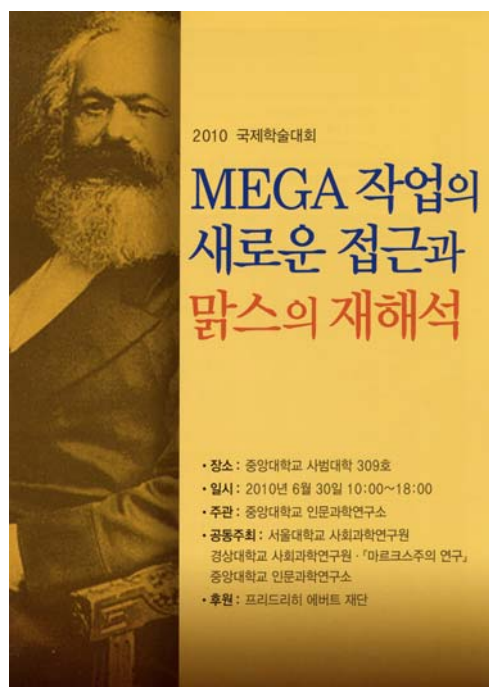




Am 30. Juni 2010 fand an der Chung-Ang Universität in Seoul die Konferenz *A New Approach of the MEGA Project and Reinterpretations of Marx* statt. Daran nahmen rund 50 Wissenschaftler verschiedener Universitäten der Republik Korea teil. Neben dem Institute of Humanities der gastgebenden Universität waren als Veranstalter beteiligt: Institute for Social Sciences der Kyungsang Universität, das Institut for Social Sciences der Seoul National Universität, die Zeitschrift *Marxism 21* und die Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (siehe http://nongae.gnu.ac.kr/~issmarx/eng/eng_index.php). Die Tageszeitungen *Hankyoreh* und *Kyunghyang* veröffentlichten am 1. bzw. 3. Juli 2010 ausführliche Interviews. Oben 1. Reihe v.l.n.r.: Prof. You-Seok Seo, Prof. Dr. Beatrix Bouvier (Bonn), Prof. Kwang-Young Shin, Prof. Dr. Izumi Omura (Sendai), Prof. Dr. Rolf Hecker (Berlin), Prof. em. Moon-Gil Chung, Dr. Werner Kampeter (Leiter des FES-Büros in Seoul). 2. Reihe v.l.n.r.: Mr. Seung-Woo Lee, Prof Noo-Ri Kim, unbekannt, Prof. Sung-Jin Jung, unbekannt, Prof. Nae-Hee Kang, Prof. Shin-Joon Gang, Prof. Kyung-Soo Kim.



Moon-Gil Chung

Present State of Marx-Studies in South Korea

I. Translations of the Works of Marx/Engels into Korean

Around the years of century-change, I had contributed a trend report on South Korean studies on Marx and Engels to the *Beiträge zur Marx-Engels-Forschung. Neue Folge 1998* (1999, pp. 268–282) and Japanese monthly *Keizai* (May, 2003). On that occasion, I had checked almost all of the Korean translations of Marx/Engels' works which were published after Second World War. As a result of this examination, I had indicated some of the characteristics of them. Among them, the most prominent one is the deviation of the basic principles of translation. It means the inconsistency of its original texts for translation. In case of the works of Marx and Engels, needless to say, it must be based on original German language texts. But there were a lot of translations which had utilized English, Japanese, Chinese, and even Russian translations as their basic texts.

Under such a situation, following cases may be useful to understand the general atmosphere of the translation of this field:

a) *Das Kapital*: There are lot of translations and selections. But only two editions are complete translations of 3 volumes of *Das Kapital*. The first (trans. Soo-Haeng Kim, 1989–1990) has utilized the Ben Fowkes's English translation of Penguin Edition (1981). The second (trans. Young-Min Kim and Shin-Joon Gang, 1. ed.: 1987–1990, 2. ed.: 2008–2010) is from MEW. In Korea the former is more popular and quoted more frequently than the latter.

b) *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*: This is the most popular work of Marx in Korea. It's the only translation which has utilized the text of new MEGA I/2 (1991). It comprised two kinds of text version and the Apparat too.

c) *Collected Works*: In Korea, there are still no Collections and Selections of Marx-Engels which were edited by Korean scholars. Under such a situation, the translation of *Ausgewählte Werke in sechs Bänden* (IML Berlin, 1970–1972) was a remarkable achievement of Marx scholars in Korea. For the Korean researchers and intellectuals in general, even though it was edited with



special purpose, the publication of this Collection (1991–1997) provided a rare chance to introduce Marx and Engels as a whole through their own words.

II. Some Recent Changes which Demand Our Attentions

Since 1990s, the popularity and fervor of Marx studies drastically declined in Korea as in other countries. With economic development and political democratization, the government intervention on freedom of thought and academic freedom especially reduced prominently after 1980s and 1990s. But these changes of government policies couldn't diminish the declining

trend of Marx studies in general. Under such a circumstance the Marx studies confined to the only concerned minorities whose major subjects of interest were divided into either practical or academic one.

From this perspective, in recent years, there appeared a few changes of Marx studies in academic world which demand our attentions to pay for.

- a) In the year 2008, Seoul National University, the highest ranking university in Korea, had decided not to recruit the Chair of Marxist Economics which was just leaved unoccupied through the retirement of the incumbent. The Faculty of Economics of SNU expressed their intention that they need no more Marxist economist for their faculty.
- b) From the Spring Semester of 2009, Gyeongsang “National” University opened a Department of Political Economics in their Graduate School. It offers Marxist oriented curricula from various aspects of scholarly fields.
- c) From Spring Semester 2010, the Academy of General Education of Korea University will open a Core Course titled “Karl Marx: Life and Thought”. Even though it is a mere first step, it will be a significant beginning for the future progress of such a trend in other universities.

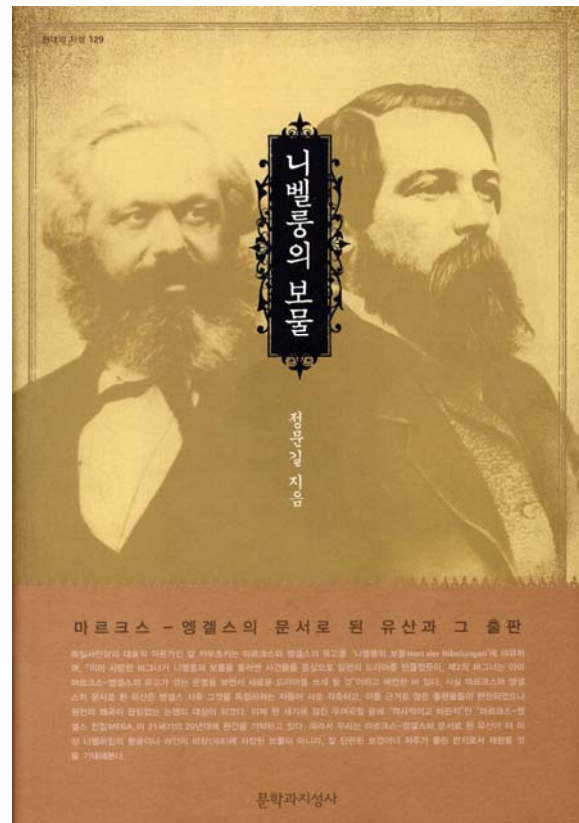
III. The Publication of “Der Hort der Nibelungen: Literarische Nachlässe von Marx-Engels und deren Veröffentlichung” von Moon-Gil Chung, Seoul 2008, 678 pp. (koreanisch)

This book is a general history of complex wandering of Marx-Engels’ literary legacy and its publications after Marx’s death. Even though there were no mentions by Karl Kautsky, the complicated moving career of their literary legacies and their restoration or reconstruction into the printed books and collected works are one of the most impressive dramas in its own meaning. It’s the reason why I had intended to write this book.

But in the process of material research and document collection I had felt the need to change the focus of my initial interest in the subject. It means to me that the book must be written rather a serious and academic one than a mere story-oriented popularly readable one.

As you see through the German translation of the contents on the back-cover of the book, it extends almost all of the publication histories of their literary legacies from the time of Marx’s last years to the present. I have utilized almost all of the available secondary materials with some of the primary ones. But from my own perspective as the author of the book, the critical weakness of the book is the absence of my own archival researches. It means that I had practically utilized every outcome of archival works which was resulted from preceding and contemporary scholars, especially those of Paul Mayer and other MEGA-scholars who had contributed to the *Alte und Neue Folge* of *Beiträge zur Marx-Engels-Forschung*, *Marx-Engels-Jahrbuch* and other periodicals. It’s the reason why I had expressed my sincere acknowledgements to those contributors in the Preface and Danksagung of the book. It witnesses the inevitability of scholarly cooperation in global level. I believe in our present MEGA-Konferenz is one of its expressions.

After its publication of early fall of 2008, the book had received following compliment from the Korean intellectual world:



- a) The book was received “Korean Publication Award” in the part of Academic Writings in 2008.
- b) The book was printed second time in the fall of 2009. It’s a rare chance for a scholarly book in Korea.
- c) The Chinese translation of the book was officially contracted with the Nanjing University Press of China in the summer of 2009. It is expected to be published at the end of 2010.

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