

The Evolution of Korean Studies in Africa

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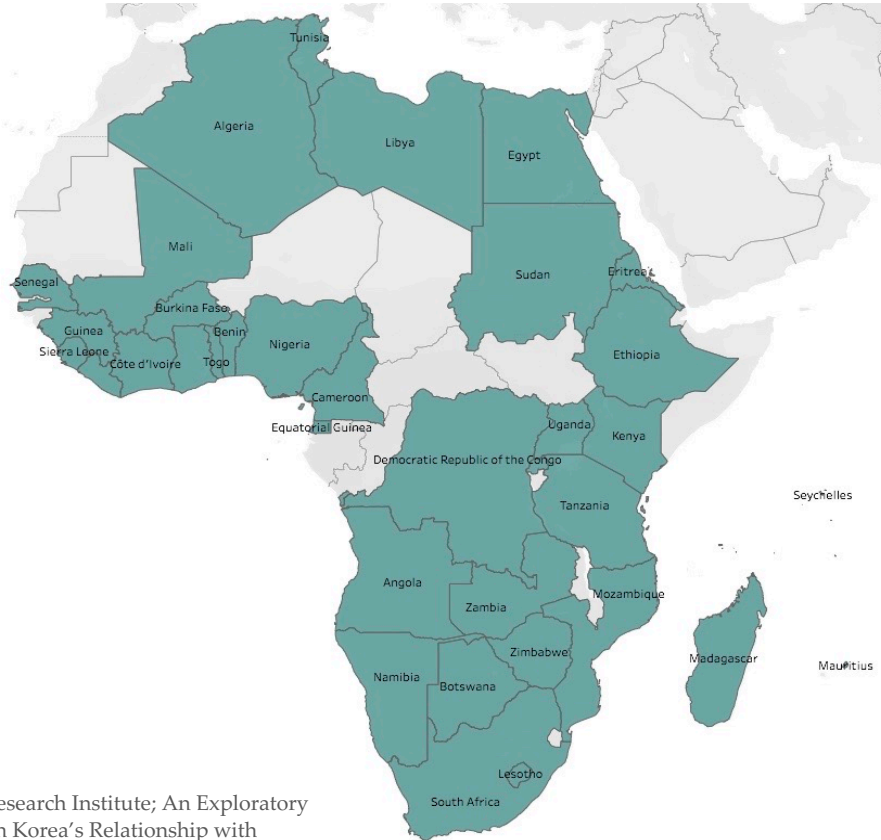
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Africa and the Two Koreas

- African countries find the North Korean model attractive and relevant.
- Rivalry with South Korea one important aspect of North Korea's third world diplomacy.
- In the 1960s, NK opened diplomatic ties with African countries but South Korea did the same and stayed ahead of the game.
- Byong Chul Koh: The foreign policy systems of North and South Korea, Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 1984, p 11 as the source Charles Armstrong replicates the African countries North Korea had established ties in the 1970s to establish parity with South Korea.

Year	North Korean Diplomatic Missions
1972	Cameroon, Uganda, Rwanda, Zaire, Madagascar
1973	Togo, Benin, Gambia, Mauritius, Angola
1974	Gabon, Ghana, Niger, Botswana, Guinea Bissau
1975	Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique,
1976	Nigeria, Seychelles
1980	Zimbabwe, Lesotho

North Korea has a Longstanding Relationship with Africa



36 countries have economic, military, cultural or other ties with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The map below also includes two countries, which were targets of cyberattacks initiated by North Korean hackers.

African Countries in the UN versus North Korea

- DuPre, A.; Kasprzyk, N.; Stott, N; (2016): Cooperation between African states and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea: Between 1945 and 1961 African membership in the UN increased nearly sevenfold, and Africa had a **sizeable voting bloc** in the UN.
- Pyongyang relied on cultural diplomacy in Africa, while Seoul relied mainly on trade diplomacy in Africa.
- Chongwook Chung, "North Korea and the International Community: The Search for Legitimacy in the United Nations and Elsewhere," in Scalapino and Lee, North Korea in a Regional and Global Context: Between 1957 and 1982, **57 percent of North Korea's trade agreements** had been signed with African countries and North Korea, relative to the size of its own economy, was a rather **substantial contributor to African development**.

Independent, Practical and Opportunistic Nature of NK's foreign relations with Africa

- Pyongyang joined the non-aligned movement without prior consultation with the USSR and its allies, and conducted its foreign policy activities based on purely **pragmatic considerations**. (Armstrong, Tyranny of the Weak Chapter 4)
- “Courting the ‘Traitor to the Arab Cause’: Egyptian-North Korean Relations in the Sadat Era, 1970-1981” Balázs Szalontai Korea University S/N Korean Humanities Volume5 Issue1 (March 2019): Szalontai analyzes the diplomatic aspects of Egyptian-North Korean relations and finds that the **post-1973 reorientation** of Egyptian foreign policy toward a pro-American position did not lead to a breakdown of the Egyptian-North Korean partnership.
- Szalontai further concludes that the Sadat & Kim Il-sung partnership showed simultaneous cooperation with China, their shared enmity for the USSR, and their fear of diplomatic isolation. However, instead of iron-willed, anti-empiricist solidarity with revolutionary African countries and anxious to prevent **Egyptian-South Korean rapprochement**, NK diplomacy is characterized by ambivalence, vacillation, prevarication, and opportunism.
- Odd Arne Westad, The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005) talk about **North Korea siding with the United States** against the Soviet Union in operations in Zaire.

Camaraderie between NK and Africa

- NK assisted rightwing dictators as **Mobutu Sese Seko** in Zaire, **Idi Amin** of Uganda, and **Jean-Bédél Bokassa** of the Central African Republic.
- “Bokassa made first state visit after to Pyongyang in 1978. The bilateral documents released set a solid foundation for a close collaboration between the two countries, especially on **economic matters**.” “The main objective of the DPRK was to convince the Central African Empire to break off diplomatic relations with South Korea. TELEGRAM 066.793To: the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (First and Second Directorates - Liaison) Wilson Center CW Archive.
- Ethiopia had a special relationship with NK, when President Mengistu Mariam visited North Korea in 1983 and received a promise of about **US\$200 million in economic and military aid** based on his close friendship with President Kim Il-sung. North Korea supported construction of hydroelectric power plants, shipyards, pumping equipment factories, and small arms factories in Ethiopia and in exchange, NK strongly requested Ethiopia to cut off bridges with South Korea and close diplomatic missions. (Yunhap News [외교문서] 에티오피아서 남북 외교전...소금 1만+에 참패 면해,2021 03/29).
- “Uganda: North Korea's African Ally: A **decades-long relationship** continues to flourish, despite increasing pressure from UN sanctions” The Diplomat 10/30/2019: NK support in education, technology, culture, and most importantly, the military of Uganda.

Binary Ideology Choices of African Countries

- The USSR and China became the viable alternative to US-led, UK-led colonialism or “imperialism” as many African countries became independent and they were **binary** in their choice (West vs. the USSR and its allies). In this process, North Korea was pictured favorably with independent movements: the **anti-imperialist** and **anti-colonial** elements were found in socialism, Marxism-Leninism.
- During the Cold War bipolarity, Africa was a **battleground for capitalism and socialism**. African states became an object of ideological and political measures of power for the US and USSR, and the binary ideological choices African nations made seem to be relevant to US USSR rivalry in Africa.
- Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2007): the Third World held great promise for the expansion of Soviet influence as from the 1950s onward, the “darker nations” of Africa promised a vast area of opportunity for the USSR and a **zone of competition** not only with the United States, but also with China.
- Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB and the Battle for the Third World* (New York: Basic Books, 2005): The Soviet Union and its allies put enormous resources - economic, military, cultural, and especially, clandestine intelligence activities - to win political support among developing and **newly independent nations** in the 1960s and 1970s.

Victory of Marxist-Leninist Leaders in Africa (1974-1975), but no Solidarity

- In a period of some eighteen months in 1974 and 1975, **self-professed Marxist-Leninist leaders** came to power in Angola, Mozambique, Madagascar, and Ethiopia,
- Marina and David Ottaway, *Afro-Communism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Africana, 1981), 5. Congo was the first African state to declare itself a “**people’s republic**” in 1969.
- Mohamed Siad Barre took power in Somalia the same year and became **pro-Soviet**. Somalia signed the first treaty between a sub-Saharan state and the Soviet Union in 1974.
- In Angola, the Soviets supported the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (**MPLA**), and the Chinese, Romanians, North Koreans and the US sided with the rival National Front for the Liberation of Angola (**FNLA**) - (Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005))
- Marina and David Ottaway, *Afro-Communism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Africana, 1981) sums up that by the end of the 1970s, Moscow considered a dozen states in Africa were **Marxist-Leninist** or at least “**socialist-oriented**”.

Charles Armstrong (Tyranny of the Weak) Chapter 4

- The 1970s represent the peak of North Korean Third World diplomacy according to scholars and the promotion of **Juche** as a model.
- But by the mid-1980s, North Korea's image in the developing world sharply declined, and many Third World countries shifted their diplomacy more in favor of South Korea, as SK's economic development program by then seemed much more promising to African countries (for example Egypt).
- Out of rivalry with South Korea, to win votes at the United Nations, and for its own internal propaganda, North Korea energetically pursued economic and diplomatic ties among the “non-aligned” nations of the Third World.
- Pyongyang's involvement with the **Non-Aligned Movement** represented a major shift from radical regimes and movements to moderate countries of the Third World as a whole.
- By the end of the decade, in the eyes of Moscow, a dozen states in Africa could be considered **Marxist-Leninist** or at least “socialist-oriented.”
- The Moscow-Beijing alliance had fallen apart a decade or more before Marxist-Leninists took power in sub-Saharan Africa, and by the late 1970s.

Is Juche “Anti-imperialist nationalism” and “Post-liberation nationalism”?

If Juche is an offshoot or a variant of Marxism-Leninism to North Korean soil, why can it be applied to Africa?

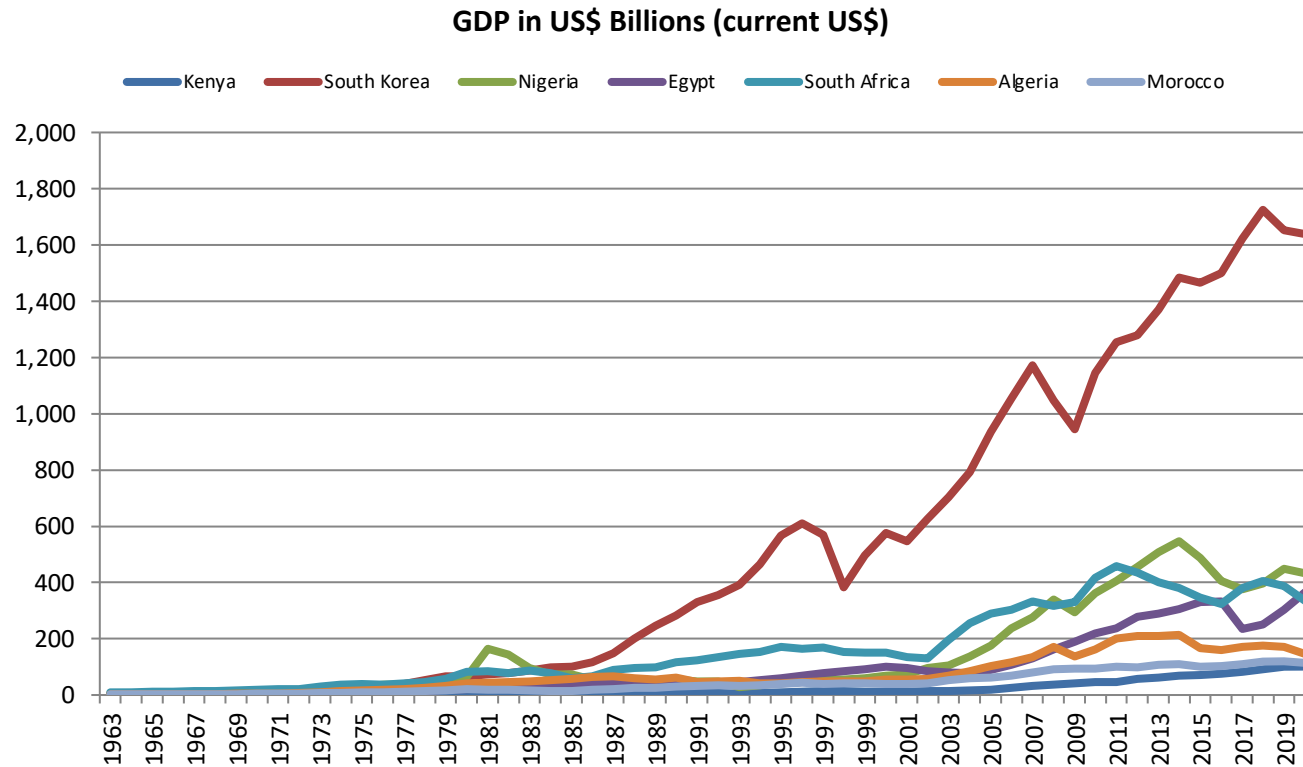
A Literature Review

- Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures Polish Academy of Sciences?
- ACTA ASIATICA VARSOVIENSIA No. 32 Warsaw 2019 IGOR DOBRZENIECKI: Juche ideology in Africa: its origins & development
- Refer to JUCHEA.COM: Africa is emphasized as the continent for success of NK’s Third World diplomacy and used as a tool to confer diplomatic recognition to the DPRK and showcase Juche as a successful model for development strategy in Africa.
- Charles Armstrong used the following reference:
 - ❖ Huber Mono Ndkana, *Revolution and Creation: A Treatise on the Juche Philosophy* (Pyongyang: Foreign Language Publishing House), 229. “In the 1970s Pyongyang sponsored a great many books by Third World authors praising the North Korean system and Kim Il-sung’s genius behind it. See for example Comrade Kim Il Sung, an Ingenious Thinker and Theoretician (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1975); and Muhammad al Missuri, *Kim Il Sungism: Theory and Practice* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1978)” under reference 83.
- Byun D.H. (1991): *North Korea’s Foreign Policy. The Juche Ideology and the Challenge of Gorbachev’s New Thinking*, Research Center for Peace and Unification of Korea: emphasizes the fact that North Korea itself used Juche Ideology in Africa to stay away from Sino-Soviet influence and their “hegemonism”. North Korea was rivalling with Cuba, which took active part in the wars in Angola and Namibia.

Criticism of Juche by Africa and its Demise

- Young, B. (2015): 'The Struggle For Legitimacy: North Korea's Relations With Africa, 1965-1992'. BAKS (The British Association For Korean Studies): Many African politicians criticized both **Juche ideology as inapplicable** in the postcolonial reality of Africa and **dangerously radical** and the way North Korea was promoting Juche is too aggressive.
- **Kenyan politician** Tom Mboya said about Juche: "I accept the slogan of self-reliance. The man in the bush has always been self-reliant and that is the reason why he is still in the bush".
- Young also views that Africans were not fascinated with the idea of Juche, but were interested in the fast development of North Korea after the Korean War.
- Juche also lost its audience because of a host of factors:
 - ❖ The end of the Cold War, or collapse of the USSR
 - ❖ **Economic failure of North Korea**
 - ❖ Gigantic economic and **developmental success in SK**
 - ❖ Numerous **internal crises** in Africa (coups, corruption, civil wars, etc.)
 - ❖ New opposition parties and multi-party political system in many African countries
 - ❖ **Decolonization** process ending with independence of Zimbabwe (1980) and Namibia (1990)

A Story of Divergent Development Trajectories



Nigeria is Africa's largest economy with a GDP of US\$432 billion in 2020. Kenya's economy is about one quarter the size of Nigeria's today.

Source: World Bank

Anthropological Angle to North Korean Studies in Africa

- **North Korean filmmakers** are well received by African countries: Tanzanian **documentary** “Tanzania Yasonga Mbele” (Tanzania Forges Ahead) was shoot by North Korean filmmaker in 1970 (UK National Archives: CT Hart “North Korean visit to Tanzania”)
- Sudanese President Gamaar Nimeiry paid North Korean filmmakers to make **revolutionary movies** for Sudan in 1971 (telegram from American Embassy to Khartoum, National Archives of Hungary NARA, US National Archives, Records Administration II)
- In 1979, East German security services complained that NK embassy’s film screenings were used to **indoctrinate** foreign students from Africa.
- According to documentary “North Korean Movie Madness”, Kim Jung-il possesses 20,000 titles and built 7 personal theaters.
- Kim Jung-il made a film about Kim Il-sung to smooth his way into power. Kim Jung-il wrote a book entitled “On the Art of the Cinema”.

Literature Review Summary: Arguments and Counter Arguments

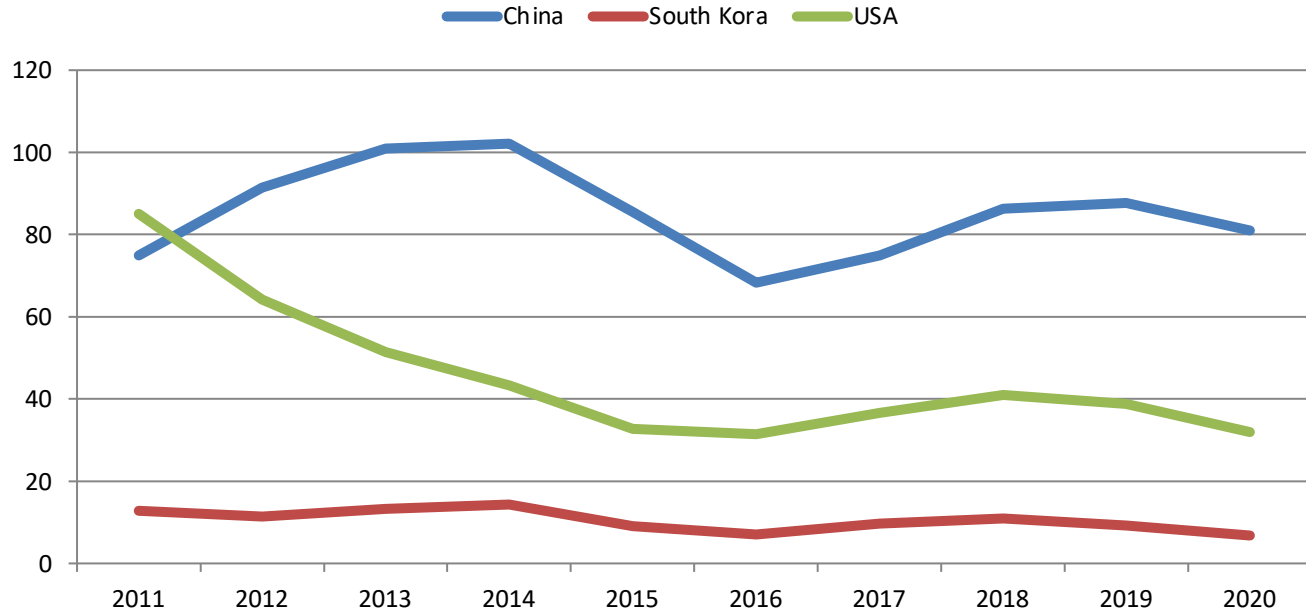
- View that Africa became unprofitable for North Korea to operate vs. view that Africa is still a fertile ground for their cash stream.
- Young, Benjamin R.. Guns, Guerillas, and the Great Leader (Cold War International History Project) 2021. Stanford University Press. Emphasize the following:
 - ❖ “Built in 2011, Dakar’s African Renaissance Monument is one of many commemorative architecture projects built by North Korea’s state-run construction company, Mansudae Overseas Projects, in Africa. Mainly because of **NK’s cheap price tag and artistic skills**, Mansudae construction projects have left a quintessentially North Korean architectural footprint in at least fifteen Africa states emphasizing “Juche” ideas of fine art.
 - ❖ In the 1980s, NK started to drop this façade of a self-reliant socialist paradise model as they needed **hard currency** and as post-colonial **Africa sought arms dealers**.
 - ❖ Over the years, North Korea’s support of African movements fighting for independence from European colonial powers in the 1960s has evolved into an **income stream** for Pyongyang.

SK's anti DPRK Agenda in Africa

- Park Chung Hee encouraged **South Korean construction companies** to seek projects in Africa: Massive 15 story department store, Immeuble Renovation in Libreville, Gabon built by Ssang Yong 1977.
- SK sent doctors free of charge to Gabon in the 1970s.
- SK used the **Rangoon bombing** to showcase NK as a terrorist group and shift African countries away from NK.
- Inter Korean conflicts in the 1980s moved to Africa as SK invested more resources in Africa.
- The first ambassador to SK who achieved the establishment of diplomatic ties, Mr. Tae-ik Jeong (Tae-ik Jeong) said, "Promoting investment in Egypt by SK companies" Kyunghyang Newspaper | 1995.05.03 Article (interview).
- NK signed the Egypt Investment Guarantee Agreement Dong-A Ilbo | 1997.08.21 Article (News).
- NK's Mass Game made a strong impression on Uganda and NK consistently supplied military advisors to Uganda. But President Park Guen Hae's visit to Uganda in 2016 prompted President Museveni to announce that Uganda would **cease its military cooperation** with North Korea to comply with increasingly harsh **United Nations sanctions** against the country for its nuclear weapons program.

Africa is a Minor Partner in Global Trade

Trade Value with Africa's Top 5 Economies - Nigeria, Egypt, South Africa, Algeria and Morocco (US\$ in billions)



From 2005 to 2019, Africa's global share has remained consistent at just 3% of global imports and exports according to the World Trade Organization.

UN Resolutions Against North Korea

Resolution	Highlight
Resolution 1718 (October 2006)	Imposed on member states e.g. arms embargos, asset freezes of entities designated by the Security Council as providing support for North Korea's nuclear, missile and other WMD programs, and a ban on a range of imports and exports from to DPRK.
Resolution 1874 (June 2009)	Expanded measures related to arms exports and imports to include all arms and related material. Called upon UN member states to prevent the provision of financial services or transfer of financial resources that could contribute to prohibited activities.
Resolution 2087 (January 2013)	Expanded on measures related to UN member states' rights to seize and destroy materials suspected of being connected to the DPRK's weapons development and research.
Resolution 2094 (March 2013)	Expanded the prohibited items list concerning nuclear, ballistic missile and other related items, and provided a non-exhaustive list of prohibited luxury goods. It imposed targeted financial sanctions, designated additional individuals and entities.

UN Resolutions Against North Korea

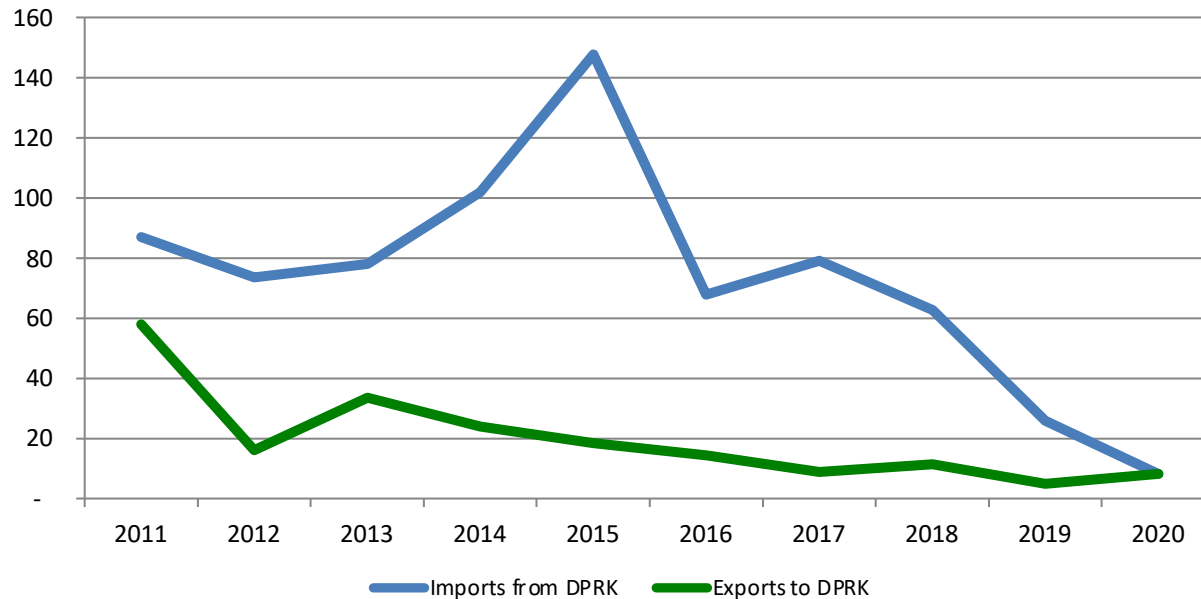
Resolution	Highlight
Resolution 2270 (March 2016)	Expanded the arms embargo and non-proliferation measures to include small arms and light weapons, as well as catchall provisions to ban any item relating to prohibited programs, dual-use nuclear/missile items, and the operational capabilities of DPRK's armed forces. It established new cargo inspection and maritime procedures, and expanded financial measures. It enforced sectoral sanctions (coal, minerals and fuel ban) and prohibited their procurement and/or transfer by UN member states.
Resolution 2321 (November 2016)	Called on member states to reduce the number of DPRK diplomatic missions and consular posts. Additionally, member states were directed to limit the number of bank accounts held by diplomats and missions. Sales of statues and helicopters by North Korea were prohibited as well as the sale or transfer of iron or iron ore and coal.
Resolution 2371 (5 August 2017)	Targeted North Korea's principal exports, imposing a total ban on all exports of coal, iron, iron ore lead, lead ore and seafood.

UN Resolutions Against North Korea

Resolution	Highlight
Resolution 2375 (September 2017)	It fully bans textile exports, freezes the amount of crude oil imports, banned all natural gas and condensate imports, and prohibited member states from providing authorizations for North Korean nationals to work in their jurisdictions. The ban on joint ventures is expanded to include cooperative entities or the expansion of joint ventures with DPRK entities or individuals.
Resolution 2379 (December 2017)	Designated an additional 16 individuals and 1 entity to the sanction list, banned North Korean exports of food, agricultural products, minerals machinery and electrical equipment, established caps on the import of refined petroleum and crude oil as well as directed countries to expel all North Korean workers immediately

Trade as A Source of Hard Currency for North Korea is Vanishing

Total Value of Import and Export of Goods between African Countries and North Korea in US\$ millions (2011-2020)



North Korea's African trade partners incurred a trade deficit of just over half a billion US dollars.

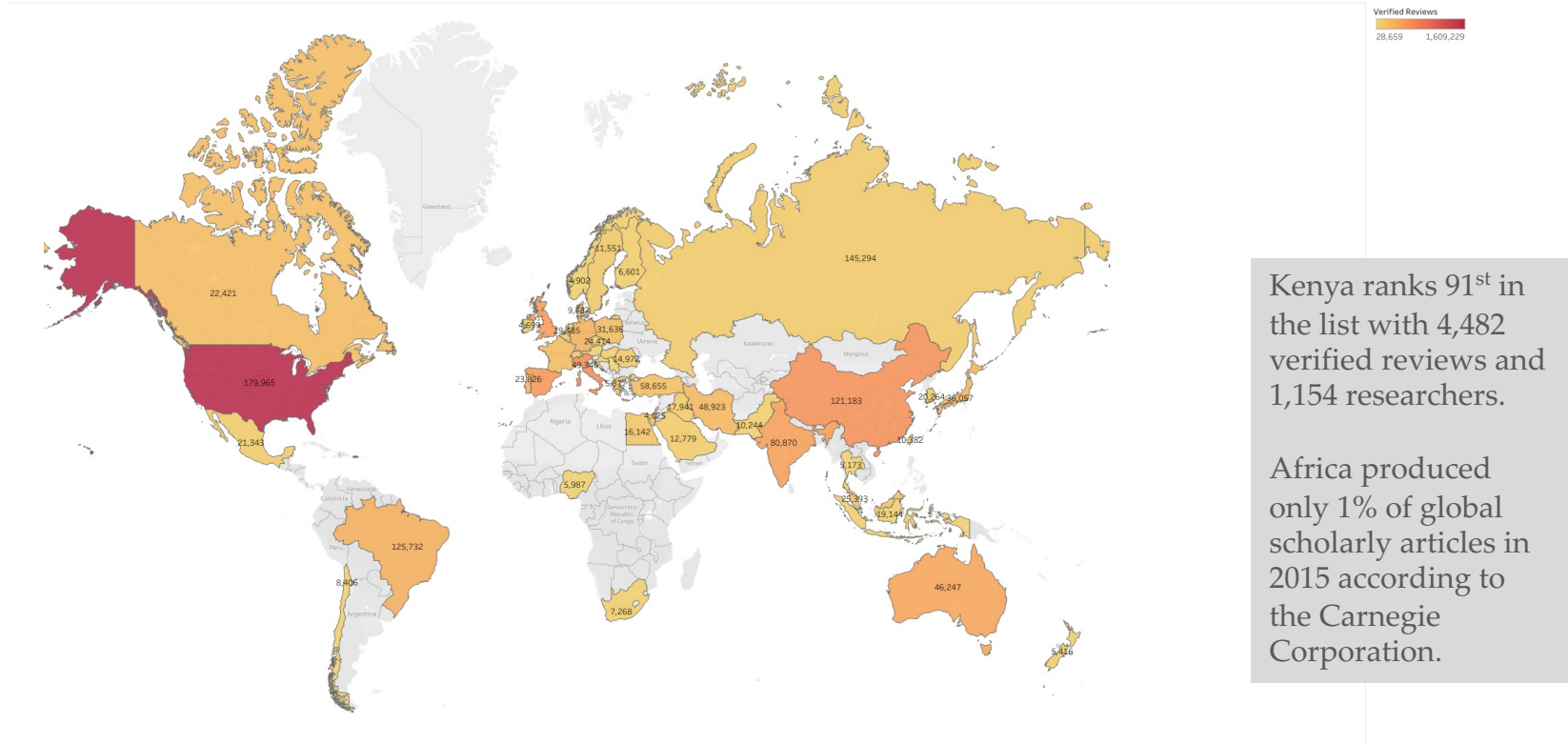
This represents a significant amount of foreign currency received by North Korea over a ten-year period.

However, UN sanctions have changed this picture.

New Scholarship

- Sochin Research Institute: Sochin Research Institute, “**An Exploratory Analysis of North Korea’s Relationship with Africa: From the Cold War to Now**”, February 2022
- Bilateral research agreement between Catholic University of Korea and Sochin Research Institute: 2022
 - ❖ **Comparative Studies of Churches’ role as political change agent in South Korea vs Kenya:** The experimental research looks at the ruling regime affiliated mega churches in South Korea vs Kenya and their democratic nature of embracing opposition party voters as parishioners.
 - ❖ In South Korea’s case, women aged 30 to 55 tended to work as a democratic nucleus for harnessing social movement through voluntary works, membership in other civil societies, membership in opposition political party. In Kenya, the democratic nucleus is missing.
 - ❖ Used process tracing and within case method to trace different democratic trajectories.

Research Output in Africa is Low by Global Standards



Kenya ranks 91st in the list with 4,482 verified reviews and 1,154 researchers.

Africa produced only 1% of global scholarly articles in 2015 according to the Carnegie Corporation.

Asian Studies is not a Popular Specialty in Africa

Country	Name	University	# of Publications
Algeria	AVC AVC	Universite Abou Bekr Belkaid, Tiemcen	-
Algeria	Abdelhakim Hakim Chaibi	Faculte des Lettres et des Sciences Humain	-
Algeria	Salim Guessoum	Universite 8 Mai 1945 Guelma	5
Algeria	Dekkiche Mokhtar	University Abdelhamid Ibn Badis de Mostagane	2
Rwanda	Edouard Cyuzuzo	EarthEnable	-
South Africa	Nshimbi CC	University of Pretoria	35
South Africa	Ronald Wall	University of Witswatersrand	-
Sudan	Yagoub Elyah	Industrial Research and Consultancy Center	-

Globally, there are 1,246 self declared specialists in Asian Studies compared to 8 in Africa.

Korean Studies is a Rarity in Africa

Country	Name	University	# of Publications
South Africa	Suweon Kim	University of the Western Cape	2

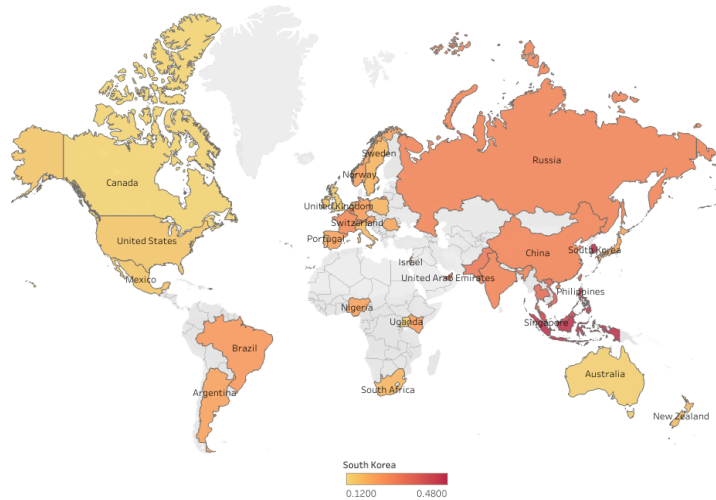
Publications:

1. The misadventure of Korea Aid: developmental soft power and the troubling motives of an emerging donor. (2019)
2. Who watches Korean TV dramas in Africa? A preliminary study in Ghana. (2018)

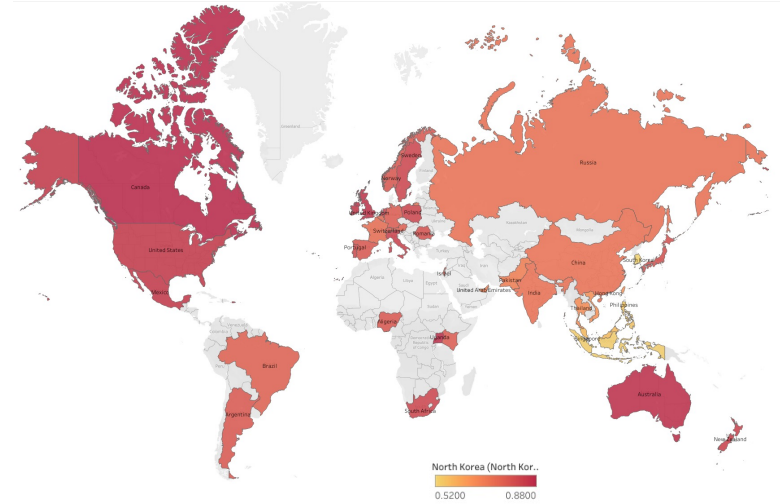
Globally, there are 103 self declared specialists in Korean Studies compared to 1 in Africa.

Google Trends Search Requests about the Koreas are Sparse in Africa

Search Requests about South Korea in the News Category
(1/1/2008 to 3/7/2022)



Search Requests about North Korea in the News Category
(1/1/2008 to 3/7/2022)





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