

Why Jeju “World Peace” Island? 4.3

Grant McCall
(University of Sydney, Australia)

Abstract

The thought occurs that through “Korean Tolerance” Wonsan and the Jeju “Peace Port” at Gangeong village could be linked as “sister holiday places” by ferry, which sailing could include other ports to promote peace and Korean tolerance cruises featuring entertainment from all parts of the peninsula. Those Korean relatives in Japan could meet their DPRK families on Jeju and at other places on the Korean Tolerance cruise itinerary.

There no doubt are many barriers to such a proposal as a peace and Korean Tolerance voyage between the DPRK and RoK, but the principle of Korean Tolerance and exchange between Wonsan and Jeju World Peace Island should be able to overcome such difficulties with good will throughout the peninsular polity..

“Korean Tolerance Peace Cruises” would serve to promote cultural exchange by using artists from all of Korea to learn from one another’s experiences, using their common language, shared culture and deep history.

Key words :

Korean Tolerance. Wonsan. The Jeju “Peace Port” at Gangeong village Jeju World Peace Island. “Korean Tolerance Peace Cruises”.

Why is Jeju Island designated “world peace island” as part of its name, from 2021?

To answer this question, we must go back to the troubled days of the 1940s, the fighting of World War Two and the beginning of the “Cold War” that was to last nearly five decades, causing the peoples of the world to balance on an anxious knife edge, in fear of nuclear holocaust and the termination of a way of life they considered normal and eternal.

Jeju island, just under 500 kilometres off the southern tip of the Korean peninsula, had not been attractive to any colonial power. There weren't enough people to enslave, or any minerals of note to exploit. The touristic and agricultural riches of Jeju had yet to be discovered by the outside world. The riches –the treasures of Jeju island– were of the mind and the spirit, There was the majesty of Mount Halla and the graceful beauty of the haenyo women divers. When Japan annexed Korea as that modernising Asian country consolidated its colonial conquests over its continental neighbours, Jeju was part of the “package”. For the first part of the twentieth century, Korea (and Jeju) were part of the greater Japanese empire from 1910 to 1945.

Those subject to the empire looked to self-determination and freedom, investing in resistance movements, promoted, even sponsored by other overseas countries for their own reasons. As a nation founded on revolution, the Soviet Union (USSR) was eager to support such movements of self-determination. Although initially part of the German–Japanese Axis, USSR leader Joseph Stalin welcomed freedom fighters from several parts of the world, including Asia, instructing many peoples in the principles of worker/people community organisation, as opposed to the heavy handed colonial domination they experienced.

The WW II allies, led by the USA and the United Kingdom, defeated German forces in Africa and Europe, signing a peace treaty with the National Socialist state on 7 May 1945. This left Japan to fight on in the Pacific, allied forces advancing ever closer to the embattled archipelago.

As expectation of the Japanese surrender (eventually on 2 September 1945) spread, local insurgents stepped up their guerrilla attacks,

weakening the imperial forces to the point that they withdrew to the homeland islands, prepared to endure a bloody invasion and conquest. Such local freedom forces in the Japanese colonies, including Korea, saw themselves as contributing to the defeat of the Imperial enemy and as participating in common cause to liberate enslaved lands.

American and allied troops, including those of the Soviet Union, moved in to soundly defeat the Japanese former overlords.

This common allied cause soon fractured in victory owing to the fierce ideological differences between the Soviet Union and the European (former) allies. There were different visions of what “freedom” and “self-determination” meant. The Soviet Union saw its role as promoting a better life for the world's workers; the USA and allies saw World War II as a temporary interruption of the triumph of capitalism through modernisation.

The former, now victorious, allies –the Soviet Union and the USA/UK– were moving to a different kind of war: a “Cold War”.

Powering the USA and allies (minus the Soviet Union, of course) was the so-called “domino theory” whereby the enemy prosecuted a rolling conquest of adjacent countries, turning each one in turn to the Communist cause of freedom and liberation, as had taken place, in their own country after the Bolshevik revolution.

Ideologically, Karl Marx influenced Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin to hold a belief in what they declared was “Scientific Marxism” whereby Communism eventually would overcome previous forms, such as Capitalism. With that certainty, those aligned with the Soviet Union saw themselves as having contributed to the defeat of Japan and part of an inevitable socio-economic evolution towards their understanding of inevitable progress.

The Communist view had its adherents amongst the triumphant allies, but military power saw such views as those of a dangerous enemy who must be defeated, even eradicated.

The looming conflict was foreseen in many parts of the world, including Korea. What was Korea to be?

Talks about that future were inconclusive.

Neighbouring China had a faction that had just declared itself Communist, led by former guerrilla

hero Mao Zedong. In Korea, there was Communist influenced former guerrilla fighter Kim Il-sung. The allied troops that had liberated the Korean peninsulas occupied the southern part of the peninsula, including Jeju Island, finding and discouraging governing village councils. The Soviet Union had defeated Japanese forces in the north and occupied that territory supporting the native Communists who had fought so hard against the Japanese empire.

This was not unlike the division of Germany and other European countries as the USSR faced more Western allies with increasing suspicion and hostility.

In USA sources, the Jeju 4.3 incident is called “the Jeju uprising”, but people on the island see the 3rd of April 1948 as a tragedy as occupying troops attacked and killed unarmed people in their homes, declaring that such brutality and bloodshed were necessary to discourage, indeed to suppress, Communist plans for a free (of Japan) Korea.

Not long after, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) was founded on 9 September 1948 as a safe haven for those fleeing repression by the occupying forces in the south. In fact, USA military historian Allan R. Millet¹ claims that the “4.3 Incident” was the actual start of the so-called Korean War. Whilst the dates of the war on the Korean peninsula officially are 1950 to 1953, no treaty of peace ever has been signed between warring factions at time of writing (2021). Ongoing talks regarding treaty negotiations have been suspended, with the DPRK having a history of fruitless requests for their continuance.

Before the Koreans can reach an accord, such a peace treaty seems obvious.

So, technically, the DPRK is at war still with the USA and its allies!

Events, therefore, on Jeju Island produced a destructive war on the Korean peninsula, following by decades of dictatorship, both in the north and the south. Moreover, the “4.3 Incident” was a forbidden topic in South Korea, so it is only in the

last few decades of the 21st century that 4.3 can be discussed and analysed in public in the Republic of Korea.

To that end, there is a strong movement to have the “Jeju April 3 Incident Victim’s Record” including documents, visual and audio records as well as relics from that tragedy, memorialised as part of the UNESCO world program of memories².

The 2021 designation “World Peace Island” derives from the devastating conflict that took place from 3 April 1948!

It is not surprising, then, that the people of Jeju Island and their leaders feel they have an historical affinity with the DPRK and, by extension, to the cause of peace and understanding, termed these days as “Korean Tolerance”.

Jeju island has sought to symbolise the connection from the southern-most tip of Korea to their northern compatriots in various ways.

The most fundamental human behaviour is exchange. From the earliest archaeological records, we find humans, as individuals and as groups, exchanging goods, services and, even, people, the latter most familiarly through marriage alliances. In a recent archaeological investigation in South Africa, evidence of human exchange dating to nearly 2,000,000 years ago was discovered.

The French anthropologist, Marcel Mauss, theorised that through exchange, humans and their groups establish socio-cultural relations to survive and prosper. Mauss saw the exchange process as passing through three stages:

1. The obligation to give
2. The obligation to receive
3. The obligation to repay

Since his publication in the early part of the twentieth century, this theory has been used to explain all manner of human socio-cultural life.³

I believe Mauss’s theory of reciprocity can be used to analyse relations between Jeju World Peace Island and the DPRK.

Presently, there are two countries that occupy the Korean peninsula, with different recent histories and governments, but sharing a common language,

1) Allan R. Millet, a USA Marine Corps officer and military historian at Ohio State University, claims that the 3 April 1948 “incident” was the beginning of the later Korean War. Allan R. Millet, 2015, *The War for Korea, 1945–1950: A House Burning*. Modern War Studies, Illustrated paperback edition, University of Kansas Press,

2) The website for this Register is <https://en.unesco.org/programme/mow/register>. Accessed on 21 June 2021.

3) Marcel Mauss, 1923, *Essai sur le don*. Paris, Presses universitaires de France.

history and culture from ancient times.

Jeju World Peace Island is an autonomous, self-governing province of the Republic of Korea (RoC), as well as being the country's premier holiday place. "Jeju Peace Island" was an honour in the early part of this century and, on 27 January 2021, RoC President Noh Moo-hyun, added to that distinction by adding "Jeju World Peace Island", a tag that the people of the island cherish and wish to justify by public actions in the cause of peace on the Korean peninsula as well as in the wider world.

As an agrarian culture, Jeju produces some of the most highly prized food for Korea, valued throughout the peninsula. At Jeju International Airport, along with the usual souvenirs, alcohol and manufactured luxuries, there are boxes of Jeju agricultural produce that visitors eagerly purchase to take home.

The people of Jeju sought to share some of their rich produce with their compatriots in the DPRK. In 2018, 200 tonnes of delicious tangerines were sent to the DPRK that were met with two tonnes of Mountain Pine mushrooms, a delicacy. The Jeju tangerines were part of a long policy of exchange ("the obligation to give") and the DPRK responded by accepting the delicious gifts ("Obligation to receive"). The Mountain Pine mushrooms, and other products was the "Obligation to repay", as theorised by Marcel Mauss. Such exchanges have happened since 1998, as the political situation in the RoC became less dictatorial. Jeju also has sent delicious carrots to the DPRK from time to time.

These exchanges are not just food aid, but establishing relationships through tasty and prized produce.

Such initiatives from Jeju have evolved into what people have come to call "Korean Tolerance".

In various sources the DPRK has plans to develop the port of Wonsan as a holiday area. Jeju proposes to send the large Mount Halla cherry trees to decorate a garden in Wonsan as symbolic of their relationship. Only a few years ago, there was a ferry service for Koreans in Japan to visit their relatives in the DPRK. That service that transited between Japan and Wonsan has been suspended.

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by ferry, which sailing could include other ports to promote peace and Korean tolerance cruises featuring entertainment from all parts of the peninsula. Those Korean relatives in Japan could meet their DPRK families on Jeju and at other places on the Korean Tolerance cruise itinerary.

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As part of these developing exchanges, may people on Jeju would be pleased to welcome as a Korean Tolerance Ambassador Kim Yo-jong who could consider meeting with Haenyeo women divers in a special Bultuk. An especially crafted agenda based on Korean Tolerance and peace exchange would ensure mutual learning and warm success.

The proposal is for a bouquet of flowers for peace and Korean Tolerance: The Mugunghwa together with the Mongnan and unified with the Dongbaek of Jeju World Peace Island.

All of the above is very idealistic, almost in the realm of fantasy, but through Korean Tolerance possible so that the Korean peninsula can become two governments on one ancient peninsula

Continuing beligerence and mutual threats are unlikely to bring about peace on the Korean peninsula. Rather peace building exchange and "Korean Tolerance" are the way forward. In a recent Bloomberg report⁴.

These ideas were presented firsts at The 2021 World Peace Island Forum on June 21, 2021 cites both the Biden and Kim administrations as ready to dialogue. But the DPRK leader paired "dialogue" with "confrontation". Given the lessons of the 4.3 tragedy, this preparedness is not surprising. At the core of the DPRK is the memory of what happened

4) Bloomberg.com 18 June 2021. Accessed on 22 June 2021.

on Jeju Island when unarmed populations were executed by USA controlled military forces. It is not surprising that the DPRK leader declared (according to Bloomberg) that the country should “get fully prepared for confrontation in order to protect the dignity of our state and its interests”.

Through “Korean Tolerance” and the efforts of Jeju World Peace Island such distrust on both sides can be transformed into productive dialogue after so many decades of suspicion and mistrust based on the events that began on 3 April 1948.

Addendum

The "Six Party" talks have stalled and North Korea frequently mentions their importance for peace on the Korean peninsula. I would like to suggest a further development of the earlier proposed "Six Plus One" talks.

Report from DPRK's KCNA states that leader Kim Jong-un declared a "great crisis" in his country owing to the impact of measures taken to control possible COVID-19 infection. The article above has proposed already that a peace ferry service between DPRK leisure port Wonsan and Peace Port at Gangjeong. The autonomous government of Jeju World Peace Island could offer to send a sponsored vessel to Wonsan with a mass COVID-19 vaccination team, offering to carry donated Sinovac and Sputnik supplies under the guidance of Harvard Medical School's professor Kee B Park, who has experience in health administration in the DPRK. Medical supplies could be sought from Japan on the way and you have the following promise of peaceful cooperation:As a medical mission to the DPRK you have the "Six Parties" plus Jeju:

Jeju World Peace Island supplying the initiative and starting point;

North Korea, the leisure port of Wonsan and mission approval

South Korea, finance and the peace ship to carry the supplies

Japan, medical supplies to be collected along the journey from Jeju to Wonsan

USA, supporting with Harvard Medical School

professor Kee B. Park and personnel
China, Sinovac vaccination donation
Russia, Sputnik vaccination donation
The "Six Party" talks begin with humanitarian, peace action initiated from Jeju World Peace Island!

I hope you like the idea and believe it could further support Jeju's status in the field of world peace with the concept of 6+1 Talks and international cooperation.

Receiving Date : May 26, 2021

Reviewing Date : June 3, 2021

Reporting Date of Article Appearance: June 10, 2021