



From Occupation to War: *Cold War Legacies of US Army Historical Studies of the Occupation and Korean War*

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Abstract

The History of the US Army Forces in Korea and the official history series of the Korean War were written in the context of the emerging Cold War with the Soviet Union and during the formation and establishment of the global Cold War, respectively. They served to diffuse a Cold War-centered worldview of vested interests at the American and global level. Meanwhile, Robinson's "Betrayal of a Nation" could not find a publisher for its severe criticism of American occupational policy and was passed on to later researchers in manuscript form. And I.F. Stone's *The Hidden History of the Korean War* (1952), which raised, "the theory that North Korea was provoked to attack South Korea" and denounced the US government's military conduct of the war, was removed from many libraries.

As the understanding of the nature of the Cold War and its culture has deepened, the awareness is widespread that the efforts to resolve postcolonial issues failed due to the advent of the Cold War. It emerged in the process that world powers' dominance strategies violently deterred and sealed postcolonial challenges in the places concerned.

As witnessed in the cases of Robinson and Stone, a divergent understanding of the epoch which countered the dominant one was repressed or rooted out by force in the US and around the 'free world.' The Cultural Cold War did not unravel in a way that different views and modes of understanding engaged in free competition; conversely, it had the characteristic of being deployed as one side excluded and suppressed the other unilaterally.

Keywords: *History of the US Army Forces in Korea, Betrayal of a Nation, The Hidden History of the Korean War, US Army's Office of the Chief of Military History (OCMH), Richard Robinson, I.F. Stone, Cold War culture*

Introduction

Historiographically, the dominant approach to understanding the Korean War has long been based on a framework of US-USSR confrontation and Cold War. A series of books and manuscripts written by the US military on the history of the Korean War contributed to the establishment of that mode of understanding in Western academia. This study attempts to investigate how such an approach pushed Korea's modern history into the center of the Cold War by examining the process of the US Army's historical compilation on the occupation of Korea and the Korean War during the period from the end of World War II to the outbreak of the Korean War.

The history books under analysis in this paper include an unpublished manuscript written by the Historical Section in the Headquarter of the US Army Forces in Korea (USAFIK), entitled *History of the United States Army Forces in Korea (HUSAFIK)*, and books compiled by the US Army's Office of the Chief of Military History (OCMH) on the Korean War, such as *Policy and Direction: The First Year*. Those interested in the US armed forces' occupation of South Korea and in the Korean War—whether amateur researchers or professional scholars—may have come across these works at least once, but strangely enough, none of them has been scrutinized in a historiographical context.

While it delves into some of the contents of these aforementioned works, my paper devotes greater analytic efforts to the examination of the intent behind their composition, the planning of these compilation projects, and the compilation process. It also examines the characteristics of these works and their position in historiography through comparison with other history books of the same period. I hope this study will help advance our understanding of the sentiment of American society during the early Cold War era, when these works were written, and of their impact on the formation of the Cold War-oriented views and perspectives in the study of the US military occupation and the Korean War, which constitute an important part of contemporary Korean history.

The Postwar Period and Occupation of Korea in the US Army's Military Histories

Upon liberation, the Korean people were confronted with the situation of having to begin the nation-building process under the occupation by foreign armies, exertions that ultimately ended in national division. This condition, in turn, produced several constraints in the study of the history of that period. While it would be appropriate to rely on books and records written by Koreans as primary references in examining the nation's post-liberation history, the present research condition does not allow it, because, practically speaking, such resources are scarce. For that reason, one has to use books and historical materials compiled by external observers.

Of these, *HUSAFIK*,¹ written by the Historical Section of the US Army Forces in Korea is of particular importance. Dealing with the activities of the US Army in entirety from the occupation to the withdrawal and containing detailed texts and annotations, it serves as a useful basic reference in describing "the three-year history of Korea under the US military occupation," which marks the beginning of its contemporary history (Pang 1988, 181). Thanks to the uncommon feature of being written right in the middle of the action as things unraveled with each day's passing, it carries, in itself, a great value as a historical resource. Prepared as part of the historical project to compile the US Army's official history, it was written for more than three years under the responsibility and direction of the US military.

As the US Army XXIV Corps was selected as the occupying force for southern Korea after the end of the Pacific War, on August 30, 1945, the Tenth Army's 1st Information and Historical Service was attached to the XXIV Corps. A little after the entrance of the XXIV Corps to Korea, the 1st Information and Historical Service had its public relations and communications function transferred to relevant units in the USAFIK and

1. This book has several titles: *History of the United States Armed Forces in Korea*, *History of the United States Army Forces in Korea*, and *History of the Occupation and Military Government of Korea*. Though never published in the United States, it was reprinted in Korea in 1988 under the Korean title *Juhan migunsa*.

the US Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), dedicating itself to the task of writing the “history of military occupation and government of Korea.”²

As of December 31, 1946, the 1st Information and Historical Service was renamed the Historical Section. A little later, on June 2, 1947, it was moved under the G-2 intelligence component. This allowed military historians to access classified materials more freely.³ The Historical Section worked over three and a half years compiling *HUSAFIK*, until its activities were halted on January 5, 1949, by which time it had still not been completed. The manuscripts written up to that point were transferred to the Historical Branch of the US Army Special Staff together with extensive materials and resources collated for the writing.

HUSAFIK consists of three parts, which were written in sequential order by different military historians. Part 1 was written by active duty officers, whereas Parts 2 and 3 were produced by civilian officials hired by the War Department. The different status of the compilers, however, caused little variation in the work’s historical account. While a historian’s personal disposition and individuality tend to be reflected in the writing of history books to a certain degree, this was kept to the absolute minimum in this monograph. Overall control of the writing was exercised by the standard procedures and internal guidelines established for US government historical projects and by the views of *USAFIK* and its superior entities. It would not be difficult to imagine that, within the regimented organizational structure of the army, historians could not reflect their own views in the writing. Besides, the drafts of chapters had to go through multiple rounds of meticulous screening after writing.⁴

Immediately after the end of World War II, the US War Department

2. “History of the G-2 Historical Section of XXIV Corps,” in Chung (1994, 488–489).

3. “History of the G-2 Historical Section of XXIV Corps,” in Chung (1994, 493).

4. “History of the G-2 Historical Section of XXIV Corps,” in Chung (1994, 502). The manuscripts written at the time are currently kept by the US Army Center of Military History (successor of the Office of the Chief of Military History). Historical records and data collected by the G-2 Historical Section can be found in the files of Record Group 554, US Army Forces in Korea, XXIV Corps, G-2 Historical Section, which are stored in the US National Archives II.

sent the Commander-in-Chief of US Army Forces, Pacific a directive ordering him to swiftly wrap up the writing of the “operational history” of all units under his command in the Pacific War and make preparations to write separately an “occupational history” of occupying US forces. According to this letter, the occupational history “should be a single narrative account consisting of a comprehensive study of all aspects of the command. Particular attention will be given to administrative organizations, major policies, problems, accomplishments and lessons learned.” It accentuated that this “occupational history” and journals, which were to be prepared for the War Department’s official history, should be based on all sources within reach and provide citations in a complete and faithful manner. Lastly, it was made clear that the responsibility for all historical compilation activities of the US Army would be borne by the Historical Branch of the War Department, which would also perform technical supervision.⁵

On the instructions of the War Department, the Historical Section of XXIV Corps began to write *HUSAFIK* as soon as the occupying forces entered southern Korea. Although the Historical Section’s “Internal Guidelines on the Preparation for the War Department’s History of the USAFIK” clarified that it should be written from the perspective of the USAFIK,⁶ the writing was, as indicated in the above-mentioned letter, under the technical supervision of the War Department, more specifically, under the direction and oversight of its addressee, the US Army Pacific Command (USARPAC, hereafter the Far East Command [FEC]). In other words, even if the writing was done by the Historical Section, it reflected the perspective of USAFIK and was checked again from the perspectives of superior authorities, namely, FEC and the War Department’s Historical Branch. Further, because the purpose of the writing was to collect and systematize pertinent historical materials needed to compile the history of the US Army, securing reliable fact-based evidence, i.e., *documentation*, was emphasized as

5. Letter from the Adjutant General’s Office, the US Department of War, to Commander-in-Chief of the US Army Pacific, AG 314.7, August 30, 1945, “Historical Program for U.S. Army Forces, Pacific,” September 8, 1945 (Chung 1994, 528).

6. Harold Larson to author, “Internal Guidelines on the Preparation for the War Department’s History of the USAFIK,” September 1947 (Chung 1994, 512).

a foremost objective of the project from its inception.

This objective was faithfully adhered to throughout the writing process. The Historical Section's internal guidelines stressed that military historians' principal function was the collection of historical materials, evaluation of sources and information, and the recording of that information, while the writing aspect was considered secondary. It was even noted that historians were not expected to regard it as their role to judge any office or person; they were simply to "record the story as [they] find it, trying always to arrive at what is factual and not mere opinion or hearsay."⁷

The actual procedure of the writing was devised to facilitate working towards the objective. The manuscript for each chapter underwent the following steps: 1) collection, arrangement and appraisal of materials and information (documents and oral accounts); 2) writing the outline and footnote list; 3) prior review of the outline by USAFIK, FEC, and the Historical Branch of the War Department; 4) writing the first draft; 5) reviewing, editing, and revising the draft by USAFIK and relevant units; 6) editing of the final draft by the Historical Section; 7) review and editing by FEC and the Historical Branch of the War Department; and 8) final review and decision-making on public release by the Historical Branch of the War Department.

As revealed in the above compilation procedure, USAFIK and its higher authorities exerted influence as early as the composition of the outline, which determined topic selection and the direction of the writing.⁸ After the draft was written, it was subjected to review and screening by USAFIK, FEC, and the Historical Branch of the War Department. The first draft of each chapter was screened initially by USAFIK. At USAFIK, the head of G-2, Commanding General John R. Hodge, and officers in relevant units responsible for the contents of each chapter reviewed the draft and discussed any revision with the Historical Section. Regarding the screening by USAFIK and concerned units, the third chief historian, James C. Sargent,

7. Harold Larson to author, "Internal Guidelines on the Preparation for the War Department's History of the USAFIK," September 1947 (Chung 1994, 512).

8. Memorandum from O.J. Hale, Chief of the Review Section, Historical Division of the War Department Special Staff, to the Planning Branch of the Historical Division, "The Military Occupation and Government of Korea," March 1, 1946 (Chung 1994, 546-547).

once complained that “after a chapter is written, it has to go through a long process of criticism and with many regrets I have fallen heir to several chapters which were virtually criticized out of existence.”⁹ As USAFIK, G-2, and relevant divisions looked closely into the drafts of chapters, historians regarded it as the toughest hurdle in the review process to satisfy the screening criteria. Under this procedure, the finished manuscript was unavoidably reflective of the views of USAFIK and concerned units.

The internal guidelines and the actual work process involved in the writing of *HUSAFIK* implicated a dual nature. On the one hand, it was composed through an intense process of verification and multiple layers of review. On the other hand, however, because military historians were not, in essence, allowed to criticize information given to them, nor did they have leeway in interpreting and critiquing facts, they were left only to describe *sanitized* history, knowingly and unknowingly, from the collection stage to the writing of the initial draft.

In accordance with the guidelines on the writing, the scope of description encompassed all activities of the command of the occupying forces spanning the entire period of the occupation.¹⁰ The Historical Section finished composing the outline of each chapter sometime in the first half of 1946, which was approved by the USAFIK Commander-in-Chief, Military History Section (MHS) of FEC, and the Historical Division of the War Department Special Staff. In the outline generated at the time, 3 parts and 29 chapters were envisaged. Content-wise, the three parts were supposed to cover Tactical History, National and International Events, and Military Government, a structure that was maintained to the end.¹¹ As the occupation was prolonged and there were more things to address, the number of chapters eventually increased to 31. The table below presents the author, editor, progress of draft writing, and number of pages for each chapter.

9. Letter from Captain Sargent, Chief of the Historical Section, XXIV Corps, to Colonel Kemper at the Historical Division of the War Department, September 17, 1946 (Chung 1994, 555); and “Dr. Larson’s Report,” date missing (Chung 1994, 78).

10. Sargent to author, “Standard Operating Procedure for Historical Section,” May 24, 1947 (Chung 1994, 521).

11. “History of the G-2 Historical Section of XXIV Corps” (Chung 1994, 494).

Table 1. Status of Chapter Manuscripts of
History of the United States Army Forces in Korea

Chapter title	Progress of manuscript (pages of completed manuscript)	Writer(s) and editor(s)
Part 1		
1. Mission and Movement to Objective	Completed (68)	Fredrick P. Todd
2. Korea Prior to Japanese Surrender	Completed (70)	Harold O. Hinton
3. Intermezzo: August 1945	Completed (40)	Hinton
4. The Japanese Surrender and the Beginning of the Occupation	Completed (57)	Hinton
5. Release of Allied POWs	Completed (63)	Hinton
6. Tactical Forces in the Provinces	Completed (92)	Todd
7. Demilitarization and Evacuation of Japanese Military Forces	Completed (116)	Albert Keep
8. Reparation of Japanese Civilians and other Foreign Nationals	Completed (75)	Hinton, Harold Larson, Lewis W. Bealer
9. Reparation of Korean Nationals	First draft (50/100)	J.D. Comer
10. Administration of Army	First draft (80/125)	Robert W. Rether, Dana W. Russell
11. Service Operations	Uncompleted	Hinton, Rether
Part 2		
1. Introduction: the Korean People and Politics	Completed (82)	Unknown
2. Korean Politics: The First Year	Completed (153)	Richard D. Robinson
3. Korean Politics: The Second Year	First draft (180/275)	Robinson, George Tays
4. American-Soviet Relations: The First Year	Completed (396)	Robinson
5. American-Soviet Relations: The Second Year	First draft (365/450)	Robinson, Peter Balakshin
Part 3		
1. Creating the Machinery of the Military Government	Completed (45)	Historical Section
2. Setting up a National Administration	Completed (107)	Historical Section
3. Provincial and Local Governments	Completed (79)	Historical Section
4. Police and Public Security	First draft (110/140)	Historical Section
5. Justice	First draft (125)	Bee Stockton
6. Agriculture	Completed (479)	Wahl
7. Commerce	Completed (150)	Historical Section
8. Finance	Uncompleted	Department of Finance
9. Education	Completed (170)	James C. Sargent, Russell
10. Public Health and Welfare	Uncompleted	Alexander Lane, Department of PH&W
11. Transportation	Uncompleted	Sargent
12. Communications	Uncompleted	Sargent, Department of Communications
13. Independent Agencies	Uncompleted	Independent Agencies
14. National Defense	Uncompleted	Department of Defense

Source: Sargent, "Progress Report on the Historical Project," May 27, 1947, "Quarterly Status of Manpower and Work Progress," September 2, 1947 to July 10, 1948, and "Report on Progress

and Manpower—the Historical Project of the Department of the Army,” October 5, 1948; Second Lieutenant Hugh M. Proffitt, “Status of Work on the History of the Military Government,” date missing; and Biller, “Status of Work, Historical Section,” October 21, 1948. These records can all be found in Chung (1994, 572–624).

Note: The names of chapter author(s) and editor(s) are listed in the order of their involvement, with the name of the person who worked on the manuscript last appearing at the end.

While the distinction between the “operational period” and “occupational period” is noticed in the War Department’s letter ordering preparations for writing the occupational history, what is also noteworthy is the differentiation between “operational history” and “administrative history,” as indicated in a letter of October 8, 1945 from the War Department’s Historical Branch to the FEC MHS. Operational history addresses warfare and military operations of tactical forces, whereas administrative history concerns all sorts of issues facing the command, including logistics, the connection between individual combats, civil affairs, and administrative organizations.¹² In other words, while the former is concerned purely with the combat action of tactical forces, the latter entails combat support and noncombat activities of tactical forces and higher units.

Part 1 of *HUSAFIK* is comprised of eleven chapters, eight of which completed their final review. The chapters describe the XXIV Corps’ tactical operations and the establishment of the military government in central and provincial areas during the early phase of the occupation, covering occupational policies, tactical units’ entrance to various parts of Korea, establishment of the military government at the center and in local areas, acceptance of the surrender of the Japanese army, release of Allied prisoners-of-war (POWs), and repatriation of Koreans and Japanese to their homelands. Strictly speaking, these could be classified as operational history and Part 1 was entitled “Tactical History” in consideration of the

12. Letter from the Adjutant General’s Office, US Department of War, to Commander-in-Chief of the US Army Pacific, AG 314.7 (August 30, 1945), “Historical Program for U.S. Army Forces, Pacific,” September 8, 1945 (Chung 1994, 528); and Letter from the Historical Branch, Department of War, to the Military History Section, Army Pacific Command, “Administrative Histories,” October 8, 1945 (Chung 1994, 529).

contents described. The monograph of Part 1 was authored by incumbent officers and was completed relatively early.¹³ Amidst the rapid progression of demobilization, military historians quickly obtained oral accounts from relevant persons and made the best use of them in Part 1, compared to other parts.

Part 3, which describes the history of the offices of the USAMGIK and military government in localities, falls under the category of *administrative history*. It has 14 chapters all together. According to the guidelines on historical writing of the military government in Part 3, each department's history was to include without fail the background (pre-liberation), administrative organization, objectives of activities, major policies, problems encountered, accomplishments, lessons learned, and a summation. Personal opinions and observations could be used only when they were fact-based; and if used, whose view it was had to be identified by name. In addition, historians were told to avoid evaluating specific individuals.¹⁴ Indeed, an army historian noted a key principle to be employed in writing and editing military history: "No ... personal opinion at all. You can form your own conclusions and include them if you have plenty of reliable sources who agree with you and whom you can quote."¹⁵ In compiling Part 3, there was a strong overall spirit of withholding criticism of the activities of departments, but only revealing their achievements. A number of non-historian staff members in other departments who did not specialize in history also participated in the writing of this part, which was written the last among the different parts.¹⁶

What is rather unusual in the project of writing *HUSAFIK* is the

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13. The writing of Part 1 was virtually completed by around May 1947 (Sargent, "Progress Report on the Historical Project," May 27, 1947 [Chung 1994, 569]).
 14. Instruction to the Military Governor, TFGBI 314.7, "Instruction for Writing of Historical Outline," in "Preparation for the History of the Military Government" (Chung 1994, 587).
 15. Author and date missing, "My Job as XXIV Corps Historian" (Chung 1994, 608–609). The writer is presumed to be Frances Juanita Wahl, the author of "History of the Department of Agriculture." Regarding the date, it is suspected to have been written around September 1947 before she left Korea.
 16. "History of the G-2 Historical Section of XXIV Corps" and "Status of USAMGIK 'Histories' September 22, 1948" (Chung 1994, 435 and 501).

presence of Part 2, “National and International Events.” Its content belongs neither to operational nor administrative history. Here the authors probably tried to write a *political history*, distinct from the tactical history of Part 1 and the administrative history of Part 3. Part 2 addresses US policy towards Korea, the USAFIK’s plans for governance in the South. Three of its five chapters, covering the period from the beginning of the occupation until the second half of 1946, completed the final review.

It appears that the political complexities of the post-war international order in solving the Korea problem during the post-war period—which resulted in the partitioned occupation, with Soviet forces in the North and American in the South—and Korea’s independence through trusteeship—made the structure of this section of the history inevitable. Further, the outline had to be of a tentative nature, as the situation was fluid. But an official of the Review Section of the War Department’s Historical Branch commented that the structure of the chapters on American-Soviet relations and Korean politics had proper logical sequence and that the chapter topics were well-chosen, suitable to describing the mission of the US Army’s occupation of Korea.¹⁷

For the “Korean politics” chapters of Part 2, it was cautioned “not to go too far afield and undertake a chapter in the history of Korea ... It is US occupation and policies that should be kept sharply in focus.” It was also noted that the chapter covering US-USSR relations “should not be allowed to develop into a history of the Russian occupation of northern Korea ... Special care should be taken in evaluating the sources of information.” The writers were well aware that the subject of Part 2 was a very sensitive one, considering American relations with the Korean people and the Soviet Union.¹⁸

Because the contents of Part 2 addressed problems directly affecting the Korean people and matters handled by the highest level of government, the Historical Section and military historians would have found it very burdensome to take on. Moreover, to digest the topics, they needed

17. “The Military Occupation and Government of Korea,” March 1, 1946 (Chung 1994, 547).

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someone—such as a political analyst or an expert historian—well versed in the historical background of Korean politics and international relations, including those of the US and the USSR. This formidable task in many regards was assigned to military historian Richard D. Robinson.¹⁹

It was anticipated that *HUSAFIK* would be completed within six months of the end of the occupation, at which point the manuscripts and collected materials would be submitted to the Historical Branch of the Department of the Army (DA).²⁰ The USAFIK Historical Section wrapped up the work in early January, 1949, and transferred the monographs and source materials to the United States. Some of them were submitted with their final reviews completed, and others in the form of initial or revised draft.

The book is quite an unusual historical work within the tradition of historiography of Korean history. It is grounded on the perspectives and views of Americans at the historical juncture marking the beginning of Korean contemporary history following liberation, and the US Army was portrayed as the main actor of the new nation-building process in Korea. The US military was systematically involved in the writing. It excels all other history books addressing the period in the scale of its compilation and comprehensiveness of resources collected. The writers had to exercise extreme caution to avoid presenting their own interpretations and evaluations and to employ fact-based verification and objectivity as the sole criteria of writing. Considering the scarcity of historical materials and other information necessary for research into the post-liberation period from the Korea side (particularly, chronicles and statistical data), the resources employed for its writing need to be used more actively in studying Korean history of that period. Notwithstanding, it should be pointed out that the monograph, which was written by the very actors who occupied and governed Korea and regarded the Korean people as the objects of governing, situated the political history of the era within the context of left-right political confrontation in Korea and rival American and Soviet policies towards the country.

19. "Letter from Captain Sargent, Chief of the Historical Section, XXIV Corps, to Colonel Kemper in the Historical Branch of the Department of War," September 17, 1946 (Chung 1994, 555).

20. "Standard Operating Procedure for Historical Section" (Chung 1994, 521).

The US Army's Project of Writing the History of the Korean War

The US Army compiled a systematic description of the history of its activities in the Korean War period, and the most highest-level agency that planned and pushed this historical project forward was the OCMH of the US Army. Upon the outbreak of the Korean War, the US Army established the command and control system from the OCMH down to the FEC/UNC MHS to the Eighth Army MHS and finally to the Military History Detachments (MHD) in the corps and divisions. These latter carried out the activities of compiling the history of the Korean War, producing, collecting, and organizing materials and information, and composing the manuscripts.

Many researchers of the history of the Korean War have likely perused one or two of the following titles: James Schnabel's *Policy and Direction: The First Year* (1972), Roy Appleman's *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu: June-November 1950* (1961), Walter Hermes' *Truce Tent and Fighting Front* (1966), and Billy Mossman's *Ebb and Flow* (1990). These works are often consulted as basic introductory references that researchers turn to in the early stage of their study of the war, or as guides offering information on historical resources and data kept by the US side. They present extensive descriptions on the activities conducted by the US government and military, particularly, the US Army, in the Korean War, ranging from national American policies, FEC/UNC strategies, operations and logistics of the US Eighth Army, to the operations of tactical units on the frontline. These four works comprise the official Korean War histories of the US Army, and were published by the OCMH from the early 1960s through the early 1990s. The first three began to be written in the first half of the 1950s and the manuscripts were completed between the second half of the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s. Yet the review and editing process was quite prolonged before final publication. The following table presents for each volume the author, title, main contents, and publication year:²¹

21. "Publications of the Office of the Chief of Military History," issues of 1959, 1961, and 1966, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, General Correspondence, 1952-1968, Entry A1-145R, Box 1.

Table 2. Summary of the Official History of the Korean War Compiled by the US Department of the Army's Office of the Chief of Military History

Author, title, and main content, length	Draft-writing period ^a	Publication year
<p>James F. Schnabel, <i>Policy and Direction: The First Year</i></p> <p>Summarizes the developments of events in Korea from August 1945 to June 1950; examines major policy decisions and planning actions of Washington and Tokyo from the outbreak of the war to June 1951; outlines the combat operations to facilitate the reader's understanding. 443 pages.</p>	<p>July 1953– January 1956</p>	<p>1972 (1973)^b</p>
<p>Roy E. Appleman, <i>South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu</i></p> <p>Describes combat operations carried out as the US and South Korean forces retreated south to Busan after the opening of the war, and UN forces' push northward again following MacArthur's landing at Incheon, wiping out North Korean forces and reaching the Yalu River near Manchuria. 813 pages.</p>	<p>March 1951– May 1954</p>	<p>1961 (1963)</p>
<p>Billy C. Mossman, <i>Ebb and Flow</i></p> <p>Delineates combat operations spanning from the involvement of the Chinese army (November 24, 1950 to July 10, 1951) and its impacts on UNC plans to the US Eighth Army's shift back to the offensive until the opening of the truce negotiations. 551 pages.</p>	<p>June 1954– June 1964 (?)</p>	<p>1990 (1995)</p>
<p>Walter G. Hermes, <i>Truce Tent and Fighting Front</i></p> <p>Describes the truce negotiations held in Gaeseong and Panmunjom from July 1951 to July 1953 and the continuation of highland combat during the armistice talks; includes a depiction of the large-scale uprising of POWs on Geoje Island. 571 pages.</p>	<p>May 1957– April 1961</p>	<p>1966 (1967)</p>

^a The writing period describes when manuscript writing began and ended. The source is "Projects Status, Histories Division," March 31, 1964, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, General Correspondence, 1952–1968, Entry A1-145R, Box 2.

^b The figure in parentheses refers to the year the Korean translation of each volume was released in South Korea. *Ebb and Flow* was published by the Daeryuk Press, and the others by the Republic of Korea Army Headquarters.

The OCMH prepared the plans to write the official Korean War history immediately after the outbreak of that war. Less than a month from the opening of hostilities, the OCMH submitted a report arguing for the necessity of writing and publishing a war history. In August 1950, only two months since the inception of the war, the office was not only recording the

status of the war on a daily basis, but assembling related information and drawing up ambitious plans to utilize the collected information and daily recordings on the war's status to compile a comprehensive history of the Korean War.²²

At that time—the summer of 1950—the North Korean People's Army was plowing through everything in its path, while South Korean and American forces were pushed back in battle after battle until they reached the Naktong River. Judging from the fact that the US Army prepared war history writing plans on a comprehensive scale covering an extended time period even when the war was going very unfavorably, seems to indicate it never thought they could lose the war.

In fall 1950, the OCMH discussed with FEC on concrete activities and the division of responsibilities, based on its war history writing plans. For an effective implementation of the writing plans designed by the OCMH, it was crucial to obtain the cooperation of the theater command and frontline units in the areas of information production, collection, and systematic organization. Also, it was a delicate but important issue whether the writing would be done by the OCMH in Washington or at the theater command in Tokyo. As General Douglas MacArthur, a strongly charismatic figure who led Allied forces to victory in the Pacific War, was supreme commander of the theater command directing the war, this matter had to be settled between the FEC and the OCMH before putting the plan into action. Dr. Gordon W. Prange, then chief historian of the FEC MHS and a political advisor to General MacArthur, argued that his Section should take on the overall responsibility of the writing, considering the Korean War would be MacArthur's last war and he might then enter American politics after his military career. But General Charles A. Willoughby, MacArthur's right-hand man and head of G-2, FEC, shifted the work to the OCMH in Washington,

22. "Special Studies, Korea," July 18, 1950, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History Decimal Files, 1943–1955, Entry NM3-487, Box 14; "Plan for History of Korean Conflict," August 1950, NA II, RG 554 Records of General Headquarter, Far East Command, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, and the United Nations Command, Command & Staff Section Reports, 1947–1952, Entry A1-141, Box 8.

raising practical issues like workload.²³

Beginning in 1951, the plan to write the Korean War history devised at the level of the US Army became a historical compilation project pursued not only by the military but at the national level. In January 1951, President Truman ordered the Director of the Budget Bureau to establish the Federal History Program and to make frequent progress reports. In his letter, Truman directed the establishment of “a plan for the arrangement of all the organizations engaged in emergency activities.” Reminding the Director that similar plans and activities made in World War II had greatly helped with mobilization efforts for the Korean War, Truman also noted that, “In order for this compilation plan to be worthwhile, we should focus on an objective analysis of the problems at hand, the responses to them, the reasons for policy and administrative decisions, rather than dealing with them in detail. ... Historians should fully explore the raw materials, and they should extract information that is either described or not described. The heads of the organizations should allow historians to contact key officials, and allow historians to trace the policy decisions and administrative measures they have made.” The President also stressed that it was vital to put the plans into action immediately in order “to take advantage of the lessons we are already learning.”²⁴

The President’s letter operated as a guide to expanding the US Army’s historical compilation project from Korean War historiography to a greater project to examine the overall actions of the US government and military in response to the Cold War. In an April 1951 memorandum, the Current History Branch of the War Histories Division, OCMH, noted that the OCMH would need to deal with overall plans for the US Joint Chiefs of Staff’s (JCS) opposition to communist invasion, and proposed to address the US Army’s role in the Korean War in view of the global Cold War. This resulted in readjusting the initial plans for the historical project to

23. “From Dr. Prange thru Col Bratton to Gen Willoughby,” October 21, 1950, NA II, RG 554 Military History Section; Command & Staff Section Reports, 1947–1952, E. A1-141, Box 8.

24. “The President’s Letter to Director Lawton,” January 31, 1951, by Harry S. Truman, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, General Correspondence, 1952–1968, Entry: A1-145R, Box 1.

this new stance.²⁵ The OCMH's scheme to write the Korean War history was incorporated into plans to compile a Cold War history and continued to be so incorporated after the end of the Korean War. It was to be executed continuously as part of a larger agenda of the OCMH's historical compilation project in the post-World War II period, which was labeled the "US Army in the Conflict with the Communist Powers."²⁶

The initial plans for the writing of the Korean War history drafted by the OCMH in Washington in August 1950 was of a comprehensive scale, foreseeing all five parts: Part 1 (War History); Part 2 (Combat History); Part 3 (Special Tasks); Part 4 (Combat Activities of Small Units); and Part 5 (Technical and Support Operations of Small Units). Its realization required compilation work of an elongated period. It proposed five final outputs to be produced from the project, but the most noticeable features were i) the primary goal of securing a consistent organized work scheme, from information collection and systematic arrangement to writing and editing; ii) distinction between war history and operational (combat) history in actual writing; and iii) emphasis on the mobilization of armies from the continental US and the acquisition and deployment of resources for them.²⁷

According to the plan, the OCMH was to manage and supervise the overall process of the project and compose official war histories, while the Historical Sections of FEC and the Eighth Army and MHDs at the corps and division levels would play the role of implementing the plan at the theater and frontline levels. It designated the production, collection, and arrangement of information as one of the project's most important responsibilities. Among key resources used to write the Korean War history

25. "Memo for: Chief, Current Branch, War Histories Div., OCMH, Subj; Reappraisal of Current History Program in light of Army's Global Commitments in the Present Emergency," April 24, 1952, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, Background Files to "Policy & Direction: The 1st Year," Entry: P-176, Box 1.

26. Executive, OCMH, Chief, Hist. Div., "Briefing for Visiting VIPs," November 17, 1958, by Joseph Rockis, Lt Col Inf Chief, Hist. Div., NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, General Correspondence, 1952-1968, Entry A1-145R, Box 1.

27. "Plan for History of Korean Conflict," August 1950, NA II, RG 554 Records of General Headquarter, Far East Command, Supreme Commander Allied Powers, and United Nations Command, Command & Staff Section Reports, 1947-1952, Entry A1-141, Box 8.

were i) policy documents and telegraphic messages written by the US government and military; ii) Command Reports generated by FEC/UNC and command and control units at all levels (the Eighth Army, corps, and divisions); and iii) After Action Reports and After Action Interviews of tactical and support units that conducted operational activities. In October 1950, the OCMH sent the basic plan to FEC in Tokyo for comments, and on November 10 FEC replied after intensive review that it would cooperate with information collection but not be able to undertake any writing and editing.²⁸ Consequently, the OCMH assumed the responsibility of writing the official war history, while the MHSs of FEC and the Eighth Army would perform the duties of gathering and supplying historical information. Especially, the MHSs in both commands poured great efforts into the writing and assessment of Command Reports. Their basic duties included preparation of Command Reports, supervision and control of MHDs, special research and monograph preparation, handling and evaluation of subordinate units' Command Reports, and the collection, preservation, and treatment of historical records and artifacts. Meanwhile, MHDs concentrated on the production, collation, and organization of Command Reports, After Action Reports, and After Action Interviews of tactical units on the frontline.

The OCMH discussed the implementation measures of the basic plans with the theater command and moved quickly towards their execution. Upon establishing the basic plans, it instructed the Current Branch of the War History Division to review relevant documents and materials for prior preparation. According to the October 1950 Progress Report by Joseph Rockis, Chief of the Current Branch, a wide spectrum of materials were analyzed, including *History of the United States Army Forces in Korea* (on the US military occupation in Korea before the war), Historical Reports and Munition Board Reports produced by FEC and the US Military Advisory Group to Korea in 1949, and even papers on Korea published in the

28. From Gen Willoughby to Dr. Prange, Sub: Gen Ward Letter, August 30, 1950, re: Col S. L. A. Marshall, September 14, 1950, NA II, RG 554 MHS; Command & Staff Section Reports, 1947-1952, E. A1-141, Box 8.

academic journal, *Pacific Affairs*. Also, the DA G-2's Intelligence Reviews from January 1950 and Minutes of the UN General Council Meetings were examined to understand the developments of the ongoing war.²⁹

The OCMH rushed to set up MHDs which would produce, gather, and assemble information on the frontline. On August 29, 1950, the Historical Section of the Eighth Army requested the OCMH, via the FEC MHS, to send five history teams. The dispatch of two Major-level historians was additionally requested to meet the increased workload from the opening of the war. The FEC MHS actively supported the request to assign MHDs and increase manpower. In response, the OCMH hurried to create MHDs and finally set up eight of them in the headquarters of selected armies, corps, and divisions stationed in the US between October and November 1950. The Detachments went to Japan for 1- to 4-month-long retraining from January to May 1951 and arrived in Korea, their new post, between February and July of the same year.³⁰

The initial plan aimed for a five-part history of the Korean War, but this was increased to six parts in March 1952. Part 6, entitled "Time and Space," was to address the US Army's global military mobilization.³¹ This alteration was made to reflect the effort to incorporate the Korean War history into a global Cold War history. Although the original plan was modified and expanded, the OCMH proceeded steadily to get the writing in full swing, making progress in document review, increasing historians in the theater

29. "Memo for: Chief of Military History, Subj: Progress Report (October 3 through November 1, 1950) Current History: Korean Conflict," by Lt. Col. Joseph Rockis, Chief, Current Branch, November 1, 1950, NA II, RG 319 Office of the Chief of Military History, Progress Reports of Sections and Branches, 1946-1956, Entry A1-145S, Box 3.

30. "From Dr. Prange to Gen Willoughby, Sub: Eighth Army Historical Program," February 10, 1951, Telegraphic Messages between Gen. Willoughby, Chief, G-2, Far East Command, and Gen. Ward, Office of the Chief of Military History, dated August 29, September 25, and December 5, 1950, NA II, RG 554 Records of General HQ, Far East Command, Supreme Commander Allied Powers, and United Nations Command, Military History Section, General Correspondence 1951, Entry A1-140, Box 2; and Chung (2013).

31. "Historical Coverage of the Korean Conflict," by Office, Chief of Military History, March 2, 1952, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, Background Files to "Policy & Direction: The 1st Year," Entry: P-176, Box 1.

and frontline commands, deploying MHDs, and producing, collating, and organizing information under a unified direction and control system.

Interestingly, making use of the experience gained in writing its World War II history, the US Army attempted to mobilize high-ranking officers among enemy POWs for writing the Korean War history. The US Army had utilized high-ranking German and Japanese commanders in captivity for the compilation and writing of the history of World War II. In November 1951, the OCMH sent military historians to Japan and Korea to probe the possibility of using high-level North Korean and Chinese POWs for the Korean War history. The attempt failed because there were not many higher officers among the POWs, and those there were did not consent, but it illustrates how the OCMH tried out various measures for the project.³²

Now let us examine the actual process of the writing through the case of *Policy and Direction: The First Year*, which corresponds to the first volume of the aforementioned four books. The OCMH assigned its writing to James F. Schnabel, a historian with the FEC MHS.³³ He gathered and organized records and information produced and kept by FEC to work on the first volume. His primary duty was to write from the FEC/UNC perspective on US Army activities in the Korean War, especially, the background and rationale for the decisions made by UNC during the war. According to the writing plans for volume I finalized in March 1952, the intent was to describe the US Army's policy and direction in the Korean War on two separate dimensions, that of the US Army Staff in Washington and the FEC/UNC in Tokyo; the former was given to Paul C. McGrath, an OCMH historian, and the latter to Schnabel. But this plan was readjusted through several meetings between late 1952 and early 1953 so that Schnabel ended

32. "Visit of Lt. Col. James M. Miller to Korea," by MHS, November 14, 1951, NA II, RG 554 Records of General HQ, Far East Command, Supreme Commander Allied Powers, and United Nations Command, FEC Military History Section, General Correspondence 1951, Entry A1-140, Box 1.

33. From Historical Division to G-2, "Radio WCL 32347 from Gen Ward dated December 15, 1950," December 18, 1950, NA II, RG 554 Records of General HQ, Far East Command, Supreme Commander Allied Powers, and United Nations Command, FEC Military History Section, General Correspondence, 1951, E. A1-140, Box 2.

up tasked with the entire writing of volume I.³⁴

Although Schnabel was the author in the practical sense, it would be more accurate to say that the work was not his own baby but a product of the collective efforts of many military historians at OCMH. First of all, all OCMH historians, not only Schnabel, were involved from the phase of constructing the work's framework and attended meeting upon meeting to decide the content of the writing. McGrath played a pivotal role at this stage.³⁵ The first draft written by the author was sent to OCMH historians for feedback through collective reviews and criticisms and then returned for his revision. Going through the revision process, the draft received the critiques of theater and frontline commanders, including MacArthur and Mathew B. Ridgway, whom Schnabel had to interview. On the one hand, this process was instrumental to improving the accuracy of the description of pertinent records by obtaining oral history accounts from major commanding generals, in addition to documentation utilized in the writing. On the other hand, it gave commanders the opportunity to justify the operations they had led, and the writer could not ignore their views.

Once the draft was revised, it was edited, copyedited, and modified at the OCMH level to generate a complete manuscript. Then one final step remained before publication in book form. It had to undergo multiple layers of screening by not just upper-level bodies and heads of the Army, such as the DA Secretary and the JCS, but also various constituents of the military, related government agencies, and higher authorities, e.g., the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, State Department, National Security Council, Central Intelligence Agency, etc. After the first draft of *Policy and Direction: The First Year* was completed around January 1956, it received the critiques of OCMH historians and then underwent copyediting, followed by critiques

34. "Minutes of Conference on Outline of Volume I, the Korean Campaign," January 16, 1953, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, Background Files to "Policy & Direction: The 1st Year," Entry: P-176, Box 1.

35. "Seminar to discuss the scope and contents of chapters of the History of the Korean War being written by Lt. Paul C. McGrath," December 3, 1952; "Minutes of Seminar Meeting, December, 12, 1952 at 0930 to discuss the scope and contents of Chap. I, Vol. I, of the History of the Korean War," Background Files to "Policy & Direction: The 1st Year," Entry: P-176, Box 1.

and revisions by commanders at all levels of command, and then was finally sent to the G-2 Security Division for clearance to be published in summer 1961.

The G-2 Security Division notified the OCMH of the results of security clearance. Some major points mentioned included the following: firstly, the manuscript should be submitted for criticism to all offices whose original sources are cited. Frequently quoted documents included those from the US Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, the JCS, NSC, CIA, State Department, as well as official document from the United Kingdom. Secondly, it was advised that critical descriptions of the South Korean Army be deleted to the extent that they would no longer jeopardize the stability of the allied government. Thirdly, all concrete accounts of intelligence operations needed to be removed. Fourthly, all mention of US control strategies towards the UN forces had to be eliminated. Fifthly, all information quoted from “Personal For” files without the consent of the individuals concerned should be omitted. In addition, it was also directed that all remarks on persons related to the annihilation of the Gloucester Battalion should be erased and everything marked in red pencil be excluded from the manuscript.³⁶

The volume was finally published after modified as instructed by the G-2 clearance. Judging from the given instructions, it seems that the G-2’s directives were made based on the following criteria: respect for the views of the US military and government offices concerned; diplomatic considerations of allies; and the exclusion of potential privacy violations. That is, such measures were intended to mitigate any negative political, diplomatic, or legal impacts after publication. Yet, upon deeper consideration, one can see that these precautions were not based solely on the consideration of consequences, but were actually a reflection of the very nature and characteristics of the official history of the war.

36. “Clearance of Manuscript: ‘The US Army in the Korean War: Policy Planning and Direction-The First Year,’” July 12, 1961, by Claude D. Barton, Col GS, Chief, Security Division, NA II, RG 319 Records of the Army Staff, Office of the Chief of Military History, Background Files to “Policy & Direction: The 1st Year,” Entry P-176, Box 1.

The “concrete remarks on intelligence operations,” which were requested deleted by the G-2 Security Division, referred to specific descriptions of intelligence activities that had failed to predict the war’s outbreak. More specifically, they concerned accounts that, although intelligence reports on the possibility of the North’s invasion were routinely made before the war, none of the US military units in South Korea, nor FEC and Washington, considered this a more imminent threat than communist activities. The instructions of omission were given to hide the American military’s botched overlook of the signs of the war’s outbreak and to conceal the fact that US Army intelligence had engaged in continuous activities in Korea prior to the war.

Nonetheless, if the occurrence of the war and its underlying causes are kept in view, it is not difficult to conclude the nature of the war, which was a civil war. G-2 was concerned that any concrete description of this point might ignite disputes on the background of the war’s outbreak and the war’s nature.

This complex procedure was applied in the same order to the writing of the other volumes of the Korean War history. The multiple rounds of reviews of the written draft were to help prevent errors and advance the work’s factual accuracy. The practice of relevant commanders reviewing the first draft before publication is understandable, given the supreme importance attached to order and discipline in the military. Considering the status of the book as an official war history of the US Army and the potential risks of publication, such screening of the manuscript by all concerned authorities and superior organizations is to be expected. Despite all this, however, to acquire a proper understanding of the character and traits of the book, it is essential to examine what was dropped or excised in the compilation process and the reasons for this.

Schnabel left a meaningful memorandum dated fall 1951 while serving in the FEC Historical Section. To capture the background and rationale for the decisions made by UNC in the Korean War, he asked his superiors for permission to access General MacArthur’s “Personal For” files. In reply, he was informed that the general had taken all such files with him after his dismissal in spring 1951, so they would be at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York, and that there were no copies left in FEC because only a single

copy had been printed.³⁷

Schnabel could explain the background to and rationale for UNC decisions in the war based on documents generated in the Command, rather than MacArthur's "Personal For" files. But if he described the UNC's strategic decisions and the General MacArthur's commanding activities without referring to those files that were key to understanding the general's inner thinking, there would inevitably be some limitations. One might conjecture, naturally, that the clever Schnabel may have left the memorandum explaining the situation where he was unable to consult MacArthur's "Personal For" files in order to avoid blame if things later turned out unfavorable for him and his work.

The US Army's Korean War history was generated based on a systematic compilation process, from material collection to manuscript writing, involving the OCMH, Historical Sections in the theater and frontline commands, and MHDs on the frontline, all of which performed their functionally distinct roles and moved in coherent order. In the process, a solid foundation for good quality resources for historical compilation was created by producing standardized information, e.g., Command Reports, After Action Reports, and After Action Interviews. It also allowed for a broad view of the US forces' wartime operations by separating the war history (describing policy decisions accompanying combat actions, strategic choices at the theater level, and directive activities of the theater command) from combat history (operational history, depicting the combat activities of frontline units and tactical deployments). James F. Schnabel's *Policy and Direction: The First Year* belongs to the former, whereas Roy E. Appleman's *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu: June-November 1950* and Billy C. Mossman's *Ebb and Flow* fall into the latter category. Walter G. Hermes' *Truce Tent and Fighting Front* is a combination of the two.

While Hermes' book may be regarded as a hybrid, it simply added to

37. "Personal For' files of GHQ, FEC," Memorandum for Record, by James J. Schnabel, Maj. Chief, Special Studies Div. MHS, November 19, 1951, NA II, RG 554 Records of General HQ, Far East Command, Supreme Commander Allied Powers, and United Nations Command, Military History Section, FEC General Correspondence 1951, Entry A1-140, Box 1.

the developments of highland battles between July 1951 and July 1953, the concurrent truce negotiations, and the UN forces' negotiation strategies. Of the four official war histories, Schnabel's was the only one which addressed in full Washington's major policy decisions and theater-level strategic directions. That is, the US Army's official history of the Korean War was written with a greater stress on combat history, focusing on the functional aspect of military activities, such as lessons learned for effective combat operations and the effective use of manpower, arms, and equipment. Moreover, it was an important objective of the compilation project to determine, through a study of this war, how to mobilize and distribute resources effectively at the national level.

The fact the military was the main actor in both the war and the compilation of its history effectively minimized, from the beginning, the potential for injection of the historians' personal views and interpretations. The purpose of the compilation was not only to write a history of the Korean War but also to secure factual information for the writing of that history. The efforts to improve the accuracy of descriptions were accentuated from the information collection stage as well as in the writing. As seen in Schnabel's memorandum, however, military historians had to work within certain limits in terms of access to information. Besides, major commanders who made strategic judgments and led operations in the conduct of the war were able to participate in the writing process in the form of giving comments and copyediting the written drafts. Further, agencies involved in the operation of the war could influence the history through critiques and screening of the drafts. The resulting US Army's official history of the Korean War—which was a careful and meticulous undertaking, taking into consideration even the risks of public release—may have succeeded in identifying military lessons learned and establishing a fact-based foundation. On the other hand, by only emphasizing the purpose and objectives of the writing as formulated by the US government and military, while preempting questions that should have been duly raised, the history constituted a flat, dry, problem-free system of understanding and factual recognition.

The US Army's official history of the Korean War published by the OCMH puts preponderant focus on the administration of the war,

particularly combat, operations, and military support activities such as munition and logistics. The war's relevance to Korea is revealed only in the sense that space-wise, it occurred on the Korean Peninsula and American and South Korean forces jointly carried out operations. Its relation to Korean society, regional and international implications and the political and social aspects of the war were either excluded from the work's inception or eliminated afterwards. Such an approach may seem natural in the view of the US Army, but it seems as if the war's entire dimensions were substituted with the operational history of the US Army.

Cold War Legacy of US Military Histories in the Historiography of Contemporary Korean History

In the manuscript of *HUSAFIK*, Chapters 1 and 2 of Part II, which are entitled "Korean Politics and People: Introduction" and "Korean Politics and People: The First Year," respectively, deal with South Korean politics in the post-liberation period. The first chapter is presumed to have been written by First Lieutenant Albert Keep, and the second by Captain Richard D. Robinson. There is some chronological and subject overlap between the two. As Keep left his position as Chief Historian at the Historical Section in August 1946 and returned to the United States, Robinson picked up where Keep had left off and wrote Chapter 2. Robinson had a master's degree from Harvard University and in the army had received civil affairs training at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, before being posted to Korea. He was 24 years old when he arrived on November 21, 1945. In the USAFIK, he served as an official at the Public Relations Department, and upon fulfilling his military service he was hired again as a civilian official of the War Department and worked as a historian with the USAFIK Historical Section from August 1946 to August 1947.³⁸

38. NA II, RG 554 Records of General Headquarters, Far East Command, Supreme Commander Allied Powers, and United Nations Command, USAFIK: XXIV Corps, G-2 Historical Section, 1945-1948 (hereafter, "Files of the USAFIK Historical Section"), Box 5, "Resume of Richard

His service at the Public Opinion Bureau of the Public Relations Department, USAFIK, gave him the opportunity to acquire a deep understanding of Korea's internal circumstances and capture the trend of public opinion in Korean society. He had broad contacts with Koreans in this capacity, and unlike most other military government (MG) officials at headquarters who did not move beyond the MG buildings and living quarters, he made frequent business trips to local areas and was well aware of the actual conditions of Korean society. He had a profound interest in Korean history and politics and studied it from his days with the Public Opinion Bureau.

While at the Public Relations Department, he submitted to his superiors several proposals on how to improve the occupational policies of the US military government. Some major points he raised were that translators and officials with a pro-Japanese background dominated the American military government; that the police had fallen into the grips of officers in commanding positions who had displayed a pro-Japanese tendency in their past careers and openly supported extreme rightists; and that the US military government's backing of the right wing, such as Syngman Rhee, had cost it the support of many Koreans. Robinson's proposals were to revamp the police, withdraw support for ultra-rightists, and expedite socioeconomic reforms. As his proposals were not accepted at the upper levels of the USAMGIK, he contributed to an American weekly magazine an article criticizing the US military occupation and government in Korea, using a pen name, Will Hamlin. This action was taken in the hopes of changing the occupational policy by moving American public opinion.

The article, "Korea, a Tragedy of the US," published in the March 1, 1947 issue of *The Nation*, had considerable ramifications in the US Army and the USAMGIK, ultimately becoming a critical factor in Robinson's involuntary departure from Korea. In the piece, Robinson/Hamlin hurled sharp criticism at the US military occupation and government for oppressing the Korean people and left-wing leaders and shoring up the ultra-rightists. The piece

D. Robinson," May 16, 1947; and Sargent, "Progress Report on the Historical Project," May 27, 1947 (Chung 1994, 570).

contained some confidential government information.³⁹ Upon the article's release, the USAFIK, which was paying close attention to US public opinion, traced the author with the assistance of the Security Group of the Intelligence Division, the War Department, and the FBI. The War Department's Intelligence Division and the USAFIK could not obtain material evidence that Richard Robinson was the author, but came to learn that his brother Hamlin Robinson delivered the article to *The Nation*, thereby reaching the strong conclusion that Will Hamlin was Richard Robinson.

Upon receiving the investigation results, the USAFIK began to monitor Robinson's every move. A surveillance agent was assigned exclusively to him to collect every bit of information on his activities outside work hours, while people around him were also investigated. Reporting on the surveillance results, one agent concluded, "...the information he [Robinson] obtained as a military historian may be used in the relationship between the State Department and the prospective Korean government, but it could do irreparable harm to the ongoing efforts by the USAFIK to help establish a democratic government in the South Korea."⁴⁰

Eventually, labeled an un-American by the USAFIK, Robinson found himself in a situation of being unable to continue to work in Korea and left for Istanbul.⁴¹ His plan to put pressure on the USAMGIK by mobilizing American public opinion had ended in failure. The repercussions in the military government caused by the article and the process of his deportation remind one of a chapter from the McCarthyist "Red Purge."

While at the Historical Section, Robinson was recognized by his superiors for his outstanding abilities. He was chosen to write the "Korean Politics" chapters of *HUSAFIK*, as they were aware of his extensive knowledge

39. For the description on the internal investigation of Robinson in this paper, I refer to the US NA II, RG 319 Army - Intelligence Project Decimal Files, 1946-1948, Box 243, "Identification of "Will Hamlin." This is shortened hereafter, Files Relating to "Will Hamlin."

40. Files Relating to "Will Hamlin," Wynn Walter, Special Agent, the Seoul Branch Office, CIC, the US Army Forces in Korea, "Agent Report: Statements and Activities of Richard D. Robinson," May 30 and May 31, 1947.

41. Files Relating to "Will Hamlin," Colonel L. R. Polney, Chief, Security Group, Intelligence Division, Department of the Army, "Richard D. Robinson," January 6, 1948.

of Korean history and politics. Sargent, his immediate supervisor, appealed to higher authorities to give Robinson a promotion and let him continue to serve as a historian before leaving Korea, and even General Hodge, whose political inclination was opposite to Robinson's, acknowledged his talent and praised his manuscript profusely.⁴²

The narrative of Part 2 ("Korean Politics") of *HUSAFIK* starts off with the categorization of political forces in Korea into left, right, and center. Regarding the labels, left and right, Robinson defines, "The terms Left and Right here mean the extreme elements of either unless otherwise modified, the Communists being considered as the extreme Left and the Rhee Syngman-Kim Koo-Hankook Democratic Party-Provisional Government alignment as the extreme Right."⁴³ Robinson understood that the left wing had developed via the communist movement from the Japanese colonial period, and its power and authority grew out of the communists' leadership role in the anti-Japanese underground resistance.⁴⁴ Korean communists and nationalists collaborated with each other on a personal level under colonial rule.⁴⁵ In Robinson's view, such cooperative relations were formed on the basis of individual ties, if not more, during the colonial period.

Robinson explained the historical origin of left and right and offered an adequate summary of their mutual relations by reminding the reader that under Japanese colonial domination the two sides did not have serious conflicts and enjoyed rather cooperative relations. Indeed, in the colonial era, the left-right confrontation was concerned more or less with the approach to the national liberation movement opposing Japanese imperialism, and the two forces allied and collaborated with each other at individual and organizational levels to mount resistance against Japanese rule.

Robinson believed that the left-right distinctions in Korea originated in the colonial period, but they were redefined after the liberation according

42. Sargent, "Justification for Civilian Personnel, Historical Section," March 17, 1947 (Chung 1994, 558); and Harold Larson, "Corps Staff Conference," September 9, 1947 (Chung 1994, 257).

43. *HUSAFIK*, Part 2, Chapter 2, p. 11.

44. *HUSAFIK*, Part 2, Chapter 2, p. 9.

45. Borrowing Robinson's expression, nationalists of the colonial period had the "stomach of the rightist and the mouth of the leftist" (*HUSAFIK*, Part 2, Chapter 2, p. 9).

to their respective attitudes toward the US military government. He writes, "...the Rightists manifesting a degree of cooperation in their hope of seizing political—and hence, economic—control by means of infiltration into the police and governmental bureaucracy under military government, and the Leftists showing more or less hostility by reason of the apparent tendency of the American authorities to rely upon Rightist leadership in administrative affairs."⁴⁶ Following his point that the attitude towards the US military government became a new criterion of left-right distinction in the post-liberation period, it can be inferred that a more important factor of the left-right political conflict was the political tendency toward anti-US vs. pro-US, rather than ideological rivalry between communism and democracy. That is, the US military government recategorized various political forces, which had existed in Korea from the colonial period, based on its own political preferences. Borrowing General Hodge's words, Robinson remarks in the conclusion of Part 2, "Our occupation here has been reasonably successful, and, fundamentally, what we have done is appreciated by thinking Koreans."⁴⁷ But in the preface to *Betrayal of a Nation*, a manuscript he authored after returning to the US, Robinson vehemently criticized *HUSAFIK*:

The official American military history of the occupation, classified "secret" for the most part, was highly prejudiced and inaccurate. ... It told the story in half-truths only, for it was written upon explicit orders not even to imply criticism of anything American. ... If the truth were known, the American occupation of South Korea was incredibly bungled by an incompetent and corrupt administration—all in the name of American democracy. (Robinson 1960, 3)

Holding a negative view of the US occupation of Korea, Robinson hurriedly decided to write the history anew aboard ship departing Korea, and *Betrayal of a Nation* was the result. He describes his motivation in a solemn tone, saying that it was "a responsibility to the people of our republic" and "a responsibility

46. *HUSAFIK*, Part 2, Chapter 2, pp. 9–10.

47. *HUSAFIK*, Part 2, Chapter 2, p. 143.

which should be felt by all public servants who see things going away within their bailiwicks,” and condemned the American military occupation’s overlooking and abandoning its responsibility (Robinson 1960, 2). While he held back on open criticism of the US military government in *HUSAFIK*, he censured it squarely in *Betrayal of a Nation*. For Robinson, the US military government considered itself as a “missionary of democracy,” yet its fundamental mission was to “build a bulwark to counter the expanding influence of Soviet ideology rather than to establish democracy in Korea” (Robinson 1960, 265). Denouncing the US occupational policies, he argued that the Soviet Army should not be blamed entirely for the military government’s failure to achieve stability and prosperity in Korea, for both sides were equally responsible for the developments, and particularly, as far as the fallout of the occupational policies in the South was concerned, the US should take entire responsibility.

Robinson’s criticism of “saying two things with one mouth” provides a clue to understanding the character of *HUSAFIK* in the historiography. “Premature Cold-War warriors” is an expression often used in studies of the Cold War to allude to the people who escalated the US-Soviet confrontation to an intensified level when the Cold War was in its formative stage, that is, those who argued for the repulsion of the Soviet Union and communism in various places and situations before the term Cold War had even been coined, examples being the USAFIK Commanding General Hodge, US Army occupiers south of the 38th parallel, and intelligence agents in Europe. Such early “Cold War warriors” controlled the US Army’s occupational policies in Korea, and *HUSAFIK* had no alternative but to reflect their views and positions. Though Robinson was a contributing author of *HUSAFIK*, the US Army’s official history of the occupation in South Korea, he later wrote another manuscript criticizing this work. The first draft of *Betrayal of a Nation* was completed in 1947. In 1960, he tried to publish the 1947 version with an epilogue added, but was unable to find a willing publisher, which shows well the sentiment of American society at the time when the Cold War was raging fiercely.

While precocious Cold-War warriors controlled occupational policies in Korea, there were nevertheless some liberal officials in the military

government who criticized them. But these latter were eventually excluded by stubborn anti-communists among the commanders of the occupying forces, and the US government's policy toward Korea followed after the views of these Cold-War warriors. Yet Robinson is an example that liberalist views were present at USAFIK—at least before the Cold War regime was put in place.

HUSAFIK incorporated the history of occupied territories as a part of the US Army's overseas activities. The US treated Korea's independence as one of the post-World War II problems to be dealt with, but what confronted it in occupying Korea was the Korean people's ardent hope for liberation and independence, which the US attempted to contain as part of its Cold War strategy anchored in a Cold War-centered worldview. This attitude of the occupying authorities was fully reflected in the compilation of *HUSAFIK*. The compilers analyzed internal and external conditions with the mindset of intense confrontation with the Soviet Union, while a handful of liberal historians tried to understand and accommodate the moves for Korean independence within the framework of American democracy.

While the Cold-War warriors that prevailed among the occupying American authorities tried to understand historical changes in Korea within a Cold War-centered anticommunist framework that officialized the US's global strategy, liberal historians such as Robinson attempted to recognize, at least in part, the national revolution of Korea based on New Deal-style democracy. Furthermore, in the 1950s and 1960s, when the Cold War was deepening, the former dominated the official historiographies of America and South Korea with the full support of the US government and military under the gush of McCarthyism. Banishing the latter as the history of communists and *pinkos*, they expelled them from the institutionalized system. The fact that Robinson's *Betrayal of a Nation* long remained unpublished, only to reemerge in the second half of the 1970s attests to this reality.

Even as the US Army's OCMH drew up plans to write the official history of the Korean War, and implemented it by establishing an extensive and systematic organizational structure from Washington to the frontlines, a journalist was closely watching the war's daily developments and independently produced a book on the history of the Korean War. That was

The Hidden History of the Korean War (hereafter *Hidden History*) by “Izzy” Stone, or Isidor F. Stone, a renowned independent journalist (Stone [1952] 1988).

This famous book is often mentioned in the historiography of the Korean War. Although the author was not a professional historian but a journalist, his work drew attention for inspiring the revisionist view of the Korean War that emerged in US academic circles during the 1970s. The theory he raised in the book that North Korea was provoked to invade the South was recognized as a strong hypothesis for the revisionist interpretation of the origin of the war by earning the support of Bruce Cumings and others.

Interest in the issues of the origin and outbreak of the Korean War, which had prevailed in the study of the war for a long time, has diminished, and attention to the book seems to have dwindled as well. Moreover, because of its tendency to make assumptions and inferences on the intents of policy makers based mainly on press coverage and government reports of the time, one may no longer feel the need to consult the book, as a large proportion of internal documents of the nations involved in the war have since been made public. Nevertheless, if one revisits and reconsiders those problems mentioned above, one can rediscover the value of Stone’s book.

Attention to the book tends to have been limited to the theory that North Korea was provoked to attack South Korea, but this topic is in fact discussed only in one of its seven chapters. *Hidden History* covers a two-year period, from early 1950 to early 1952, and examines diverse dimensions of the war in minute detail, sometimes even specifying dates. The remaining six chapters, which have received little attention until today, require a close scrutiny. Also, the weakness of Stone’s utilizing only publicly available information in the middle of the war may also be a strong point of the work. Stone delineated the developments of the war and their meanings relying mostly on press reports of the day. Stone clarifies in his Preface that the book is “a study in war propaganda” (Stone [1952] 1988, xxii). Using publicly available information, *Hidden History* does a superb job of illustrating how the US government and military responded to the war and how the public consumed press releases and reports and formed their opinion.

Hidden History developed out of a series of articles Stone contributed to

Daily Compass, an American newspaper. Staying in Paris between 1950 and 1951, Stone wrote six articles per week, sending one each day to New York by post. After returning to New York, he wrote the book based on those articles written from Paris. Following the publication of *Hidden History*, Stone recollected in an interview that he was motivated to write the book when he found contradictions in press releases and reports. He may have begun writing it out of professional concern and interest, but beneath it was a yearning for peace, the awareness that prospects for such a peace were being hindered by the US political, economic, and military establishments, and a belief that the American press was not covering the war as it *really was*. The purpose of his writing is revealed in the following words of Stone speaking in an interview:

The dominant trend in American political, economic, and military thinking was fear of peace. General Van Fleet summed it all up in speaking to a visiting Filipino delegation in January, 1952: “Korea has been a blessing. There had to be a Korea either here or someplace in the world.” In this simple-minded confession lies the key to the hidden history of the Korean War. (Patner 1988, 61)

Some weeks after the opening of the war in 1950, Stone visited India to interview Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and on the way back he went to Paris and stayed there. The Cold War atmosphere in Washington at the time under the dominance of McCarthyism was too repressive even for outgoing souls like Stone to bear. He felt more comfortable in Paris where leftist intellectuals were actively engaged. Claude Bourdet, chief of the editing bureau at *L'Observateur* and a resitant against the NAZI in World War II, published his columns on the Korean War, which were popular among that paper's readers (MacPherson 2008, 273–274).

Stone returned to the United States in June 1951. By then the “witch hunt,” in his expression, was underway. He was anxious that his entry might be denied at the port, but he met a sympathetic Jewish immigration officer who recognized him and allowed him to enter. Stone was also Jewish. Around the time he decided to return to America, Stone tried to find a

publisher in London and New York to publish his manuscript, but it was rejected each time. By chance, Stone met Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman with the *Monthly Review*, a leftist magazine, and secured his publisher. When it was published, the war was ongoing (Patner 1988, 63–64).

The second edition was printed in 1969, when the Vietnam War was in full-swing, with a subtitle added, “First Vietnam in Asia.” A third edition came out in 1988 with another subtitle, “The Nonconformist History.” The late 1960s was when the anti-Vietnam War movement was rampant in the US, and by 1988 the disintegration of the Cold War was imminent. Entering the mid-1960s, the American public was becoming disillusioned, as it had been revealed that the Gulf of Tonkin incident, which had triggered the Vietnam War, had been fabricated, and Stone’s *Hidden History* found renewed attention. Coincidentally, it was Stone who unveiled the concoction of the Tonkin incident. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, more and more Americans came to believe that the two wars of Korean and Vietnam had many things in common. The Foreword to the second edition of *Hidden History* reappraised its significance, remarking that “in pinpointing how severely we were brainwashed by our own propaganda [Stone] forces us to scrutinize Vietnam with the same microscope” (quoted in MacPherson 2008, 269).

Later, making his own assessment of his book, Stone indicated that it raised several fundamental issues concerning the Korean War and he strove to find answers to them:

I wrote the book in the middle of the war and I haven’t reread it in a long, long time. I think the book really does three things. One, it raises questions about the origin of the war that still haven’t been answered—I didn’t claim to have the answers. Two, it showed the hostility of the American military to a truce. And three, it’s an exercise in how to study military propaganda in wartime. ...

You see, the view here was that this was a deliberate attack by the Soviet Union, through a surrogate, to test our will ... But it’s hard to believe that the South provoked the war. Maybe they did, I don’t know. ...

But the way the American military, working with the Korean military, kept upsetting the truce and doing things that made it difficult to have peace was never really spelled out in the American papers the way I spelled it out. ...

Korea and Germany, on opposite sides of the planet, are still tragic flash points that could set the world afire. Microcosmically, they represent, they symbolize, a divided world. And to divide two such energetic and industrious and nationalistic peoples, as the two powers did—they both share the blame—is to prepare the seeds for further trouble. (Patner 1988, 61, 65 and 66)

After the publication of *Hidden History*, both Stone and his book were put on close watch by the US military and government, as indicated in a 1954 official notification by Colonel W.A. Perry of the US Army Security Division to FBI Director Hoover that the book had been removed from all Army libraries (MacPherson 2008, 267).

Even though *Hidden History* was reevaluated in the United States from the second half of the 1960s when the anti-war and human rights movements were picking up steam, it had been suppressed by authorities, both overtly and covertly, when first published, and neither the press nor academia displayed a favorable response. As Stone reminisced, his inclination of defying ties to any political or ideological faction angered everyone. Some disliked him for his leftist bent, whereas leftists regarded him as unreliable (Patner 1988, 48–49).

Stone's book estranged him from the press community and no newspaper company wanted to hire him, so he had to carve out a new career as an independent journalist. In 1953, he founded a one-person independent newspaper company, *I.F. Stone's Weekly* and on that footing, launched a campaign against McCarthyism and racial discrimination. *Weekly* became an influential paper, printing 70,000 copies in its heyday in the 1960s. And the alternative issues he raised concerning the Korean War were visited again and again for discussion by historians of later generations.

The OCMH's historical project to compile the US Army's history of the Korean War was launched when the war was ongoing, and Stone's *Hidden*

History was published in the same time period. The former addressed the war not as something which the residents of the Korean Peninsula had to live through but as a part of the US Army's operational activities. The latter critically questioned the significance of the war carried out by the US in a corner of the Far East.

As for the historical significance of the war, the former highlighted that the US fought with communists on the Peninsula to deter the Soviet communists' plot to communize the entire world. Denouncing that stance, the latter asserted that both world powers were responsible for the division of the Peninsula and that the US military and government were partly responsible for the protraction of the war. The former was written based on diverse materials and information systematically produced by the military, whereas the latter relied on newspaper reports released at the time and the government's official publications.

The former focused on explaining the phenomenal level at which the US responded to the developments of various events in Korea, while the latter questioned why those events occurred (and Stone had to pay a price for posing such questions; he was denied a footing in the media community). With the former, military security elements screened and revised descriptions to avoid embarrassing the US Army or causing diplomatic difficulties with countries that participated in the war alongside the US. The latter was removed altogether from many libraries.

The different approaches to understanding the Korean War emergent in the Cold War era are often viewed as manifestations of the cultural Cold War. Yet the cultural Cold War did not mean a fair competition between these competing views. The nature of the cultural Cold War increasingly revealed itself as a one-sided affair, where one view endeavored unilaterally to exclude the other, sometimes by force.

Conclusion

The historical writings examined in this article are books and manuscripts researchers often refer to before any other materials in studying Korean

history during the period from national liberation to the Korea War. In existing studies on the historiography of the Korean War, these works are categorized into two opposing camps, i.e., traditionalism and revisionism. This manner of distinction stresses differences in their standpoints on and perspectives and interpretations of the events they describe.

While it is important to identify divergences in the descriptive and interpretative approaches of these works, one cannot obtain an adequate understanding of the nature of these writings by relying solely on an analysis of their contents. Where on earth do the differences in the interpretation, views, and perspectives derive? Do they derive simply from differences in the authors' inclinations? If so, how should we understand Robinson's "saying two things with one mouth?" He hoped to publish his manuscript, but publishers refused. Why? Meanwhile, Stone's book was published, but it was removed from the shelves of many libraries. Why? The historical works differ from each other in the purpose of their writing and their analysis, but in order to discern their character and limitations, one needs to explicate, in addition to those differences, the works' background, motives and research intents, compilation processes, historical backdrops, and intellectual milieus.

These works have the commonality of being descriptions of events that were written during the same temporal period those events were taking place. *HUSAFIK* and the history series of the Korean War compiled by the US Army were written as part of an effort to record American military occupations and operations overseas. Particularly, the latter had a practical objective of assembling records on the mobilization of military resources at the national level. While both put focus on transcribing overseas operations of the US military, the backgrounds and reasons for these operations, and the impacts expected to incur in the region concerned because of them, were largely excluded from the project from its inception. Instead, the historical project merely concentrated on describing the US Army's response to the given reality. For instance, the former (*HUSAFIK*) laid the blame for the failed Soviet-American negotiations (made at the local Command level after the occupation) on the Soviet's uncooperative attitude, while the latter (Official History of the Korean War) framed it as part of a Cold War history based on confrontation with communist forces. Neither had any room to include in

the description the Korea-related background, conditions in Northeast Asia, larger international relations, or the Korean people's responses.

Though the US had entered World War I and sent troops overseas, nationwide mobilization of manpower and resources for war did not occur for the first time until World War II, in the wake of which the United States emerged as the most powerful nation in the world. That is, after World War II, global mobilization and deployment became an important issue confronting the US government and military at the national level. And the emergence of the US as a national security state is fully reflected in the purpose behind writing the official history of the Korean War. *HUSAFIK* and the official history series of the Korean War were written in the context of the emerging Cold War with the Soviet Union, and the formative period of global Cold War, respectively. They served to diffuse a Cold War-centered worldview and interest at the American and global level. As witnessed in the cases of Robinson and Stone, divergent understandings of the epoch that countered the dominant one were repressed or rooted out by force in the US and throughout the *free world*.

The Cold War in the cultural realm did not emerge with different views and modes of understanding engaged in free competition; conversely, it was deployed with one side unilaterally excluding and suppressing the other. As the understanding of the nature of the Cold War and its culture has deepened, the awareness has become widespread that the efforts to resolve postcolonial challenges failed in great part due to the advent of the Cold War. However, the Cold War did not simply rush in to fill a vacuum in various parts of the world after World War II. It emerged in a process wherein superpowers' strategies towards dominance violently deterred or disregarded postcolonial issues in the places concerned; it was the Cold War-centered worldview and extreme anti-communism that were offered as the rationale for this sealing. Advocates of the Cold War rejected or ignored postcolonial challenges, which were then squeezed into the crevice of the Cold War, and this was the cultural Cold War. The year 2020 marks the seventieth anniversary of the Korean War. A new study of the Korean War may need to start with a critical re-reading of various histories of that war produced in the Cold War era.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DA	US Department of the Army
FEC	US Far East Command
<i>Hidden History</i>	<i>The Hidden History of the Korean War</i>
HUSAFIK	<i>History of the US Army Forces in Korea</i>
JCS	US Joint Chiefs of Staff
MHD	Military History Detachment
MHS	Military History Section
NSC	National Security Council
OCMH	US Army's Office of the Chief of Military History
UNC	United Nations Command
USAFIK	HQ, US Army Forces in Korea
USARPAC	US Army Pacific
WD	US War Department