Voice of the most isolated country:
North Korea Collection of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library.

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1. Background: Why did we start the North Korea Special Collection project?
Background: Why did we start the NKSC project?

They show the library’s bibliographical history.

The scale of the North Korean Publications in our library is an accomplishment of University of Hawai‘i’s communities such as East-West Center, Center for Korean Studies, Sinclair and Hamilton library.

→ A history of our institution that has been intensively researching and collecting the NK materials for decades.
Their value as primary resources for NK studies:

- The content of the publications can be regarded as an essential primary source for North Korean studies.
- Considering extremely limited information from the country, this is a rare opportunity to get information from North Korea's insiders, and might give hints to understanding their society and culture.

[in Korean] “Publications are an important means of connecting the Party and the public and a powerful weapon for organizing and mobilizing the working masses to carry out the tasks of political, economic, and cultural construction set forth by the Party.”


[in Korean] “Supervision and control over the publishing business is carried out by the publishing guidance institution or the relevant institution, and the publishing guidance institution and the relevant institution register printing facilities to prevent leakage of secrets or the spread of reactionary ideology, culture, and lifestyle through publications. Its use must be supervised and controlled.”

North Korea Publication Law Article 47
The rarity of the materials and the usability for patrons.

- Unable to order books freely nor communicate with publishers and vendors in North Korea.
- OCLC records show that we are the only or one of very few places with North Korean publications.
  ➔ Preserve and give better access to researchers worldwide.
2. Facts and Figures
Size
about 3,000 titles,
2,468 volumes are scanned and processed.

Subjects
literature, politics, history, economics,
language, biography, medicine, geography,
and so on.

Format
Books, Journals

Date
1940s–
3. Processes
Create an inventory

A list of extracted records by using the place of publication "Pyŏngyang" as a search operator.

→ Incomplete and temporary

Shelf-reading,
Selecting,
Updating the inventory list.

Re-shelving into closed stacks.

Stable and dedicated place to retain them and also facilitates control intellectually and physically.
Processes

Updating the cataloging records.
Consolidating the records the place of publication by fixing the country to North Korea in fixed field and place of publication in 264 field, updating 043 geographical area code, and adding field 505 content, 520 summary, and 651 geographic name.

Annotations.
Brief summaries of materials according to the foreword and content page.

Scanning.
From the title to the content pages. Cooperation of interns, student assistants, and library staff.

Refining metadata.
Selected and refined metadata fields from the original inventory according to Dublin Core. Created twenty-seven subjects for the NK collection and tagged every volume with its proper subject.
4. Outcomes
Outcomes

A grid of titles with the cover image.
North Korea Special Collection Project at the UHM Library

Outcomes

Digitized cover and content pages.

Title, Call number, Creator, Date, Format, Publisher, Place of publication, and Description

MINJOK MINJOKCHU'IRON ÙI CHUCH'EEJOK CHONGAE

Collection
North Korea Collection

Citation

Comments
Your name
Email (required)
Comment

Please verify you're a human

SUBMIT
5. Future Plans
Correction of data

- Correcting metadata that does not match the actual material.
- Input title data in the vernacular due to its loss in the process of batch import.

Adding electronic materials

- Uploading North Korean newspapers and journal databases such as 노동신문 and 근로자 to eVols (a digital institutional repository of the UH).
- Linking them with current digital collections to provide holistic access to NK materials.

Full scan of copyrighted materials

- Digitizing and disclosing the entirety of materials whose 50-year copyright has expired.
Conclusion
Through this project, we tried to make our North Korean materials more accessible by providing researchers with information about the rare North Korean books held at the University of Hawai‘i.

During this process rare books were collected in one place and moved to a safe closed area.

Our aim is that this collection will help people understand North Korea, a country with extremely limited information, and its society and culture of people living there, and the refugees who come from there.
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