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North Korean Human Rights: Activists and Networks ed. by
Andrew Yeo & Danielle Chubb (review)

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Erakat's writing is fluid and inviting. While she covers much technical material, she does so in a style that is accessible. Erakat is a human rights lawyer and acknowledges that she writes from an advocacy perspective, seeking strategies that would incorporate international law to achieve Palestinian rights. Nonetheless, *Justice for Some* addresses controversial and complex issues of law in a rigorous manner. It is a useful read for anyone seeking to understand how international law was involved in bringing the Israel-Palestine conflict to its current posture and how international law may play a role going forward.

John Quigley

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North Korean Human Rights: Activists and Networks (Andrew Yeo & Danielle Chubb eds., Cambridge University Press, 2018), ISBN-13: 978-1108425490, 330 pages.

*North Korean Human Rights: Activists and Networks*¹ collects twelve essays on the transnational non-governmental efforts to promote human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea). The core chapters are descriptions of the North Korean hu-

man rights activist movements in South Korea, Japan, the United States, and Western Europe. Other chapters examine the outreach of North Korean refugees now living in South Korea (commonly called "defectors" there),² efforts to get information about the outside world into North Korea, NGO (nongovernmental organization) efforts at the United Nations, and North Korea's efforts to respond to the accusations and advocacy directed against its human rights practices. Two of these chapters were written by NGO activists, and the other chapters were written by young scholars in the United States, Japan, Australia, and South Korea. A number of chapters attempt to utilize social science methodologies and to infuse their analyses with contemporary academic theory.

Promoting human rights in North Korea is unique in today's world owing to both the DPRK's deliberate self-isolation from most normal interaction with the international community and the "closed" nature of North Korean society.³ In virtually every other country situation, transnational NGOs work in consultation with and in support of indigenous citizen activists and rights defenders. However, North Korea has no civil society and citizen surveillance is ubiquitous. Citizen associations, media, and broadcasts are under the direct control of the Korean Workers' Party and the various DPRK State organs, and there is virtually no unauthorized or unsupervised contact or communication.⁴

Thus, just about all human rights activists and NGOs can do is document violations (mostly from information provided

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1. NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS: ACTIVISTS AND NETWORKS (Andrew Yeo & Danielle Chubb eds., 2018) [hereinafter NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS].
 2. Danielle Chubb & Andrew Yeo, *Adaptive Activism: Transnational Advocacy Networks and the Case of North Korea*, in NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 1, at 12–14.
 3. Andrew Yeo, *North Korean Human Rights Discourse and Advocacy in the United States*, in NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS, *supra* note 1, at 72.
 4. Chubb & Yeo, *supra* note 1, at 1.

by refugees) and seek to inform international public opinion and influence the posture of other nation-states, particularly in a variety of UN fora. In these efforts, human rights advocates have achieved considerable success. North Korean human rights violations have become a major subject of international concern, second only to North Korea's nuclear weapons programs. "[T]he situation of human rights in the DPRK"⁵ is assessed and condemned annually by huge majorities at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) and UN General Assembly, and, from 2014 through 2017, North Korean human rights violations were discussed annually by the UN Security Council.

Such "successes" are, of course, penultimate, as the ultimate goal is to affect the human rights practices of the regime and improve the lives of the North Korean citizenry. Notwithstanding, this volume is packed with information about efforts to accomplish this and thus fills in a gap in the now voluminous academic and policy literature on North Korea.

Several chapters stand out. Celeste Arrington, an Assistant Professor at George Washington University, provides a clear account of the complex relationship between Japan and North Korea⁶—the huge concern in Japan about previous North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens, a major political issue—and

articulates concerns about North Korean mistreatments of North Koreans. This includes ethnic Koreans once resident in Japan who migrated to the DPRK in the 1960s (many of whom ended up in prison camps). Several hundred of these ethnic Koreans escaped to China and again returned to Japan.

Sandra Fahy, a Korean-speaking anthropologist teaching at Sophia University in Tokyo, provides a fine account of North Korea's counterproductive and self-defeating responses to human rights criticism.⁷ In her chapter in *North Korean Human Rights*, Fahy analyzes the DPRK responses at the UN Commission of Inquiry (COI)-generated criticism; perhaps more importantly, she analyzes North Korean domestic media such as the Korean Central News Agency and *Rodong Sinmun*, the leading newspaper of the DPRK.⁸ North Korea's self-defense includes what Fahy terms "ersatz civil society" commentary by government-instigated non-governmental organizations (GINGOs)⁹ and so-called "man-in-the-street" interviews.¹⁰

Fahy finds North Korean responses to human rights advocacy to be self-discrediting abroad and counterproductive at home. Domestically, its "normatively flawed" discourse is "bound to clash with the day-to-day reality on the ground."¹¹ As to "self-discrediting discourse,"¹²

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5. Rajiv Narayan, *North Korean Human Rights Discourse and Advocacy: The European Dimension*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 113.
 6. Celeste L. Arrington, *Linking Abductions Activism to North Korean Human Rights Advocacy in Japan and Abroad*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 85–108.
 7. Sandra Fahy, *North Korea Responds to Transnational Human Rights Advocacy: State Discourse and Ersatz Civil Society*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 224–48. See also SANDRA FAHY, *MARCHING THROUGH SUFFERING: LOSS AND SURVIVAL IN NORTH KOREA* (2015), Fahy's previous book on the North Korean famine of the 1990s, which this reviewer assessed in an earlier issue of these pages. David Hawk, *Marching Through Suffering: Loss and Survival in North Korea by Sandra Fahy* (review), 38 *HUM. RTS. Q.* 522 (2016).
 8. *Id.* at 243.
 9. *Id.* at 225–27.
 10. *Id.* at 241.
 11. *Id.* at 245.
 12. *Id.* at 240–41.

Fahy cites examples of the DPRK's crude name-calling: the refugees who testified to the COI are "human scum";¹³ former South Korean President Park Geun-hye is an "old prostitute"; former President Barack Obama is a "wicked black monkey"; and the former Chair of the COI and former Australian High Court Justice Michael Kirby is denounced as a "disgusting old lecher with a 40-odd-year-long career of homosexuality."¹⁴ It is no surprise then that diplomats and governments who speak and write like this are not believed when they contend that there are no human rights violations in their country.

Joanna Hosaniak, the Deputy Director of the Seoul-based NGO Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (Citizens' Alliance), offers a summary of NGO and Member State efforts at the United Nations, culminating in the 2013 creation of the COI.¹⁵ However, in the title, her narrative rebrands old-fashioned human rights activist NGOs as "discursive catalysts."¹⁶ The insight of this rebranding is opaque, at least to this reviewer. One can wonder how many of the thousands of activists who line up for credentials at the HRC and General Assembly would recognize this description of themselves or think that it captures the purposes for which they have travelled to Geneva or New York.

Rajiv Narayan, former researcher of Korea for Amnesty International (AI), provides a succinct description of NGO activists in Western Europe.¹⁷ Andrew Yeo, co-editor of *North Korean Human Rights* and a professor at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., provides a nuanced description of North Korean human rights discourse in the United States, which also includes descriptions of key activist networks.¹⁸

Jieun Baek, a Ph.D. candidate at Oxford, provides a valuable description and analysis of the vital efforts, mostly by North Korean defectors, to get information about the outside world into North Korea, thus breaking the information barrier constructed by the regime.¹⁹ The activist approaches described in the chapter "Breaking Through" are enormously important to include in a volume on North Korean human rights activists. The DPRK has learned to live with human rights criticism at the United Nations. Up to now, North Korea has managed to live with the economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council²⁰ in response to North Korea's aggressive nuclear weapons program. The phenomena Baek describes will not be widely known outside North Korea, and its effect is hard to quantify or qualify within. It is precisely the kind of development that may not make a difference—until it does.²¹

13. *Id.* at 244.

14. *Id.* at 239.

15. Joanna Hosaniak, *NGOs as Discursive Catalysts at the United Nations and Beyond: An Activist's Perspective*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 131–53.

16. *Id.* at 131.

17. Narayan, *supra* note 5, at 109–27.

18. Yeo, *supra* note 3, at 61–84.

19. Jieun Baek, *Breaking Through: North Korea's Information Underground and Transnational Advocacy Networks*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 249–71. [hereinafter *Breaking Through*] This chapter is a short version of her book-length presentation. See JIEUN BAEK, *NORTH KOREA'S HIDDEN REVOLUTION: HOW THE INFORMATION UNDERGROUND IS TRANSFORMING A CLOSED SOCIETY* (2016) [hereinafter *NORTH KOREA'S HIDDEN REVOLUTION*].

20. Patricia Goedde, *Human Rights Diffusion in North Korea: The Impact of Transnational Legal Mobilization*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 159.

21. While this chapter provides the basic outline of these efforts, it is without the wealth of examples of the activists and networks that Baek describes in her book. See BAEK, *NORTH KOREA'S HIDDEN REVOLUTION*, *supra* note 19.

Notwithstanding these chapters, the book lacks two significant pieces: the first is an adequate discussion of human rights activists and networks in South Korea; second, it only barely skims over the largest and most successful activist network on North Korea, the International Coalition to Stop Crimes Against Humanity in North Korea (ICNK).²² Unlike the core chapters on activists and networks in Japan, the United States, and Western Europe, the chapter on South Korea²³ fails to provide any overview of the large and varied NGO activist networks working on North Korean human rights issues, including, for example, The Network for North Korean Democracy and Human Rights (NKnet); the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights (NKDB); Good Friends, originally known as the Korean Buddhist Sharing Movement (KBSM); Liberty in North Korea (LiNK), which works in both South Korea and the United States; People for Successful Korean Reunification (PSCORE); and the Transitional Justice Working Group (TJWG). These groups and others, particularly the defector activist networks based in South Korea, play vital roles in the global efforts to promote human rights in the DPRK.

The omission of these activist networks in South Korea is rather surprising. One of the co-editors of *North Korean Human Rights*, Danielle Chubb, previously authored an essential historical analysis²⁴ that well-covered the South Korean NGOs established at the time of her research. In addition, there are also the good dozen of refugee-defector NGOs that are a hugely important part of the activist network movement in South

Korea, which may be an even more important component in the years to come. When the North Korean refugee-defectors resettled in South Korea, they formed scores of human rights organizations and projects. A number have proved to have a sufficiently stable membership and funding base to endure: North Korea Strategy Center (NKSC), No Chain, NK Watch, Now Action and Unity for Human Rights (NAUH), North Korea Intellectuals Solidarity, Free North Korea Radio (FNKR), and North Korea Reform Radio (NKRR), to name just a few. These activists and networks are at the core of efforts to spread information about the outside world into North Korea.²⁵ Just like the other South Korean activist groups mentioned above, they are too important to promoting human rights in North Korea to go almost unmentioned in a book on North Korean human rights activists and networks.

In *North Korean Human Rights*, there is a chapter on South Korean networks, and it is a social science theory and technique-laden evaluation of the ongoing (and probably unresolvable) divergences between “progressive” and “conservative” networks and “discourse frames.”²⁶ Another chapter, which is by Jay Song, a senior lecturer at the University of Melbourne, is a hyper-link analysis of the outreach of five North Korean defectors who published English language autobiographies or biographies.²⁷ Both of these chapters are of interest and they would have been fine analytical additions to the basic descriptions and analyses of the relevant activists and networks in South Korea, as was the case with the chapters on Japan, the United States, and Western

22. Yeo, *supra* note 3, at 78.

23. Jacob Reidhead, *A Prisoner's Dilemma of Movement Nationalization: North Korean Human Rights in South Africa*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 31–60.

24. DANIELLE L. CHUBB, *CONTENTIOUS ACTIVISM & INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS* (2014).

25. This work is described in Baek's chapter. See Baek, *Breaking Through*, *supra* note 19.

26. Reidhead, *supra* note 23, at 39–41.

27. JIYOUNG SONG, *HUMAN RIGHTS DISCOURSE IN NORTH KOREA: POST-COLONIAL, MARXIST AND CONFUCIAN PERSPECTIVES* (2011).

Europe; however, they don't fill the missing gaps in this collection.

One example, in detail, perhaps may be instructive. To my knowledge, the second-oldest South Korean NGO working on North Korean human rights, as cited above, is NKnet. Established in the late 1990s by radical South Korean student activists from the 1980s, some of whom were imprisoned during the struggle for democracy in South Korea, the leadership of this group would be some twenty years younger than the founders of Citizens' Alliance, the oldest of South Korean groups working on North Korean human rights and the NGO most featured in *North Korean Human Rights*. Along with the standard projects of documenting and publicizing violations and advocating remedy and redress, NKnet has, in the fashion of the South Korean industrial (*chaebol*) conglomerates,²⁸ spun-off quasi-independent projects of considerable importance: providing staffing and funds for the first grouping of former North Korean political prisoners; sending radio programs into North Korea; and establishing a news service, *Daily NK*, which hires North Korean defector reporters who clandestinely maintain contacts with would-be "correspondents" inside North Korea and then publishes sometimes important human rights news stories in Korean and English, which are then picked up by other media outlets and activist networks. Additionally, NKnet activists working with refugee-defectors initiated one of the first appeals for an International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation of North Korea, and an NKnet off-shoot provided the Seoul-based secretariat for the ICNK.

Similarly, *North Korean Human Rights: Activists and Networks* neglects what is arguably the pre-eminent activist network, the ICNK, which worked to secure what is recognized as the most impactful and successful advocacy effort to promote human rights in North Korea: persuading UN Member States to empanel an investigation by the COI. While the ICNK is included in the List of Abbreviations and is noted in passing in the chapters on Japan, Europe, and the United States, the considerable NGO advocacy effort on behalf of the COI is told through the activities of Citizens' Alliance, which easily comes to mind as the one NGO that did not join the ICNK. While that is the editors' choice, it is problematic for a book on activist networks to substantially ignore the largest and most influential network.²⁹

An NGO activist super-network, the ICNK was co-chaired by Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the London-based Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), an NGO with strong connections with the British Parliament and Foreign Office. Other leading ICNK participants included AI, which is still the largest membership human rights NGO. ICNK had considerable input and support from the Washington, D.C.-based Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK) (which has strong outreach to US Congress, the State Department, and the National Security Council) and from the Paris-based Federation Internationale des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH), important because France was the leading government within the European Union (EU) for action on North Korea at the United Nations. As noted above, NKnet provided

28. Carlos Tejada, *Money, Power, Family: Inside South Korea's Chaebol*, N.Y. TIMES (17 Feb. 2017), <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/17/business/south-korea-chaebol-samsung.html>.

29. Disclosure: the chapter notes my years of collaboration with Citizens' Alliance.

the secretariat for the ICNK, and the NKnet activist who earlier accompanied refugee-defectors to the Hague to request an ICC investigation was elected to the National Assembly, providing solid access to South Korean political leadership as well as Republic of Korea (ROK) support at HRC meetings.

HRW and AI have very capable advocacy offices at the United Nations in Geneva and New York (and at the EU headquarters in Brussels), important for lobbying to create the COI and for subsequent lobbying in support of the recommendations of the COI. At the HRC meetings in Geneva, CWS and FIDH (coming from London and Paris, respectively) joined in. At General Assembly and Security Council meetings in New York, ICNK advocacy efforts were joined, via HRNK connections, by the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, a powerhouse repository of UN diplomatic connections and institutional memory going back to efforts in 1945 to include human rights provisions in the UN Charter. To all of these UN meetings, NKnet brought former North Korean political prisoners. The ICNK also organized delegations of NGO activists and former NK political prisoners to meet with foreign ministry officials in Tokyo, London, Paris, and Brussels.

The missing activists and networks in *North Korean Human Rights*, particularly the refugee-defector networks that work to insert information about the outside world into North Korea and the ICNK super-network, is partially remedied both

by a chapter from co-editor Danielle Chubb on the “Politics of Networking”³⁰ and by the co-editors’ thoughtful concluding chapter,³¹ which largely succeeds in bringing together the various strands, tendencies, and discourse frames of the multiple activists and networks described in the book. I would like to take issue with two analytical points made by Professor Chubb and then note an issue the editors got right.

Chubb posits that the support of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was the “tipping point” in regards to creating the COI.³² I certainly would not minimize the importance of the High Commissioner’s strong support (nor that of the Special Rapporteur). The High Commissioner, Navi Pillay, had in her prior position as a judge in the Rwanda Tribunal pioneered legal recognition of sexual violence as a war crime and a crime against humanity.³³ The High Commissioner’s extraordinary meeting with Mrs. Kim Hye-sook, who was imprisoned with hard labor (mining coal) for twenty-eight years at Prison Camp 18, was key to Pillay’s strong support for a COI on the DPRK. However, creating a COI and, indeed, creating and defining the mandates for both UN officials and “independent experts” such as Special Rapporteurs are the carefully-guarded remit of the UN Member States, which leads to new mandates such as instigating a high-level investigation into a Member State for possible genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity.³⁴ Such mandates are created and defined through

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30. Danielle Chubb, *The Politics of Networking: Behind the Public Face of the Transnational North Korean Human Rights Movement*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 177–97.
31. Andrew Yeo & Danielle Chubb, *Conclusion: The Contentious Terrain of North Korean Human Rights Activism*, in *NORTH KOREAN HUMAN RIGHTS*, *supra* note 1, at 272–90.
32. Chubb, *supra* note 30, at 193.
33. Hosaniak, *supra* note 15, at 144–45.
34. *Id.* at 145–47.

resolutions receiving a majority of votes in the political organs of the United Nations following pro-and-con debates by the representatives of Member State governments, during which UN officials remain largely in the background. As I saw it at the time, the dispositive “tipping point” for the creation of the COI on North Korea³⁵ was the initiative of the Government of Japan that, as a primary co-sponsor of the yearly resolutions on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, informed the other primary co-sponsor, the EU, that COI-creating provisions should be included in the 2013 DPRK human rights resolution at the HRC.³⁶

A second issue that I see differently: to look “behind the public face of the transnational North Korean human rights movement,”³⁷ Chubb discards the usual international relations dichotomy between moralist-legalist “idealism” versus national interest and balance of power “realism;” instead, she substitutes a dichotomy between “moralism” and “legalism.” Creating a continuum between “Values (moral mandate)” and “Principled Ideas (legal norms),”³⁸ Chubb places many of the key NGOs at various points along this “normative frameworks” continuum.³⁹ I am not sure that this works in practice or in theory. In practice, for example, two faith-based NGOs whose moral stances and mandates are proclaimed in their titles, CSW and the Jubilee Campaign (“jubilee” is a Biblically-positing freeing of prisoners and slaves),

were among the first human rights NGOs lobbying in 2003 for the application of international legal norms at the Human Rights Commission.⁴⁰ Additionally, CSW was among the first NGOs to explicitly detail North Korean violations according to the international law on crimes against humanity. At the other end of Chubb’s moral-legal continuum, Citizens’ Alliance and AI are cited as paradigms of “Principled Ideas (legal norms).”⁴¹ Yet, Citizens’ Alliance was organized and led by ordained Methodist pastor Benjamin Yoon, almost always addressed as Reverend Yoon, who had previously been the long-serving executive director of the South Korean section of AI.⁴² Similarly, the US section of AI from 1974 to 2006 had, as successive executive directors, a Protestant seminary graduate, a long-time employee of the National Council of Churches, a former Catholic priest, and an ordained Unitarian minister; a subsequent executive director attended seminary after leaving AIUSA. Applying and upholding legal norms seems to be an attractive pursuit for persons motivated by moral values.

More abstractly, those who hold that their moral values mandates derive from either reason or revelation have often sought to legislate their morality. Put more positively, believers in *natural right* have long sought to codify *natural rights* and to progressively elaborate *natural law* in *civil* and *international law*. Even the archetypical legal norms—the twin

35. Chubb, *supra* note 30, at 192–93.

36. Arrington, *supra* note 6, at 103–05. Japan did this primarily because Japanese diplomats had been stiffed by North Korea when seeking a resolution of the prior North Korean abductions of Japanese citizens, knowing that the abductions of foreign citizens would surely be taken up in an investigation of crimes under international law. *Id.*

37. Chubb, *supra* note 30.

38. *Id.* at 191, fig. 8.2.

39. *Id.* at 193.

40. Hosaniak, *supra* note 15, at 140.

41. Chubb, *supra* note 30, at 192–93.

42. *Id.* at 192.

International Covenants (a Biblical term indicting a binding-contract of the highest moral order) and the UN Charter itself—start by explicitly re-affirming *faith* (i.e., the belief) in inherent moral rights, dignity, and worth. Chubb's dichotomous continuum between morally mandated values and ideationally principled legal norms is unpersuasive to this reviewer.

One of the things the co-editors get right, in my opinion, is their evaluation of "critical theory" on North Korea. In the preface, the co-editors take note of a body of critical theory, a special volume of *Critical Asian Studies*,⁴³ which charges that the movement for human rights in North Korea is a handmaiden of US imperialism, with its militarized or securitized human rights discourse purposefully designed to extend US hegemony by the anticipatory violent destruction of the North Korean regime.⁴⁴ In the editors' conclusion to *North Korean Human Rights*, they return to the claims of critical theory. Having noted the variety of activist network projects (with their contentious variety of discourse frames) that have been examined throughout the collected chapters, Yeo and Chubb posit that the "regime-change" discourse so offensive to the critical theorists is only one of many, and it is not even the predominant human rights discourse on the DPRK.⁴⁵ Hence, the co-editors disagree with critical theory's emphasis on "US hegemony as the key culprit driving North Korean human rights discourse and advocacy."⁴⁶

Moreover, the co-editors express less interest in scholarly debates than

in policy implications for governments and activists. Here, they substantially advocate a continuation of the two-track, "legal/institutional" approach⁴⁷ posited by the UN Special Rapporteur and the COI (which the United Nations terms the "accountability track"⁴⁸) with secondly, the "engagement track,"⁴⁹ which for the United Nations depends on the (long-denied) permission and cooperation of North Korea. Yeo and Chubb include within the engagement approach a "subversive, 'hands-on'" effort⁵⁰ to get information into North Korea and get North Koreans out in ways UN officials would not, having to limit their emphasis to freedom to access information, rights to travel, etc. Yeo and Chubb would also like more reference to North Korean laws to be cited in the materials smuggled or broadcast into North Korea and that such broadcasts are in North Korean dialects, not the Korean language as spoken by South Koreans.

Additionally, they want more emphasis on economic and social rights, and they heartily endorse the call of the former co-chair of the HRNK for more cooperation between human rights networks and activists and the organizations that provide humanitarian assistance within North Korea.⁵¹ Yeo and Chubb urge care and caution in the inescapable inter-relationship between human rights and political-military security concerns, or what they call the "security narrative."⁵² All of these recommendations enjoy considerable support within wide varieties of activists and networks surveyed.

43. Yeo & Chubb, *supra* note 31, at 278.

44. *Id.* at 279–81.

45. *Id.* at 279–81.

46. *Id.* at 279.

47. *Id.* at 282.

48. Goedde, *supra* note 20, at 165.

49. Yeo & Chubb, *supra* note 31, at 283.

50. Chubb & Yeo, *supra* note 2, at 20.

51. Yeo & Chubb, *supra* note 31, at 284–85.

52. *Id.* at 286–88.

Most of activist network projects analyzed in this book took place before the spate of rapid-fire North Korean missile and nuclear weapons tests of 2017, which resulted in serious economic sanctions by the Security Council followed by the theatrically spectacular summit meetings of 2018 and 2019. As of mid-2019, those highest-level negotiations are stalemated and without a roadmap for a political solution. Thus far, human rights concerns have not been part of those discussions. The current (renewed) humanitarian concerns about food and medicine shortages in North Korea also remain largely on a separate track.

The idea persists that if North Korea's security concerns—the reasons they say they need nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles—were being addressed and even partially met, then North Korea might be willing to consider the human rights concerns of the international community. If so, perhaps the situation might open up in some different way. Barring some kind of political settlement, the context for human rights advocacy will remain pretty much as described in these pages under review, and the situation of human rights in the DPRK will likely remain much the same as has been recorded in scores of UN reports and General Assembly resolutions over the last fifteen years.

Notwithstanding the gaps in the coverage of activists and networks noted in this review, as well as my differences of opinion with some of the analyses of the contested frames for human rights discourse (re: the DPRK), this volume is the fullest available coverage of the activist efforts that have made North Korean human rights a serious matter of international concern. Though the efforts therein described have not yet materially improved the situation of the North Korean citizenry, this volume should have considerable shelf-life.

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