

Reflections on the True Reality of Kim Il-Sung

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Abstract

As the social trend to learn more about North Korea grows, the person and past career of Kim Il-Sung have been thrown into controversy. In this context, Kim Il-Sung's anti-Japanese guerilla activities in Manchuria focused on the raid of Pochonbo Police Station and who is the leader of the Sixth Division of the Anti-Japanese United Army. Also, this article compared two groups of scholars, that is, proKim who is positive side of Kim's Identity and conKim who denied Kim's past to the North Korea's claims.

It has been demonstrated conclusively that many anti-Japanese activists used the name of General Kim Il-Sung and the present Kim Il-Sung in North Korea must be one of them. And Kim Il-Sung's anti-Japanese activities were not revolutionary armed resistances but rather small scale guerilla activities.

I. Introduction

The Korean People celebrated their fatherland liberation on August 15, 1945. Unfortunately though, the Soviet Army marched into Pyongyang on August 26. On September 19, Kim Il-Sung came to Wonsan as a captain of Soviet Army and it was on October 14, 1945 that he appeared in public for the first time as General Kim Il-Sung. On the day, the Soviet Army authority in North Korea held a public gathering called "Pyongyang citizens' welcoming ceremony for General Kim Il-Sung." The ceremony took place at Pyongyang public stadium and it introduced the 33 year-old Kim Il-Sung as "General Kim Il-Sung." However, no one recognized him to be the "real" General Kim Il-Sung. Nevertheless, Kim Il-Sung, supported by the Soviet Army, seized power by means of a merciless purge against the opposition groups. Now he is trying to transfer his power to his son, Kim Jung-Il.

Today, as the social trend to learn more about North Korea grows, the real

identity of Kim Il-Sung has been thrown into controversy. One viewpoint regards Kim Il-Sung highly for his claimed anti-Japanese activities. He is seen as "General Kim Il-Sung"—a legendary hero admired by Koreans. At the end of World War II, most Koreans believed that Kim Il-Sung was a fake and that the real Kim Il-Sung was an old patriotic revolutionary who performed anti-Japanese activities using extraordinary tactics.

Since the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea is taking advantage of the 'revolutionary tradition' and 'Ju-che' idea to maintain his regime and to establish political legitimacy, his career in anti-Japanese activities plays a crucial role in estimating Kim Il-Sung's regime. Accordingly, the thrust of this article is to review various arguments concerning Kim Il-Sung's anti-Japanese guerilla activities and to make an objective estimation of Kim Il-Sung.

To analyze the real identity of Kim Il-Sung, the scope of this article is confined to the followings: the existence of the legendary hero of General Kim Il-Sung, his family tree, and anti-Japanese guerilla activities in Manchuria. Also, in this article, various theories of the Kim Il-Sung specialists will be collected and compared along with claims made by North Korea regarding each controversial issue, and then, the reality will be clarified through more objective and logical analysis.

II. Theories on the Identity of Kim Il-Sung

1. General

For forty years since the liberation of Korea, Kim Il-Sung has ruled North Korean residents by means of the 'revolutionary tradition' and the 'Ju-che' idea and has retained absolute power. He has been called 'the genius of revolution,' 'a born strategist,' 'a veteran of many battles,' or even 'the Sun of all the mankind.'

A North Korean Dictionary of Political Science, citing Kim Il-Sung's selected works, describes the 'revolutionary tradition' and the 'Ju-che' idea as follows: "Our revolutionary tradition was achieved through creative development of the Marx-Lenin theory to fit the actual conditions of the Korean Revolution and thorough application of the revolution theory to the actual situation. The 'revolutionary tradition' is a precious fruition created from the unprecedentedly strong and bloody anti-Japanese armed struggle." (Jungchi sajun, 1973) According to this definition, the 'revolutionary tradition' is based upon the communist ideology, and was formed during Kim Il-Sung's guerilla activities in Manchuria before the liberation of Korea. Kim Il-Sung was described as an heir to a revolutionary family and as the "General Kim Il-Sung," the legendary anti-Japanese hero who had been respected by Koreans since 1910. In addition, it was fabricated that during his revolutionary period he had constructed the basic principle of the 'Ju-che' idea.¹⁾

According to "Minjok-eui taeyang Kim Il-Sung janggun", 1968 [The Sun of

the Nation, General Kim Il-Sung], Kim Il-Sung presented a guideline to the independent anti-Japanese armed struggle based on the 'Ju-che' idea. This work was presented at a meeting of revolutionary organizations in Antu in the fall of 1931.(Baik Bong, 1968)

Later, a 1971 edition of the book claimed that Kim Il-Sung had created the 'Ju-che' idea at a meeting in KaLyun in June, 1930.(Ryuksa sajun, 1971) The 'Ju-che' idea, the ruling idea of North Korea came from the 'revolutionary tradition.' The 'tradition' means anti-Japanese guerilla activities in Manchuria having been under Kim Il-Sung's command. This article makes a comparative study on North Korea's standpoint and the various theories of scholars.

2. North Korea's Claims

All history books as well as several biographies, published in North Korea, magnificently proclaim the career and achievements of Kim Il-Sung.

There are many biographies of Kim Il-Sung: "Kim Il-Sung janggun ryak-jun", April 10, 1952 [A short biography of General Kim Il-Sung], a special edition of Nodong-shinmun, an official newspaper of Korean Worker's Party, "Minjok-cui taeyang Kim Il-Sung janggun", 1968 [The Sun of the Nation, General Kim Il-Sung] by Baik Bong, and "Kim Il-Sung dongji ryak-jun", 1972 [A short history of comrade Kim Il-Sung] by Chosun nodong-dang chulpan-sa written for the commemoration of his 60th birthday.

North Korean publications on history were issued as follows: "Chosun tong-sa," 1958 [A Comprehensive Korean History], Vols. I, II. "Chosun chun-sa," 1979-82 [A Complete Korean History], Vols. I-XXXIII. "Hyundai chosun ryuk-sa," 1983 [The Modern Korean History]-a condensed summary of the current portion of "Chosun chun-sa," and "Chosun tong-sa," 1987 [A Comprehensive Korean History, Vols. I, II-a completely revised edition of "Chosun Tong-sa," 1958.

According to the biographies of Kim Il-Sung and North Korean history books, the general outline of Kim Il-Sung is as follows: Until 1968, Kim was not mentioned in any books published in North Korea. Kim Eung-Woo, Kim Il-Sung's grandfather, was an anti-imperialist who led the masses and fought courageously in the "Sherman" ship incident in 1866. Kim Hyung-Jik, Kim Il-Sung's father, was an anti-Japanese patriot and organized "Chosun guk-min-hoi" [Korean People's Association] on March 23, 1917.(Baik Bong, 1968) His father was a pioneer who converted nationalism into communism.(Ryuksa sajun, 1971) Kim Il-Sung was a student of Huacheng Middle School and organized "Ta Do" [Anti-imperialism Federation]. He also formed "Sae-nal sonyun dongmaeng" [Children's Coalition For A New Era] in Fusong. (Baik Bong, 1968) Kim Il-sung presented the idea of independent anti-Japanese armed struggle based on the 'Ju-che' idea in Summer 1930. He formed his guerilla force in Antu

on April 25, 1932 and reconstructed his guerilla force into "Chosun inmin hyukmyung-gun" [The Korean People's Revolutionary Army] in April, 1934 (Ryuksa sajun, 1971)

Until 1968, North Korea claimed that "Jokuk gwangbok-hoi" [Fatherland Restoration Association] was organized as an anti-Japanese united front advocated by the Comintern's seventh congress. However after 1968, they reversed the above claim saying that "Jokuk gwangbok-hoi" was organized by Kim Il-Sung's insight on home and foreign affairs and not by the Comintern on May 5, 1936.

The commander of the Sixth Division of Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army led a raid on a Japanese police station in Pochonbo with 90 men. They acquired lots of war trophies, distributed propaganda leaflets to local residents, and then, returned to their base. (Han Sul-Ya, 1946) Kim Il-Sung made a raid on Pochonbo with a unit of "Chosun inmin hyukmyung-gun." (Nodong-Shinmun, April 10, 1952) Kim arrived in North Korea when Korea was liberated by the Soviet Union. "Chosun inmin hyukmyung-gun" [The Korean People's Revolutionary Army] together with the Soviet Army liberated Korea. (Yi Na-Young, 1958)

However, North Koreans have claimed that it was Kim Il-Sung who ordered "Chosun inmin hyukmyung-gun" on August 9, 1945 to make the final raid for the purpose of liberating the fatherland, and that they broke through the border with the Soviet Army. They claimed that "Chosun inmin hyukmyung-gun" made landing operations on Unggi and Najin but that the Japanese surrendered before the airborne troop raid. (Chosun chun-sa, 1982)

3. A Comparison of Two Controversial Theories on North Korea's Claims

There exist two viewpoints, positive or negative, to the person and past record of Kim Il-Sung among specialists on North Korea. Most proKim scholars—scholars on the positive side—live abroad. They visited North Korea often or stayed there. They used research materials published in communist countries. Professor Suh Dae-Sook and Im Eun represent the positive side.

Citing materials of communist countries in his books— "Bukhan eui jido-ja Kim Il-Sung," 1989 [The North Korean leader, Kim Il-Sung] and "The Korean Communist Movement: 1918-1948," 1967, Professor Suh claimed that the legendary anti-Japanese hero Kim Il-Sung didn't exist, but that the originator of the legend did. Also, there were many Korean revolutionaries and communists who contributed to the legend of Kim Il-Sung. Kim Il-Sung was one of many revolutionaries who adopted the name of Kim Il-Sung and was famous for anti-Japanese guerilla activities in the late 1930s. Also Professor Suh claimed that the commander of the Sixth Division of the Second Army of the First Route Army

in NEAJUA and the commander of the Second District Army of the First Route Army are the same person, Kim Il-Sung. According to Professor Suh, Kim, the commander of the Sixth Division in NEAJUA was the actual hero in the Pochonbo raid on June 4, 1937. Structurally, a guerilla unit below the classification level of army is composed of three subunits. Also, a division has around 100 to 150 men.

Contrary to the North Koreans' claim that the raid was made by "Chosun inmin hyukmyung-gun" [The Korean People's Revolutionary Army] with "Jokuk gwangbok-hoi" [Fatherland Restoration Association] organized by Kim, Professor Suh emphasized that the raid was made by a Kapsan branch of "Jokuk gwangbok-hoi" [Fatherland Restoration Association] in Manchuria and the Sixth Division of Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army. NEAJUA was under the control of the Manchurian Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party at the time of the raid on Pochonbo. The Kapsan branch of "Jokuk gwangbok-hoi" in Manchuria was organized by Chun Kwang under the direction of Wie Keuk-Min who came from Comintern. (Suh Dae-Sook, 1989)

In his book of "Buk Chosun Wang-jo pi-sa" [The secret history of the establishment of North Korean Kingdom] based on the materials of North Korea, Professor Im Eun claimed that there were three people named Kim Il-Sung – the commander of the Sixth Division in NEAJUA, the leader of the Second District Army, and the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea. He suggested strongly that Kim Il-Sung was only a legendary figure.

Professor Im claimed that Kim Il-Sung came to be well known to Korean people by the Japanese Army which exaggerated Kim's military achievements in the 1930s. The Pochonbo raid was done by Kim Il-Sung who was the Commander of the Sixth Division of the First Route Army. Kim became famous for his raid on Pochonbo. But the Pochonbo raid was only an attack on a small village and the results were very trivial.

Authors of negative standpoints—hereafter referred as conKim authors—alleged that Kim Il-Sung was a fake who fabricated historical events. Professor Yi Myong-Yong and Huh Dong-Chan represented the negative side.

Professor Yi collected testimonies of the people and materials from South Korea and Japan in his books of "Kim Il-Sung yul-chun" [A series of biographies of Kim Il-Sung] and "Bukhan goisu Kim Il-Sung eui jungchae" [The reality of Kim Il-Sung in North Korea]. Professor Yi believes that the reputation of the legendary patriotic hero Kim Il-Sung was established by two people named Kim Il-Sung but that neither one of these is the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea.

The first one was a leader of an anti-Japanese guerilla troop whose real name was Kim Chang-Hee. The second was a commander of Korean Independence Army whose real name was Kim Na-Chun. Professor Yi claimed that the commander of the Sixth Division of the Second Army of the First Route Army in

NEAJUA and the leader of the Second District Army were the same person. The Kim Il-Sung of North Korea is totally different.

Professor Yi claimed that the Pochonbo raid was done by the 33 year old Kim Il-Sung, the commander of the Sixth Division of the Second Army in NEAJUA who was born in Hamkyungnam-Do in 1901 and graduated from Moscow Communist University. Also he claimed that Kim Il-Sung, the commander of the Second District Army was born in Jiantao and graduated from Dae-Cheng Middle School in Longjiang and was arrested for his participation at the "May 30" incident in 1930. Later he escaped from the enemy and graduated from the Red Army Military School in the Soviet Union. The Kim Il-Sung of North Korea was only one of his subordinates.

The guerilla activities of NEAJUA may only have been venture-seeking on the part of the leftists. It was unclear whether the purpose of the leftists was revolution or plunder. Also, the Pochonbo raid could be described as destruction or plunder to the village. (Yi Myong-Yong, 1975)

Professor Huh claimed that the Pochonbo raid was done in May 1935 by Kim Il-Sung, the commander of the Third Ryun [Company] of the First Dan [Regiment] of the Second Independent Division of the Second Army in the Northeast People's Revolutionary Army along with Kim's one hundred subordinates. But Kim Il-Sung in North Korea was the commander of the Third Ryun of the Second Army in the Northeast Peoples' Revolutionary Army (NPRA) and had 30-40 subordinates. His real name was "Kim Il-Sun."

NPRA were active in Hunchoon from July 1935 to January 1936. The Kim Il-Sung of North Korea was not a leading figure in the Pochonbo raid and his activities only became magnificent after the Pochonbo raid.

From the analysis of two opposing viewpoints, Kim Il-Sung's family and the claims that "Chosun inmin hyukmyung-gun" [The Korean People's Revolutionary Army] and "Jokuk gwangbok-hoi" [Fatherland Restoration Association] were organized by Kim Il-Sung were fabricated by North Korea.

Also, it is the same opinion for the fact that the Pochonbo raid was done by the Sixth Division in NEAJUA by an order of Manchurian Provincial Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. But, there still exist big disparities between the legendary anti-Japanese hero "Kim Il-Sung" and the leading figure of the Pochonbo raid.

III. An Analysis of the Major Arguments

1. The Legend of the Anti-Japanese Hero, General Kim Il-Sung

Kim Il-Sung's biography, "The Sun of the Nation, General Kim Il-Sung" published in 1968 spread countless rumors throughout North Korea. A few of them are listed here. "General Kim Il-Sung uses a magic method of utilizing

space by disguising, increasing in height, and duplicating his body. General Kim travels for thousands of miles a day. He makes rice from sand and coal from wood. He can cross a river on a sheet of paper.”(Baik Bong, 1968).

In North Korea, brilliant decorative modifiers are used in the worship of Kim Il-Sung such as “Legendary hero and.....” Two meanings are implied in those modifiers. One is that there existed a legendary hero and the other is that Kim Il-Sung is the legendary hero. To understand the meaning, it is important to know when the story of General Kim Il-Sung began to be on everyone’s lip.

At the end of Yi Dynasty, righteous army movement started from local Confucians due to the ultimate incident and the short hair order in 1895. With the disbanding of the Korean Armed Forces by the Japanese on July 31, 1907, the movement incorporated to the principle of righteous war and, by 1910, anti-Japanese guerilla activities had become vividly.(Park Sung-Soo, 1989)

During the dark age of the Japanese rule, in Korean’s heart, there was unconscious longing for a savior for Korean Independence, and this situation led to create the magnificent legendary figure of Kim Il-Sung.(Im Eun, 1982)

At that time, General Kim Il-Sung was such a popular and symbolic national anti-Japanese guerilla activist that many Koreans misunderstood that accomplishments of other anti-Japanese activists were actually carried out by Kim Il-Sung.(Yi Myong-Young. 1974)

The legend of Kim Il-Sung was handed down orally as an expression of national pride. Throughout the 1930s, nationalists and communists talked about Kim Il-Sung. The achievements of other anti-Japanese activists, whether they were named Kim Il-Sung or not, were mistakenly contributed to General Kim Il-Sung.

Professor Suh pointed out that General Kim didn’t really exist and presented five communist revolutionaries who had the same name, Kim Il-Sung. The first was a student at Tong-bang Communist College. The second was a writer for “Hae-Sung” and “Chosun-ji-kwang” magazines. The third one was a communist activist who fought in the Ahcheng district of the Korean Communist Party Manchuria Bureau. The fourth was Kim Il-Sung praised in “Juk-Ki.” The last was Kim Il-Sung who was related to the Fourth Communist Party Incident and the “May 30” incident.(Suh Dae-Sook, 1967)

Professor Yi has a strong conviction that there would exist a figure in the steep mountains of Manchuria comparable to Yi Seung-Man in the United States and Kim Ku in Chungching. Through the testimony of witnesses he finds out that there were two General Kim Il-Sungs. One was a leader of a righteous army. The other was a commander of the Korean Independence Army.²

Also, Professor Im introduced two legends of Kim Il-Sung. The first one describes an omnipotent General Kim Il-Sung who emerged at the border of Korea and China near the Jangbaik mountains and the Laoye ridge. The second

legend describes an almighty General Kim Il-Sung who graduated from Japanese Military Academy. In his book of "North Korean Special Forces," Joseph S. Bermudez Jr. wrote that "The real Kim Il-Sung was born in 1885 in Kyung-Sang province as the second son of Kim Chun-Han. Kim quitted Japanese Military Academy before graduation and became a leader of anti-Japanese guerilla forces. "His tactics were superior and he became a respected hero of the Korean people." (Joseph S. Bermudez, 1988)

If we analyze the above arguments, we will find out that many anti-Japanese activists used aliases for the purpose of camouflage, deception, and ostentation. There was a respected anti-Japanese activist using the name of Kim Il-Sung in Manchuria after 1910. Owing to other anti-Japanese activist who used the name of Kim Il-Sung, "General Kim Il-Sung" came to be described as an almighty legendary hero on the basis of the achievements of many anti-Japanese activists using the same name.

The Kim Il-Sung of North Korea who was born in 1912 is by no means the legendary Kim Il-Sung. The present Kim Il-Sung was either a child or not yet born in the 1910s. So, we can conclude that the North Korean Kim Il-Sung is the last Kim Il-Sung and surreptitiously used all the achievements of many anti-Japanese activists of the same name.

2. Guerilla Activities and the Pochonbo Raid

According to the official story of the North Korean Communist Party, the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea is claimed to have won about one-hundred thousand small and large battles. This took place in Manchuria during a fifteen year period of guerilla activities, from 1930 to the end of the World War II when he organized a military group of Korean communists to resist the Japanese rule of Korea. (Jungchi sajun, 1973) Of all the battles of Kim Il-Sung, the attack of Pochonbo is remembered as the most successful and the largest scale military victory. North Korean have built a tower of almost 120 ft. in height to commemorate the Pochonbo victory and to show off his revolutionary activities to all over the world. In North Korea, the historical evaluation of the raid on Pochonbo is so highly exaggerated. They claim that the attack of Pochonbo, a strategically important site, had laid solid foundation for the future advancement of the Red Army into the Korean Peninsula at the end of World War 2 and the event actually was a starting point for the liberation of Korea. (Park Deuk-Jun, Kim Juk-Bong, 1987)

Professor Suh acknowledges without hesitation the claims of North Korea concerning Kim Il-Sung's guerilla activity, saying "All the publications of South Korea insist that the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea is a fake in order to degrade his revolutionary political past. They are skeptical of all his past political activities as well. But he is not a fake."(Suh Dae-Sook, 1967)

What he provides to verify his statements is the name of Kim Il-Sung and Kim Sung-Joo appearing in the organizational chart of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army(NEAJUA) in the Japanese police record. He also presents two pictures which were taken when Kim Il-Sung was the leader of the Second District Army(Picture 1 and Picture 2). Those two pictures were confiscated during the period of the Japanese rule of Korea.³ Professor Suh concludes that the leader of the Sixth division and the leader of the Second District Army are the same person, that is, the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea. He also claims that Kim Il-Sung actually attacked Pochonbo with two hundred men, took the control of the town for the night, and withdrew in the next morning. Kim Il-Sung became quite famous among the Korean people with this attack and came to be recognized by the Japanese Army.



Picture 1. Kim Il-Sung (△ mark), the leader of the Second District Army (1938)



Picture 2. Kim Il-Sung (△ mark) and his crew (1940)

Im Eun mentioned the age of Kim Il-Sung. The fact that he was thirty six years old in 1937 was somewhat misguided along with the rumor of his death. Guerilla activists distributed false information to delude the Japanese Army and to make use of it. He also said that the source for picture 1 & picture 2 of Professor Yi is from Chu Po-Chung, Kim Il-Sung's senior in the Soviet Union and the commander of the Fifth Army of NEAJUA as well. He did not graduate from Moscow Communist University. The only Korean graduate of the university was O Sung-Ryun. All of the three Kim Il-Sungs – the commander of the Sixth Division, the Commander of the Second District Army, and the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea – are the same person, and this figure was the actual leader of the Pochonbo raid.

Professor Yi, skeptical of the claims of North Korea, stresses that one hundred thousand battles during a fifteen year period require on average over twenty battles per day which is virtually impossible. Therefore, the claims of North Korea must be a manufactured idea with no evidence at all. He also present the

testimony of Ichihara, a Japanese police officer at that time, and Minaki, the chief police officer to prove that the actual leader of the attack of Pochonbo is not the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea but another Kim Il-Sung, the leader of the Sixth Division of NEAJUA. Both of two Japanese police officers were in charge of investigating the "Hyesan Incidence."⁴ The present Kim Il-Sung was actually a subordinate of another General Kim Il-Sung.

In addition, Professor Suh claims that the attack of Pochonbo was a single quick guerilla raid. Kim Il-Sung, the leader of the Sixth Division, attacked the police station for just an hour to plunder the town of Pochonbo and withdrew immediately after a relentless robbery of the town. Afterwards, Kim Il-Sung, the leader of the Sixth Division, died in battle on November 13, 1937. (*Gyung-sung Daily News*, November 18, 1937) Later, at the end of 1938, the First and Second army of NEAJUA were reorganized into three district armies. The leader of the Second District Army was the third Kim Il-Sung⁵. The third Kim Il-Sung was born in Jiantao in 1906 and Professor Suh claims that he is a totally different person from the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea. Professor Yi also found that the Kim Il-Sung in Picture 1 & Picture 2 is the third Kim Il-Sung, the leader of the Second District Army. Those two pictures were confiscated by the leader of the Changtu operation team, which then was in charge of the far front line operation of the Nozol Annihilation Unit. Then, the pictures were sent to the main headquarters and were found in the photograph album of Lieutenant Kitabe, a staff officer of intelligence. Professor Yi also claims that the Kim Il-Sung in Pictures 1 & 2 cannot be the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea because the Kim Il-Sung in the pictures wears glasses while the Kim of North Korea is not near-sighted. Furthermore, he discovered that the North Korean Communist Party altered Picture 1 into Picture 3 in 1968, and Picture 2 into Picture 4 in 1972. Finally, he claimed that the description of Kim Il-Sung in "The Ideology Bulletin(20th ed.)" is not credible and information about him was entirely intermingled because the High Court of Justice was not able to have direct access to investigating the "Hyesan Incidence."(Yi Myong-Young, 1989)

The true identity of the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea will now be analyzed and many opposing views on his political past will be compared.

To begin with, authors of his political past, whether they are in favor of his political past or not, agree that it was in the late 1930s that the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea was a member of NEAJUA of China during a period of his guerilla activity in Manchuria. However, they have quite opposing views on his political past in the early 1930s(1930-35). Professor Suh, a proKim author who is in favor of his revolutionary past, explained that the Kim of North Korea had begun his guerilla activities in Korean nationalist organization led by Yang Se-Bung, who was not a communist. Later Kim Il-Sung moved to a Chinese organization led by O Eui-Sung and continued his guerilla activity there



Picture 3. Kim Il-Sung, the Sun of the Nation (1968)



Picture 4. Kim Il-Sung at the Museum of Korean Revolution (1972)

in the early 1930s. He said that it was not until 1936 that the Kim of North Korea began a fullscale operation of his guerilla activity, and before 1935 his guerilla activities were relatively small. Another proKim author, Im Eun does not provide any detailed account of Kim's past political activity at all.

But Professor Yi describes the Kim of North Korea as a member of Kilheuk Farmer's Coalition Party. This party was organized by Yi Jong-Rak who was on the left side of Gukminbu [The People's Government]. The Kim of North Korea was only a tax collector in the area of Wujiazi and Gyyoushou. When Yi Jong-Rak formed his own organization called "Chosun hyukmyung gun gil gang chihee-bu" [The Gil River Headquarters of Korean Revolutionary Army] after he withdrew from Gukminbu to seek a communism line of violence, the Kim of North joined Yi's party and worked for him punishing counterrevolutionaries of communism. In 1931, when Yi's organization collapsed after his arrest, the Kim of North Korea left Wujiazi and continued his guerilla activity in a small scale in the area of Fusong as a leader of a brigade between 1931 and 1932. But he suddenly had disappeared in Summer 1932, and had been missing until 1936. He was identified as a member of the Sixth Division of NEAJUA by AnTu Security Unit in 1937.

Another conKim author, Professor Huh said that the Kim of North Korea was an ordinary member of Southern Manchurian Korean Youth Coalition Party affiliated to Gukminbu in the early 1930. The Kim of North Korea was a counselor of children's expedition team at Jin-Myung School in Kalyun county of Changchun province until June, 1930, became a Chamsa [staff sergeant] at "Chosun hyukmyung-gun gil gang chiheebu" of Yi Jong-Rak in July and worked as a tax-collector in the area of Gyyoushou. After Yi's organization collapsed in 1931, the Kim of North Korea came to Fusong, and organized his own guerilla group with the old boys of "Sae Nal Sonyun Dongmaeng" [The Children's Coalition

for A New Era]. In 1932, after he attacked a platoon of Gao Dong-Lei, he escaped to Antu and formed his own guerilla unit under his own name, calling it the Squad of Kim Il-Sung, with other refugees. On September 6, 1933, Kim's squad participated in the battle of Tung Ning with the corps of O Eui-Sung of Gukminbu. It was not until August, 1934 that Kim's squad was officially merged into the Wang Ching guerilla unit, and then, he, Kim Il-Sun (another name of Kim Il-Sung at that time) was able to have 30-40 men as an officer of the Third Company of the Second Regiment of the Second Independence Division of North-east People's Revolutionary Army.

In conclusion of the above facts, authors in favor of the political past of the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea do not provide any detailed explanation of his activities before 1935. But conKim authors do on the contrary. They say that the Kim of North Korea was nothing but a gangster as an ordinary member of an affiliated organization of Gukminbu until 1933, and that he had fought in a Chinese guerilla unit which was unified under the Chinese Communist Party's broad strategy of unifying all the anti-Japanese nationalities.

Secondly, the view of proKim authors that the leader of the Sixth Division and the leader of the Second District Army is the same person—the Kim of North Korea—may be mistaken due to their incomplete knowledge on the formation and characteristics of the guerilla units at that time. The Kim Il-Sung of the Sixth Division died on November 13, 1937 after he attacked Pochonbo on June 4, 1937. After his death, a self-styled Kim Il-Sung unit began its fightings with a number of subunits in April, 1938 in the bordering region of the Jangbaik mountains. I think that the operation of this squad was to deceive the Japanese Army and to camouflage the death of the leader of the Sixth Division. As was discussed in the first part of chapter 3, many anti-Japanese Korean revolutionaries had adopted the name of Kim Il-Sung for the more advantageous operation of their military group in spite of his death. Therefore, it is quite probable that the leader of the Second District army also inherited the name of Kim Il-Sung.

Thirdly, we can verify the fictitious nature of the claims of North Korea by the testimonies of a North Korean defector who escaped to Japan to avoid the cruel liquidation plan of the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea. Park Gap-Su, a former chief controller of South Korean Communist Party, testified that he had met Park Dal and Park Geum-Chul who had organized Kapsan operation team and had participated in the attack at Pochonbo with the leader of the Sixth Division. He also met a few of Kim's subordinates who supplied clothes in the attack at Pochonbo when he participated in International Youth Festival in Berlin, Germany as the director of European division of Department of Culture and Advertisement. Based on the accounts of the three people he met, Park Gap-Su testified that the leader of the Sixth Division was not the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea. (Park Gap-Soo, 1988)

Fourthly, we can not evaluate the attack of Pochonbo and the Battle of Bong

O-Dong(June 7, 1920) and the Battle of Chungsan-Li(October 21-22, 1920) on the same basis because the attack at Pochonbo is of much smaller scale in terms of the number of participated people and its spreading effectiveness. Both battles were waged by non-communist Korean nationalists and regular army units of a certain size.(Yi Jung-Sik, Scalapino, 1986) However, the attack of Pochonbo was no more than an ambush operation against the Japanese Army and a small guerilla raid on a small town police station. This is especially true when the attack of Pochonbo is compared to other battles- the Defensive Battle of Sowangchung(April 17-19, 1933), the Offensive Battle of Musong-Hyun(August 17, 1936), and the Battle of Musan Area.⁶

In addition, contrary to the claims of North Korea that the attack was the first advancement into the Korean peninsula, the Dongheung Incident was two years prior to the attack. Furthermore, the town of Pochonbo is not of strategically important site and it is the presnet Pochon-Myun Bojun-Li in North Korea with a small police station and the town office.

Fifthly, Kim Il-Sung's glasses should be mentioned. Kim Il-Sung, the leader of the Second District army, wears glasses as can be seen in Pictures 1 & 2, but the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea was not near-sighted at all in 1930s. The following four pictures of the Kim Il-Sung of North Korea were extracted from "Deungdae [Guiding Light]," an official monthly magazine of North Korea. A closer analysis of the four picutres will allow us find how long he have worn glasses. A closer analysis of those four pictures will let us decide that the Kim of North Korea began to wear glasses from 1967(fifty five years old). An ophthalmologist testified that he wears glasses for far vision due to presbyopia. According to Picture 8, the Kim of North Korea seems to wear glasses in both public and private places. Therefore, it is quite impossible that he did not wear glasses for his middle school days, began to wear glasses at the age of around 25 during his gucrilla activity in Manchuria, took them off for a certain period until 1967, and then, began to wear glasses again at the age of fifty five. And it is a medically unprecedented case.⁷

I'd like to present one more example of altering the pictures as in Pictures 9 to 11. We can imagine that Pictures 9,10, and 11 were altered to disguise Kim's seniorty to the other people in the pictures, and he was not in a senior or commanding position at that time. These altered pictures lack in credibility as a historical evidence for the claims of North Korea and are nothing but a counter-evidence for their claims.

Finally concerning the main topic of this article, "Who is the leader of the Sixth Division?", the proKim authors(Suh Dae-Sook and Im Eun)do not provide any logical ground for the objection of the conKim authors(Yi Myung-Young and Huh Dong-Chan). Professor Suh based his argument on the claims of North Korea and Pictures 1 & 2. Against Professor Suh's argument that the Kim

Il-Sung of the Sixth Division is not only the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea but also the leader of the Second District army, Professor Yi raised an objection presenting an appraisal report on the two pictures and some witnesses. He also stressed that there are a lot of recording errors in "The Ideology Bulletin (the 20th ed)." and that Suh is quoting the claims of North Korea without any further investigation or test.

Im Eun, a proKim author, raised an objection against Professor Yi's book, "Kim Il-Sung yul-chun" [A series of biographies of Kim Il-Sung] with his own book, "Buk chosun wang-jo pi-sa" [The secret history of the establishment of North Korean Kingdom]. And then Professor Im was criticized by Professor Yi in that he is actually trying to protect the interests of USSR, in his book of "Kwunryuk cui yuksa" [The history of Power] by denying that the present Kim Il-Sung of North Korea is a legendary anti-Japanese hero, Kim Kwang-Suh and admitting that the present Kim of the North is the same person as the leader of the Sixth Division of NEAJUA. But, thereafter, Professor Im did not provide any counter-evidence against the criticism of Professor Suh.

In addition, International Academic Conference in memory of the 44th anniversary of the Liberation of Korea was held in the international conference room of the Press Center on August 11, 1989. In the conference, Suh and Huh discussed the true identity of Kim Il-Sung. At the discussion, Huh criticized Suh for his lack of any concrete material or reliable witnesses when he present a new theory on Kim Il-Sung. But Suh did not respond to Huh at all.

Therefore, the statements of Professor Suh are not reliable and lack in academic credibility. His statements are just a simple repetition of the claims of North Korea.

IV. Conclusion

I have compared and analyzed the positive and negative arguments about North Korea's claims on Kim Il-Sung's identity. At present, this is not a good approach to determine whether Kim Il-Sung of North Korea is real or an imposter.

Originally, the person who first used the name of Kim Il-Sung gained a reputation as a legendary hero of the armed anti-Japanese movement. Later, a number of anti-Japanese activists used the name of General Kim Il-Sung. Intentionally or accidentally, there were many people who had the same name or same pronunciation as Kim Il-Sung. Considering the age and career of the present Kim Il-Sung in North Korea, he must be the last person with the name of Kim Il-Sung. In addition, Kim Il-Sung's activities were not revolutionary armed resistances but rather guerilla activities of small scale, involving the disturbances of the rear area and terror. These activities were carried out under the order of the Chinese

Communist Party. Although North Koreans may claim that the Pochonbo raid was the greatest achievement in the anti-Japanese movement, the attack was only a night raid on a small village. Finally the Pochonbo attack was a failure which resulted in the "Hyesan Incident."

Because of the "Hyesan Incident," more than 500 anti-Japanese communists were arrested or apostatized and supporting organizations were dissolved. Hence, Kim Il-Sung of North Korea was neither a legendary hero – General Kim Il-Sung nor an anti-Japanese movement leader. Kim Il-Sung was a member of a guerilla unit in NEAJUA which was under the authority of the Chinese Communist Party. He also later led a small unit. If we consult with further materials from North Korea, the Soviet Union, and China, I am sure that these findings concerning Kim Il-Sung will be confirmed.

Notes

- 1) The basic principle of the 'Ju-che' idea is expressed as follows: Human beings are the master of everything and will decide all the things. People are the core of revolution and construction. Revolution and construction are the two props of the 'Ju-che' idea. There are two points of view about the two props. One is the autonomous standpoint that man is responsible for revolution and construction. The other is the creative standpoint that one applies Marx-Lenin principles and the experience of other countries to their own struggle for national independence. As the method of realization in each field, the 'Ju-che' idea recommend 'autonomy in politics, independence of the economy, and the capability for national self-defense.'(Jungchi sajun, 1973)
- 2) Two witnesses of General Kim Il-Sung[real name: Kim Chang-Hee] were the old Suh Chun-Sik(born in 1893) from the same province as Kim Il-Sung and the old Chin Seong-Ryul who was a policeman at Seochun area. The other two witnesses of Commander Kim Il-Sung[real name: Kim Kwang-Keun] were the old Kim Chong-Bum who wrote "The Reality of Chosun before and after the liberation" and the old Kim Yum-Chun(born in 1893) who confessed at "Chosun Shin-Hwa." Also, there is Kim Kwang-Suh's interview with a reporter of the Dong-A Daily News(July 29, 1923)
- 3) The Department of Ideology, The Division of Public Prosecutors, High Court of Justice, The Colonial Government of Korea, "The Ideology Bulletin"(20th ed., September, 1939), "Name, Kim Sung-Joo, Born in Pyungannam-Do Daedong-Gun Gopyong-Myun Nam-Li in 1906. Migrated to the city of Jiantao with his father at an early age and grown up there. Became a member of a Korean guerilla unit. His mother is alive now."
- 4) Park Bo-Geum, Im Yong-Baik, and Yi Jae-Soon, who arrested in the Hyesan Incident, confessed that Kim Il-Sung, the leader of the Sixth Division had graduated from Moscow Communist University, his real name was Kim Sung-Joo, and that he was thirty six years old.
- 5) His wife, Kim Hye-Sun, was arrested in April 1940, and confessed that the third Kim Il-Sung was born in Jiantao in 1906, graduated from the Military Academy of the

Chinese Red Army, and was sent as the leader of the Second District Army of NEAJUA.(Chosun Daily News, July 5, 1940)

- 6) The author happened to meet him in 1989
- 7) Professor Lee Sang-Chul at Yonsei Medical School in Seoul said that presbyopia usually begins at the age of forty five, and Kim seems to have worn glasses for far vision in Picture 7.

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Picture 5. Kim Il-Sung, a middle school student at Yuwen middle school (16 years old in 1928)
Source: Deung-dae [Guiding Light], April, 1962



Picture 6. Kim Il-Sung, an officer of the Soviet Red Army (31 years old in 1941)
Source: Deung-dae [Guiding Light], April, 1965



picture 7. Kim Il-Sung (55 years old in 1967)
Source: Deung-dae, August, 1967



Picture 8. Kim Il-Sung (56 years old in 1968)
Source: Deung-dae, March-April, 1968



Picture 9. Kim Il-Sung and his colleagues (from the far left Kim Il-Sung, an unknown, Choi Hyun, An Gil)

Source: Deung-dae [Guiding Light], August, 1965



Picture 10. The unknown is erased at the same back ground

Source: Deung-dae [Guiding Light], August, 1967



Picture 11. Kim moved to the center of the picture, and An Gil is in a mirrored image

Source: Museum of Korean Revolution