'idongbunja).” He added, “Only a small minority are malicious active instigators, while the vast majority are... individuals who passively joined counterrevolutionary organizations,” and emphasized that “Most of those who... joined passively come from the lower ranks.”

What Kim Il Sung mentioned in his speech was immediately promulgated as legislation marked Military Committee Decision No. 44 on “Punishment of Individuals Involved in Counter-revolutionary Organizations in Areas Temporarily Occupied by the Enemy.” The regulation stated: 1) strict punishment will be imposed on the individuals who punish counter-revolutionary individuals without following legal procedures, 2) individuals involved in counter-revolutionary organizations will be in-

37 Kim Il Sung, Chosŏn Rodongdang Chungang Wiwŏnhoe chesamch'a chŏnggihoeŭi esŏ chinsulhan Kim Il Sung tongji ŭi pogo (hyŏn chŏngse wa tangmyŏn kwaŏp) [Report on Comrade Kim Il Sung’s Testimony at the 3rd Regular Meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea (Current Affairs and Tasks at Hand)], (Pyŏngyang: Chosŏn Rodongdang Ch’ulp’ansa, 1951), 54-55.


dividually reviewed and punished based on specific charges, and 3) those who turn themselves in voluntarily within a month of the promuligation of this law may be exempt from punishment for their crimes.40

The above-mentioned decision and law were evidently etched in the mind of Kang Hyosik, a former member of the peace preservation corps who defected to South Korea, who remembered the legislation as “Kim Il Sung’s special directive that no punishment would be imposed on anyone except the individual involved in the incident.” Kang mentioned that his brother was retaliated against and killed due to his involvement in the peace preservation corps, but he himself did not suffer any harm. He remembered the regulation as embodying the principle of “sons not bearing the guilt of their fathers, and we not bearing the guilt of our sons.”41 According to the trial documents about the Sinchon Massacre, those who voluntarily surrendered within the specified period and had minor involvement in the counter-revolutionary organizations did not receive legal punishment.42

North Korea, as Kim Il Sung stated, separated those who participated in peace preservation corps into “active instigators” and “passive participants” and opted for a separation strategy, where in the former were strictly punished while the latter were leniently embracing the latter. Accordingly, to punish the “active instigators,” North Korea issued a decree of the Supreme People’s Assembly on April 7, 1951. The decree stipulated that “Those vile anti-national criminals, who terrorized and massacred the people shall be sentenced to death and have

40 “Chŏk ege rimsi kangiŏmdanghayŏttŏn chiyŏk esŏūi pandongdanch’e e kadamhayŏttŏn cha tŭl ŭl ch’ŏborham e kwanhayŏ [Concerning the punishing of those who were involved in counter-revolutionary organizations in the areas temporarily occupied by the enemy],” Rodong Sinmun, January 14, 1951.
42 Ch’oegojaep’anso [North Korean Supreme Court], Sinch’ŏn taejung haksal sagŏn kongp’an munhŏn [Documents from the Trial on the Sinchon Civilian Massacre] (Pyŏngyang: Kungnip Ch’ulp’ansa, 1952), 93.
all their properties confiscated.” Based on this decree, the aforementioned individuals who instigated the Sinchon Massacre—Hŏ P’il-sun, Ch’oe Hanu, Yun Myŏngwŏn, and Ri Tuhyŏn—were ultimately sentenced to death.

However, the North Korean regime minimized the scope of “active instigators” by strictly prohibiting the tendency to impose punishment without conducting investigations into the specific crimes. Furthermore, the “passive participants” were subjected to social penalties through “crowd trials” instead of receiving direct punishments such as imprisonment. A crowd trial was a form of combining “social sanctions and mass education,” where, instead of direct punishment, those subject to punishment were placed under home confinement or probation to encourage edification, introspection, and transformation.


44 Ch’oegojaep’anso [North Korean Supreme Court], Sinch’ŏn taejung haksal sagŏn, 187-188.

45 Naemusang Taeribusang Pang Hakse [Pang Hakse, DPRK Minister of the Interior], “Pandongbunja ch’wigŭp ch’ŏri e taehayŏ [Concerning the Handling of Counter-revolutionary Individuals],” Pukhan’gwangye saryojip 16, (Seoul: Kuksa P’yŏnch’an Wiwŏnhoe, 1993), 208.


47 Ri Chaedo, Konghwaguk chap’an rippŏp ŭi palchŏn [Development of Judicial Legislations in Republic] (Seoul: Kungnip Ch’ulp’ansa, 1960), 255.
Those who were placed under home confinement had to wear a sign with two red characters “杜門” (tumun, literally “confined”) on his chest and also affix another sign with the same characters on the gate of his house. Generally, probation lasted for two to three months, while home confinement was imposed for between four and six months in general, and no more than six months.\footnote{Mokgammyŏn Punjuso [Mokgam-myŏn Police Station], “Tumun kunshinja myŏngdan [List of People under Home Confinement or Probation],” \textit{Kakchong myŏngdan mit t'onggyejip} [Collection of Various Lists and Statistics], (1951), 99.}

North Korea minimized the category of “active instigators” and imposed social punishments on “passive participants,” because there was a need to reform and reintegrate the people back into the system. Under the unprecedented “counterrevolutionary” situation of the UN occupation of its territory, North Korea witnessed the people’s withdrawal of support for its regime. The leadership failed to respond systematically to the crisis, and members of the Workers’ Party, considered the guardians of the regime, were busy taking flight. Although the occupation lasted briefly, it not only showed the North Korean leadership its military defeat but also confirmed the existence of defectors from its regime.

The problem with this way of categorizing people into “active instigators” and “passive participants” was that it was not easy to separate the two groups. Kim Il Sung stated that “most of the people who passively participated in counterrevolutionary organizations were from the base class,” which proves that a lot of people from the base class took part in the peace preservation corps. Conflicts that arose during the Korean War went beyond the class distinction based on the framework of ideological differences and were influenced by various conflicting structures such as social status, class, household, village, and religion.\footnote{Pak Ch’ansŭng, \textit{Maŭllo gan Han’gukchŏnjaeng} [Korean War in the Villages] (P’aju: Tolbegae, 2010), 24.} As such, the North Korean leadership faced the challenge of
integrating the base class, which was the foundation of the socialist system, back into the regime.

Under the circumstance in which a significant number of individuals from the base class joined the anti-government forces, the North Korean leadership had to adopt an inclusive approach in order to avoid potential risk of de-nationalizing and excluding them from the regime. The easiest path to social consolidation while creating relatively fewer conflicts was to redirect the responsibility of the massacres to the fictitious enemy, the United States, and embrace those involved in the peace preservation corps as “passive participants.” Therefore, this approach meant to give “passive participants” who had a lesser degree of involvement in the peace preservation corps the perception that they were granted forgiveness, and also send a signal to those considered “active instigators” that at least their families would not be held accountable under the system of guilt by association.

In the North Korean leadership’s such assessment of the problem, the Sinchon Massacre, which involved the death of a large number of people, was the most suitable incident in which the blame could be easily placed on the US army. Consequently, immediately following the incident, newspapers did not repeat their initial reports that the massacre was perpetrated by the right-wing peace preservation corps, and instead placed the blame on the US military under Harrison’s command. By shifting the blame for the massacre on the fictitious enemy—United States—and taking a conciliatory approach to the numerous participants in the peace preservation corps, North Korea aimed to achieve regime integration in the post-war era.

2) Obstacles to Productivity Growth and the Search for a Breakthrough through the Historicization of the Sinchon Massacre

North Korea strove to achieve regime integration by blaming the US military for massacres that occurred during the Korean War while taking a conciliatory approach to those involved in the peace preservation
corps. Unfortunately, the “counterrevolutionary” ideology prevalent in post-war North Korea was an obstacle that hindered societal integration. The state attempted to use social punishments like home confinement and reeducation to embrace those who were involved in the peace preservation corps, but the internal cohesion within the community was already shattered, leading to increased resentment and mistrust among the people.

These issues became prominent themes in post-war North Korean literature, such as the Taedonggang (The Taedong River, 1954) trilogy by Han Sŏrya, Adŏl un chŏnsŏn e itta (My Son Is at the Frontline, 1955) by Ri Sanghyŏn, Ch’ŏt suhwak (First Harvest, 1956) by Ri Kŭnyŏng, and Sansaedŭl (Mountain Birds, 1962) by Ri Chŏngsuk. These novels emerged from the social awareness to soften the lingering Cold War hostility stemming from wartime massacres, appease the issues surrounding the peace preservation corps, and foster a sense of integration.50

The protagonist of First Harvest, Sangjin, is a former soldier and a member of the Workers’ Party who lost his wife to the peace preservation corps. Due to painful memories, he does not want to return to his hometown, but he follows the party’s decision and returns home to serve as the chairman of the farm management committee. Among the people at the farm are Ilnam’s mother, who lost her husband in the massacre, and Pak Pyŏngil, a former member of the peace preservation corps. Ilnam’s mother constantly expresses hostility toward Pak and harbors resentment toward him. On the other hand, Pak, although not officially punished thanks to the state’s reconciliation policy, lives on the farm with a sense of unease, constantly being cautious of people around him. Sangjin takes the lead in building the cooperative farm as he embraces Pak Pyŏngil, who was responsible for the death of his

50 Kim Chaeyong, “Pukhan ŭi pundanmunhak – Ch’iandae munje rŭl chungshim ŭro [Division Literature in North Korea – Focusing on the Issue of the Peace Preservation Corps],” Pundan’gujo wa Pukhanmunhak [Structure of Division and North Korean Literature] (Seoul: Somyŏng Ch’ulp’an, 2000), 266.
own wife, and comforts Ilnam’s mother.\textsuperscript{51}

The author Ri Kŭnyŏng vividly portrayed the conflicts between the individuals who were involved in the atrocities perpetrated by the peace preservation corps and the families of the victims in the post-war rural communities, emphasizing the need to resolve hostility within communities caused by wartime massacres. Additionally, through the actions of Sangjin, who is a party cadre, the novel shed light on the initial approach taken by the state in dealing with those involved in the peace preservation corps.

*Mountain Birds* features Pongsuk, a family member of a peace preservation corps member, and Kŭmnyŏ, a family member of a victim of the massacre. After losing her parents during the Japanese occupation, Pongsuk is raised under the care of her uncle. However, when he joins the peace preservation corps and fled, she is left to fend for herself. Pongsuk presents herself as a war orphan and finds a job at a textile factory after finishing middle school, where she works alongside her school friend Kŭmnyŏ, never properly confiding in Kŭmnyŏ about her past out of guilt and suffers in silence. Eventually, she confides in the newly appointed work team leader named Chŏngae about her struggles. Kŭmnyŏ comes to understand Pongsuk’s situation and the two reconcile.\textsuperscript{52}

The novels addressing the issue of the peace preservation corps vividly portrayed the realistic gap between the state-led post-war regime integration measures and the hostility remaining among the people.\textsuperscript{53} The emergence of these fictional works demonstrates that the wartime massacres and post-war societal integration were not easily reconciled and resolved. Although North Korea was only occupied for four

\textsuperscript{51} Ri Kŭnyŏng, *Ch’ŏt suhwak* [First Harvest] (Pyŏngyang: Chosŏn Chakka Tongmaeng Ch’ulp’ansa, 1956).

\textsuperscript{52} Ri Chŏngsuk, *Sansaedŭl* [Mountain Birds] (Pyŏngyang: Chosŏn Munhak Yesul Tongmaeng Ch’ulp’ansa, 1966).

months, the aftermath left a heavy imprint on the consciousness of the people and social atmosphere.

The most problematic aspect, as hinted by the setting of the two novels—a cooperative farm in *First Harvest* and a textile factory in *Mountain Birds*—was that the conflict arising from the wartime massacres had a negative impact on economic growth. In the 1960s, the Chollima Movement to promote rapid economic development was in full swing in North Korea, and Kim Il Sung’s following speech reflected the concerns of the North Korean leadership at the time:

Kangsŏn Steel Mill is a complex enterprise made up of workers. However, the former party committee chairman of this company...doubted the reliability of repatriated soldiers at the company because they were repatriated soldiers and regarded those who had been involved with the peace preservation corps as bad because they had been members of the peace preservation corps. As the party committee chairman of the company was bothered by the workers’ family backgrounds and social and political lives, individuals with complex family backgrounds and social and political lives, or families of such individuals mostly became unnerved or depressed, leading to poor work performance.⁵⁴

As seen in the above quote, the North Korean authorities sought to embrace “individuals with complex social and political lives, [and]

⁵⁴ Kim Il Sung, “Hyŏnsigi kyŏngjesaŏp esŏ nasŏnŭn myŏt kaji munje wa tang chŏngch‘isaŏp panghyang e taehayŏ (1961 nyŏn 2 wŏl 27 il Chosŏn Rodongdang Chungang Wiwŏnhoe kwajang isang ilgun tŭl ap esŏ han yŏnsŏl) [Concerning Several Issues Arising in Current Economic Activities and the Direction of the Party’s Political Activities (Speech made before manager-level (kwajang) or higher members of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea on February 27, 1961)],” *Kim Ilsŏng chŏnjip* [Kim Il Sung’s Complete Works] 26, (Pyŏngyang: Chosŏn Rodongdang Ch’ulp’ansa, 1999), 376-377.
families of such individuals,” such as repatriated soldiers and former members of the peace preservation corps, for the sake of economic development. However, in the prevailing atmosphere of the Cold War that permeated society, the masses and even party cadres were reluctant to engage with such individuals. From the perspective of the North Korean regime, allowing exclusionary practices and conflicts occurring within production facilities to persist could lead to not only social disintegration but also a decline in productivity.

Under such circumstances, Sinchon drew attention in many ways, as it was a place where the most extensive massacres took place during the war. Sinchon and its neighboring Chaeryŏng county were the most fertile plains in North Korea, so much so that there was a saying, “If you want to bestow blessings, give us the fields of Namoribŏl in Sinchon and Chaeryŏng.” Recognizing the significance of Sinchon and its surrounding areas in terms of agricultural production, the North Korean regime made special efforts to address the wounds and anger caused by the massacres. At the same time, they aimed to channel that energy into increasing agricultural productivity.

Currently, the farmers in Sinchon County, Hwanghae Province, are wholeheartedly engaged in efforts to plant rice seedlings amid growing animosity toward the enemy. These farmers have suffered no less, if not more, than any other region during the temporary occupation of the US imperialist invaders. The enemy has massacred 35,383 ... residents in this area. ... “Let us finish planting rice seedlings

55 Kwihwanbyŏng (歸還兵), literally, returning soldiers, refers to those who had been captured as prisoners during the war and returned home after the war.
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in a timely manner to send more food to the frontlines!” Using such slogans as their combat cry, the farmers in the county are fighting... even amid rising animosity toward the atrocities perpetrated by American imperialist savages, which were revealed more evidently in the recent trial of the Sinchon Massacre.57

The Chaeryŏng plains by Sinchon had such a thriving productivity that it was nicknamed Namuribŏl, meaning “more than enough to eat, wear, and use.” As a result, Sinchon was considered a “town where people lived without worrying about food because there was an abundance of fertile land.”58 The Namuribŏl fields were symbolic in North Korean agriculture, as at the onset of the 1950 public bond issuance project, funds were allocated to send “ttŭrakttorŭ (tractors)” there.59 Not only Sinchon but Hwanghae Province in general was a relatively fertile and abundant region in North Korea. In the days of food shortage shortly after liberation, representatives of North Korean farmers in the region appealed “for sympathy and assistance from our comrades

57 “Wŏnssu pobok ŭi kyŏrŭi tūnopi, Sinch’ŏn’gun nongmin tŭl ŭi monaegi t’ujaeng hwarbal [Heightening the Determination for Retaliation against the Enemies, Farmers in Sinchon County Wage an Active Struggle to Plant Rice Seedlings],” Minju Chosŏn, June 10, 1952.
in western Korea.”

As such, Hwanghae Province, including Sinchon, was one of the representative places with a strong tradition of private land ownership and an ongoing practice of small-scale farming for a long time. However, after the Korean War, North Korea underwent a process of agricultural collectivization. Although there were theoretical drawbacks to implementing socialism immediately on the productivity base that had been destroyed by the war, North Korea pursued a strategy of transforming the production relations to maximize productivity. Paradoxically, the war had thoroughly destroyed North Korea’s economic foundation and laid the groundwork for the implementation of socialism.

For the farmers who had received land through the land reform in 1946, it was not easy to consolidate their land and means of production for agricultural collectivization. As they had traditionally owned the means of production, they had a sense of conservatism as small commodity producers, and this characteristic was stronger in those who had been cultivating their own land even before the land reform. The general consciousness of small-scale ownership among farmers manifested itself in their reluctance to participate in the process of agricultural collectivization or, if they did participate, in contributing less capital or clinging to their individual fields rather than working for the cooperative.

Furthermore, organized forms of resistance by the farmers also emerged. Taking advantage of the provision that guaranteed their freedom to withdraw from the cooperative in the early stages of collectivization, farmers joined the cooperatives to avoid heavier individual commodity tax burdens during harvest time, only to promptly with-


61 Kim Yŏnch’ŏl, Pukhan ŭi sanŏphwa wa kyŏngje chŏngch’aek [North Korea’s Industrialization and Economic Policy], (Seoul: Yŏksa Pip’yŏngsa, 2001), 104.
draw their participation. This type of backlash was particularly strong in (South) Hwanghae Province, where there was a high proportion of former landlords, wealthy farmers, and mid-scale farmers. One notable example was the “Paech’ŏn Wind,” during which farmers in the Paech’ŏn region in Hwanghae Province repeatedly joined and withdrew from the cooperative for their benefit.62

In this regard, Hwanghae Province was an important region for the North Korean regime in terms of agricultural development but also one that needed to be kept under close watch. Kim Il Sung’s following speech from March 1962 indicates a different approach and atmosphere, compared to the wartime and post-war periods when he sought to embrace former members of the peace preservation corps:

The Party Central Committee issued instructions to absolve the sins of those who had committed misdeeds in the past and to embrace them more boldly. In response, within the party organizations of South Hwanghae Province, thousands of individuals were pardoned each day, starting with the hostile elements who committed unforgivably grave offenses, because people said it would put the minds of lighter offenders at ease to know that they would truly be pardoned. ... When we said to absolve the sins, we did not mean the sins of hostile elements of exploitative classes who committed wicked deeds, but rather at those laboring people who once made mistakes but sincerely repent and strive to follow us.63

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63 Kim Il Sung, “Tang chojiksaŏp kwa sasangsaŏp ūl kaesŏn kanghwahal de tae-hayŏ (1962 nyŏn 3 wŏl 8 il Chosŏn Rodongdang Chungang Wiwŏnhoe che 4 ki che 3 ch’a chŏnwhŏnhoeŭi hwakdaehoeŭi esŏ han kyŏllon) [Concerning the Improvement and Strengthening of the Party’s Organizational Work and
Kim Il Sung specifically mentioned South Hwanghae Province, which included Sinchon and other places where the right-wing peace preservation corps was particularly active, and part of the province had been located south of the 38th Parallel and became included in the so-called “New Liberation Zone.” From the North Korean regime’s perspective, South Hwanghae Province was a “impure” region rife with former landlords and wealthy farmers where “sins of hostile elements” persisted.

In this context, it is important to note the timing of North Korea’s historicization of the Sinchon Massacre. The “Paech’ŏn Wind,” which was an organized resistance movement against agricultural collectivization, took place in Hwanghae Province from the fall of 1956 to the spring of 1957. Then, after the movement ended, Kim Il Sung visited Sinchon on March 26, 1958, and in October of the same year, the consolidation of agricultural cooperatives at the level of ri (the smallest administrative unit) was finalized throughout North Korea.

When Kim Il Sung visited Sinchon, he issued instructions for the construction of the Sinchon Museum of American War Atrocities. He specifically ordered that the Sinchon Museum be established in the party headquarters building, where members of the Workers’ Party had been imprisoned and later slaughtered in the Sinchon Massacre. Following his instructions, the Sinchon Museum opened on June 24, 1960, just one day before the anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War on June 25. The *Rodong Sinmun* reported this news, stating that the museum opened in the place where the “ruthless massacre was carried out without hesitation by the invading American imperialists who had temporarily occupied Sinchon County during the Fatherland Liberation War.”

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The contents exhibited in the Sinchon Museum attributed the massacre to the United States as the main perpetrator and responsible party. Diverging from its initial reports pointing at the right-wing peace preservation corps as the perpetrators in the immediate aftermath of the Sinchon Massacre, North Korea began to historicize the incident around the time the museum was built and specified the US army as the aggressor. This was a measure to make use of the anti-American sentiment that had been formed by the damage from air raids and blame the US military for massacring the masses in an effort to foster societal integration and productivity growth. Moreover, it likely served as a tacit warning to the former “hostile elements” to conform to the regime, now that the blame for the massacre has been shifted onto the United States and the incident has been historicized.

**Conclusion**

From October to December 1950, a large-scale massacre took place in Sinchon, Hwanghae Province. North Korea dubbed this incident “Sinchon Massacre” and claims that 35,383 people were slaughtered by the US military. In times of external and internal crises, North Korea has recalled the memory of the Sinchon Massacre to stir up anti-American sentiment among its people and achieve regime integration. However, the atrocious crimes of murder, arson, rape, and torture that North Korea attributes to the US military had actually been committed by members of the right-wing peace preservation corps in retaliation for the North Korean regime’s preventive custody measure.

Nevertheless, North Korea shifted the blame for the Sinchon Massacre to the US military because there was a need to embrace the

members of the base class who had betrayed the regime during the UN occupation period. To this end, North Korea included the air raids that indiscriminately killed civilians in the scope of “massacre” and named Harrison as the individual ultimately responsible for driving the North Korean people out to the site where they were eventually massacred. Moreover, the former members of the peace preservation corps were classified into “active instigators” and “passive participants,” where the scope of the former group was minimized, and the latter group was reeducated through home confinement and other forms of social punishment.

Yet, the “counterrevolutionary” ideology prevalent in post-war North Korea proved to be an obstacle in achieving regime integration. In particular, it led to animosities and jealousies among members of production facilities, such as cooperative farms and factories, negatively impacting economic reconstruction and productivity growth. In an effort to resolve this issue, North Korea aimed to achieve societal integration and productivity growth by historicizing the Sinchon Massacre and fostering anti-American sentiment. Accordingly, the site of a massacre was transformed into the museum, and the move also served as a subtle warning to the former “hostile elements.”

Then, in the current era, what is the significance of the invented anti-American sentiment that North Korea reconstructed by blaming the US military for the Sinchon Massacre?

It may be possible to find a clue to an answer to this question from the statements made by Kim Jong Il (Kim Chŏngil) during his two visits to the Sinchon Museum of American War Atrocities, once in 1962 and again in 1998. His remarks on the two occasions each had different emphasis:

The massacre perpetrated by the American imperialist invaders in Sinchon County vividly demonstrates their bestial and cruel nature inherited from their ancestors who delighted in human slaughter and shows that they are 20th-century
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cannibals and murderers who have been conditioned by medieval racial theories. We the people will never forget the savage atrocities committed by the murdering American imperialist demons in Sinchon and other areas in northern republic during the temporary retreat period in the Fatherland Liberation War.\textsuperscript{65}

In the past, there were instances where innocent people were directly killed by the American imperialists in Sinchon. However, there were also now-wiped out remnants of the exploitive class and counter-revolutionary individuals who organized the “peace preservation corps” and carried out numerous massacres in retaliation.... The Sinchon Museum should not only serve as a place of anti-American education but also as an important site for fostering class consciousness and the spirit of struggle against class enemies. This will not only be logical and reasonable but also elevate the class consciousness of our people.\textsuperscript{66}

While Kim Jong Il emphasized only the responsibility of the United States in 1962, in 1988 he acknowledged that massacres had also been carried out by the peace preservation corps and that was “logical and reasonable.” The North Korean regime was certainly aware of the real-

\textsuperscript{65} Kim Jong Il, \textit{Sinchŏnttang ü p’i ū kyohun ül itji maraya handa (Kim Ilsŏng Chonghap Taehak haksaeng tül kwa han tamhwa 1962 nyŏn 3 wol 20 il)} [We Should Not Forget the Lesson from the Blood of Sinchon (A Talk with the Students of the Kim Il Sung University, March 20, 1962)] (Pyŏngyang: Chosŏn Rodongdang Ch’ulp’ansa, 1999), 2-3.

\textsuperscript{66} Kim Jong Il, \textit{Sinch’ŏn pangmulgwan ül t’onghan kyegŭp kyoyang saŏp ül kangwahalde daehayŏ (Sinch’ŏn pangmulgwan ül torabomyŏnsŏ ilgun tül kwa han tamhwa, 1998 nyŏn 11 wol 22 il)} [About Strengthening the Class Education Project through the Sinchon Museum of American War Atrocities (Conversations with the workers while visiting the Sinchon Museum, November 22, 1998)] (Pyŏngyang: Chosŏn Rodongdang Ch’ulp’ansa, 2001), 6-7.
ity of the Sinchon Massacre. Nevertheless, they had shifted the responsibility for the massacres to the United States in order to focus on societal integration and economic development in the post-war period.

This leads to another question: would it not be possible for the anti-American sentiment that was invented through the Sinchon Massacre to be changed once again for some other practical reasons? North Korea had two choices in the face of the destruction of the socialist camp and the dissolution of the Cold War—one was the path of confrontation through nuclear development, and the other was the path of openness by establishment diplomatic ties with the United States and Japan. Yet, considering North Korea’s nuclear development was physical collateral for protecting its regime and also leverage for talks with the United States, both choices were gestures of “courting” the United States.

In this aspect, it may be possible for North Korea’s “invented anti-American sentiment” to undergo a dramatic transformation depending on the regime’s practical needs. Vincent Brooks, former commander of the US Forces Korea, mentioned the possibility of turning North Korea into an ally in the article “A Grand Bargain with North Korea,” published in Foreign Affairs in July 2021. Otto von Bismarck’s adage “Politics is the art of the possible” is not something that only applies to domestic politics. If the time comes for North Korea and the United States to sign a peace treaty and establish diplomatic relations, North Korea’s “invented anti-American sentiment” may be transformed into something else entirely. After all, what we consider “traditions” are actually quite recent, when traced back to their origins, and often invented.


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The Invention of Anti-American Sentiment — Why North Korea Shifted the Blame for the Sinchon Massacre to the United States —

Daeyeol Yea

From October to December 1950, a large-scale massacre took place in Sinchon, Hwanghae Province. North Korea dubbed this incident “Sinchon Massacre” and claims that 35,383 people were slaughtered by the US military. In times of external and internal crises, North Korea has recalled the memory of the Sinchon Massacre to stir up anti-American sentiment among its people and achieve regime integration. However, the atrocious crimes of murder, arson, rape, and torture that North Korea attributes to the US military had actually been committed by members of the right-wing peace preservation corps in retaliation for the North Korean regime’s preventive custody measure.

Nevertheless, North Korea shifted the blame for the Sinchon Massacre to the US military because there was a need to embrace the members of the base class who had betrayed the regime during the UN occupation of North Korea. To this end, North Korea included the air raids that indiscriminately killed civilians in the scope of “massacre” and named Harrison as the individual ultimately responsible for driving the North Korean people out to the site where they were eventually massacred. Moreover, former members of the peace preservation corps were classified into “active instigators” and “passive participants” — the scope of the former group was minimized, and the latter group was reeducated through home confinement and other forms
of social punishment.

Yet, the “counterrevolutionary” ideology prevalent in post-war North Korea proved to be an obstacle in achieving regime integration. In particular, it led to animosities and jealousies among members of production facilities, such as cooperative farms and factories, negatively impacting economic reconstruction and productivity growth. In an effort to resolve this issue, North Korea aimed to achieve societal integration and productivity growth by historicizing the Sinchon Massacre and fostering anti-American sentiment. Accordingly, the site of the massacre was transformed into the museum, and the move also served as a subtle warning to the former “hostile elements.”

**Keywords:** North Korea, Korean War, Sinchon Massacre, Anti-American Sentiment, Air Raids
만들어진 反美
- 북한의 ‘신천학살’ 책임 주체 변경과 이유-

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1950년 10월부터 12월까지 황해도 신천에서 대규모 학살이 벌어졌다. 북한은 이 사건을 ‘신천대학살’이라고 부르며 미군에 의해 35,383명이 살해되었다고 주장한다. 북한은 대내외적 위기를 겪을 때마다 ‘신천학살’의 기억을 상기시키며 인민들의 반미의식을 고취시켜 내부 체제를 통합시켜 왔다. 하지만 북한이 주장하는 살해, 방화, 강간, 고문 등의 끔찍한 사건은 미군이 자행한 것이 아니라 예비검속에 대한 우익 치안대원들의 보복행위였다.

그럼에도 북한이 ‘신천학살’의 책임을 미군의 탓으로 돌린 이유는 피점령 시기 체제를 ‘배신’한 기본계급들을 다시 포섭할 필요가 있었기 때문이었다. 이를 위해 북한은 학살의 범주 안에 민간인을 상태로 자행된 공중폭격을 부각시키고, 인민들을 그 장소로 내둔 해리슨을 최종 책임자로 지목했다. 아울러 치안대 출신 가담자들에 대해서는 ‘주 동분자’와 ‘피동분자’로 구분하여, 전자의 범위는 최소화하고 후자에 대해서는 ‘두문벌’ 등의 사회적 처벌을 통해 재교육시켰다.

하지만 전후 북한 사회 전반에만한 반동 이데올로기는 체제를 통합시키는데 절점으로 작용하였다. 특히 이 문제는 집단농장과 공장 등 생산기관 내 구성원들 간 반목과 질시로 이어져 경제 재건과 생산력 발전에 악영향을 미쳤다. 북한은 이 문제를 해결하기 위해 ‘신천학살’을 ‘역사화’하여 반미감정을 고취시켜 사회 통합과 생산력 발전을 이루고자 했다. 아울러 학살이 자행된 곳을 박물관으로 만들므로써 과거 ‘적대분자’들에 대한 무언의 경고도 함께 진행하였다.

주제어: 북한, 한국전쟁, 신천학살, 반미의식, 공중폭격