

Hermann Lautensach, *Korea. A Geography Based on the Author's Travels and Literature*. Transl. from the German, suppl. with a thoroughly revised and expanded index, ed. by Katherine and Eckart Dege. Berlin etc: Springer Verlag, 1988. XVII, 598 pp., photographs, 95 digrams, 46 tables, 1 map.

For more than forty years a gem has largely been overlooked by geographers and Koreanologists alike, except for those with a command of German: Hermann Lautensach's *Korea, eine Landeskunde auf Grund eigener Reisen und der Literatur*. Even erudite authors such as those writing for the *Encyclopedia Britannica* seem to be unaware of its existence. The book appeared in Leipzig in 1945, a few months before the Second World War ended. The larger part of the copies produced as well as a great number of the original photographs were destroyed by bombs during the last weeks of the war, and it appears that not more than some 120 copies were ever issued. Its rarity, together with its being written in German, is therefore the main reason why even people with a serious interest in Korea largely ignore the existence of Lautensach's book and why it never gained the wider fame it deserves.

By the English-language edition under review here the obstacles have been removed which hitherto prevented an appropriate circulation of the book, so that wider circles, and not only geographers, may soon profit from it. "The fact is that to this date no geography of Korea has been written in any Western language that anywhere near approaches Lautensach in thoroughness or sheer volume. His book remains the most comprehensive geography of the entire country of Korea", the editors say in the foreword (p. XIV). Besides being "a classical example of regional geography for its methodological approach" (*loc. cit.*), large parts of it must by now also pass for historical documents illustrating Japanese colonial policy towards Korea. The book therefore is also of considerable interest for historians.

Lautensach's book has gained even more in value by the changes and amendments made by the DeGES. The most important one, not mentioned on the title-page, is the replacement of the Sino-Japanese renderings of Korea place-names by the Sino-Korean ones, which were used prior to Japanese rule over Korea and have again been in use since 1945. For reasons acceptable in those days Lautensach himself had decided to use the Sino-Japanese renderings. As a matter of course, they are ignored by the majority of present-day Koreans as well as by most foreign observers of Korea. The continued use of those obsolete renderings in a new edition of the book would therefore have greatly diminished its utility.

Lautensach's book being a full-scale regional geography, its translation and editing demanded a lot more than just a good command of English and a thorough knowledge of the geography, in the more narrow sense of the term, of Korea. The Deges, it appears, have measured up to the task in almost all respects. Next to the material achievements themselves the reader will also appreciate their "self-effacing" motivation. I would like to add two remarks, none of which, however, will belittle the Deges' achievements. The first one has to do with the transcription of Korean terms and names, place-names in particular. The editors decided to follow the system of transcription that was created by the South Korean government in 1984. This they appear to have done in order to make the renderings in the text consistent with those on the maps, which apparently had to be drawn in South Korea and therefore were subjected to the South Korean transcription rules. The South Korean system of transcription is not identical with the one that has long been internationally used by the Korean studies community, viz., the system of McCune/Reischauer. Readers familiar with the latter will therefore sometimes feel bewildered by the renderings in the book, but the Deges can scarcely be held to blame for this. My second remark refers to the map that is found in the pocket attached to the back cover of the book. The map does not show the correct provincial subdivision of the present-day North Korean state. One wonders whether the map was drawn in that way in order to make it consistent with the administrative geography of Korea as it was at the time the book was written. If so, an editorial remark clarifying the point would have been helpful, lest the reader who wants to be informed on the provinces of the DPRK be misled.

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Yung H. Park: *Bureaucrats and Ministers in Contemporary Japanese Government.* (Japan Research Monograph 8). Berkeley, CA: University of California, Institute of East Asian Studies, 1986. 192 pages, \$ 15.00.

Park has written an important - and much needed - contribution to the analysis of Japan's power structure. For too long Japanese political scientists have recycled the notion of bureaucratic omnipotence in Japan's power coalition of government bureaucracy, organized business interests (*zaikai* etc.) and the ruling LDP. Some academics, to be sure, have picked *zaikai* (the confederate