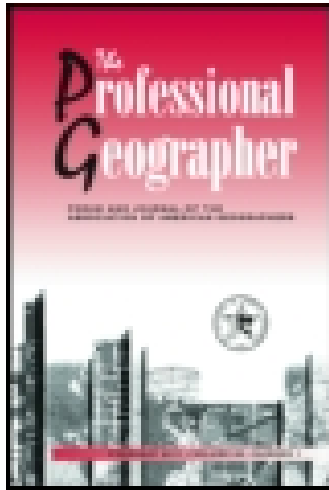


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Mapping Human Terrain in the Joint Army-Navy Intelligence Study of Korea (1945)

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Mapping Human Terrain in the *Joint Army–Navy Intelligence Study of Korea* (1945)

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The concept of human terrain has become a prominent element of U.S. military strategy. It is a means to capture the cultural–geographical qualities of an enemy or target population. An early effort to map human terrain is found in the *Joint Army–Navy Intelligence Study (JANIS) of Korea* (1945). We argue that the JANIS report on Korea was paradigmatic for the U.S. military’s contemporary geographical work and offers insights into the cultural politics of human terrain mapping. This explains why the JANIS text is cited by the National Geospatial-Intelligence College (NGC) today as an historical model. This article not only offers a window into the history of geography counterinsurgent but also shows that geography has been entwined with empire. **Key Words:** human geography, human terrain, Joint Army–Navy Intelligence Studies (JANIS), Korea, U.S. military.

人文地形的概念，已成为美国军事策略的重要元素。人文地形是捕捉敌方或目标人口的文化—地理质量之方法。韩国（1945）陆海军联合情报研究（JANIS）中，发现了描绘人文地形的早期努力。我们主张，JANIS对韩国的报导，是美国军队当代地理工作的范例，并为人文地形测绘的文化政治提供了洞见。这也解释了为何JANIS的文本，会在今日被国家地理空间情报学院（NGC）引用作为历史模型。本文不仅提供了理解地理反叛乱的历史视野，亦同时显示，地理与帝国有着紧密的结合。 **关键词:** 人文地理学，人文地形，陆海军联合情报研究（JANIS），韩国，美国军方。

El concepto de terreno humano se ha convertido en un elemento prominente en la estrategia militar de los EE.UU. Es un medio para captar las cualidades geográfico–culturales de un enemigo o de una población objetivo. Uno de los primeros intentos de cartografiar el terreno humano se encuentra en el Estudio de Inteligencia Conjunto Ejército–Armada (JANIS) sobre Corea (1945). Nuestra apreciación es que el informe JANIS sobre Corea fue paradigmático en el trabajo geográfico contemporáneo de las fuerzas armadas norteamericanas, además de presentar enfoques notables en la política cultural del mapeo del terreno humano. Esto nos explica por qué el texto JANIS es hoy citado por la Universidad Nacional de Inteligencia Geoespacial (NGC) como un modelo histórico. Este artículo no solo abre una ventana a la historia de la geografía de contrainsurgencia sino que también muestra que la geografía ha estado enredada con lo imperial. **Palabras clave:** geografía humana, terreno humano, Estudio de Inteligencia Conjunto Ejército–Armada (JANIS), Corea, fuerzas armadas norteamericanas.

In recent years, the concept of human terrain has gained prominence in U.S. military and intelligence strategy. Early arguments in favor of the concept were presented by McFate and Jackson (2005) and Kipp et al. (2006); the decisive entry of the concept into U.S. military strategy followed David Petraeus’s (2006) use in his widely read observations on Iraq. The concept of human terrain figured prominently in the Defense Science Board 2006 Summer Study (Defense Science Board 2007), and the U.S. Army launched its Human Terrain Systems (HTS) project in 2006,¹ hiring anthropologists to study the human terrain in Iraq and Afghanistan. The concept and its employment by the U.S. military promptly fell

under strenuous criticism by anthropologists; see especially the works by Price (2008, 2009, 2011), González (2009, 2010), and Gilberto López y Rivas (2014a, 2014b). In response, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) appointed a commission to study the involvement of anthropologists with the U.S. Army HTS program and found that it “raises . . . troubling and urgent ethical issues” (AAA 2007, §III A, 1). Among other issues, the AAA was troubled that

[I]nformation provided by HTS anthropologists could be used to make decisions about identifying and selecting specific populations as targets of US military operations either in the short or

long term. Any such use of fieldwork-derived information would violate the stipulations in the AAA Code of Ethics that those studied not be harmed. (AAA 2007, §III A, 1)

Over the past four years, these debates have spilled over into human geography, and critical human geographers are now contributing to a vibrant literature on human terrain (see, e.g., Gregory 2011; Belcher 2012, 2014a; Wainwright 2012). This growing body of work complements the existing, rich body of work on the various aspects of the geography–military relationship. In recent years, geographers have produced studies of the quotidian militarization of social spaces within the United States (Bernazzoli and Flint 2010); militarism’s effects with respect to subjectivity (Cowen and Gilbert 2007), particularly gender (see, e.g., Dowler 2012); the geographical imaginations framing U.S. counterterrorism (Hannah 2006) and counterinsurgency strategy (Belcher 2014a, 2014b); the creeping militarization of environmental conservation (Lundstrum 2014); the political economy of intelligence contracting (Crampton, Roberts, and Poorthuis 2014); and much more. This broad literature is buttressed by reflections on the historical influence of the military on our discipline and involvement in the U.S. military and intelligence community in producing geographical research (see, e.g., Smith 2003; Barnes and Farish 2006; Barnes 2008; Barnes and Crampton 2011; Belcher 2012).

The so-called Oaxaca controversy further stirred interest in the geography–military relationship, particularly concerning human terrain. The controversy erupted when it was revealed that a team of geographers from the University of Kansas were using U.S. military funds to map human terrain in indigenous communities in Mexico (see Wainwright 2012) and subsequently in other countries in Central America (Wainwright 2013a).² Although the term *human terrain* figures prominently in the Bowman documents, the geographers leading the expeditions have distanced themselves from the concept’s military provenance. This raises a question: Is human terrain mapping inherently a military endeavor and, if so, should civilian academic geographers contribute? Given the proximity between human terrain mapping and the methods of geography, many geographers could certainly contribute, and some already are doing so (e.g., with the Bowman expeditions). But most geographers are today neither direct participants nor open critics of the U.S. military’s work on human terrain and human geography. Part of the ambiguity—and a complication for answering the question—stems from the vagueness of the concept of human terrain. For their part, U.S. military scholars typically define human terrain as an expansive operational device for capturing the cultural–geographical essence of an enemy or target population or “sociocultural knowledge [that] would enable the military to take local perspectives and interests into account in their planning

and execution of missions” (McFate and Fondacaro 2011, 66; see also Lohman 2012).³ In a handbook written to explain how to “employ” a Human Terrain Team, Colonel Forrester explains:

[O]perational environments are made up of diverse groups of people with differing languages, thoughts, and beliefs. Trying to understand these cultures . . . was beyond the capabilities initially designed for Soldiers and units. To fill that knowledge void, the Army developed the Human Terrain System and human terrain teams (HTTs). (Center for Army Lessons Learned 2009, i)⁴

Military documents often note that mapping human terrain draws on skills and concepts that overlap with (or derive from) the discipline of geography. For instance, Eldridge and Neboshynsky (2008) contended that “[t]he idea of human terrain is not a new concept. Human geography . . . includes . . . many of the cross-domain, multi-disciplinary approaches which are precursors of human terrain” (25). To cite another example, a student guide for “incorporating human geography into GEOINT” written by the National Geospatial-Intelligence College (NGC) asserts that “Human Geography augments . . . traditional [geospatial intelligence] approaches with the addition of data and models that describe the behavior, attitudes, perceptions, and relationships of people in the context of their environment” (The School of Geospatial-Intelligence 2011, 1–1–7). Ergo, human geography is a necessary addition to human terrain mapping, itself only one component of geospatial intelligence analysis. As a recent cover of the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency’s magazine, *Pathfinder*, put it: “Human geography tells ‘when’ and ‘where’ to put boots on the ground” (see Figure 1).

Our article proceeds from two convictions. First, we do not believe that the purpose of human geography is to tell anyone “where’ to put boots on the ground.” This is not to deny the ancient tie between our discipline and military research, of which we are well aware. It is rather to affirm the necessity of another conception of geography as a critical form of thought (see, e.g., Kropotkin 1885). Our second conviction is that, if we are to criticize the U.S. military’s contemporary use of human terrain supplemented by human geography, we must historicize these concepts. To this end, this article seeks to contribute to the literature on the history of human terrain mapping (see also González 2009; Price 2011; Belcher 2014a; Medina 2014). Most U.S. military documents explain the emphasis on human terrain by referring to 11 September 2001 and the subsequent demands of U.S. counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan (e.g., Spencer 2012). Others have gone farther back, tracing human terrain mapping to the Vietnam War (see González 2009). Without denying the importance of



Figure 1 Cover of the *Pathfinder*. (Color figure available online.)

these reference points, we locate human terrain mapping in the 1945 U.S. intervention in Korea.

Prompting us here was the Student Guide of the NGC, arguably the largest school dedicated to teaching geographical techniques in the United States. It is part of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and responsible for collecting and analyzing geospatial data for the U.S. government and military. According to the NGA Web site, “Each year, NGC trains more than 15,000 students—including government civilians, military members and contractors—

from across NGA, the Department of Defense (DOD), U.S. Intelligence Community (IC), as well as federal, state and local governments and foreign mission partners.”⁵ One part of the curriculum is given by the NGC Student Guide (see Figure 2), and it was there that our attention was drawn to one seemingly minor comment found within it: that human terrain studies originated from the U.S. military’s role in Korea in the wake of World War II.

On page 1–1-2 of the *NGC Student Guide* (see Figure 3), its anonymous authors define human



National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

Incorporating Human Geography into GEOINT STUDENT GUIDE (SG)



National Geospatial-Intelligence College
The School of Geospatial-Intelligence
5855 21st Street, Suite 101
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

Version: 1.6
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Figure 2 Cover of the National Geospatial-Intelligence College Student Guide. (Color figure available online.)

terrain and cite two historical precedents of contemporary U.S. military efforts to study “the behavior of adversaries and their culture.” The first is in Vietnam, specifically the Hamlet Evaluation System.⁶ The second is World War II/Korea and specifically the *Joint Army–Navy Intelligence Studies* (JANIS).

Our argument is that the *NGC Student Guide* is broadly correct: The JANIS report on Korea anticipates the nature and purpose of human terrain as a military tool today. Given the involvement of U.S.-based human geographers in shaping JANIS, that report also exemplified the role played by the discipline of geography. It shows only too clearly that geography has never been politically innocent (as some geographers still believe⁷) but is frequently entwined with empire.

The Joint Army–Navy Intelligence Studies

JANIS reports were initiated during World War II, with geographers playing a significant role in their conception, design, and dissemination throughout the four years of their existence. In total, thirty-four JANIS studies were published between April 1943 and July 1947. Even after they were discontinued, they took on an afterlife, becoming most immediately the template for the CIA’s National Intelligence Surveys initiated just months after the CIA opened in September 1947. Even more important for us, they sparked and shaped the formulation of human terrain, the importance of which continues.

JANIS arose from early fumbling efforts of the U.S. government to establish effective organs of military

Human Terrain Defined

Incorporating Human Geography into GEOINT can be used to support efforts to understand the human terrain. But what is 'human terrain'?

One definition describes human terrain as “the social, ethnographic, cultural, economic, and political elements of the people among whom a force is operating.”¹ General Petraeus noted that “*You have to understand not just what we call the military terrain—the high ground and low ground. It’s about understanding the human terrain, really understanding it.*”

Human terrain is not a new concept; the need for understanding the behavior of adversaries and their culture, as well as that of the local populations with whom our military forces, diplomats, and aid organizations work, has been identified before:

- World War II / Korea
 - JANIS: Joint Army Navy Intelligence Studies
- Vietnam
 - Hamlet Evaluation System
 - Attempt to measure the socio-economic, political, security conditions in a COIN environment

Figure 3 National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency Student Guide, page 1–1-2 (selection).

intelligence and their coordination. Although U.S. military intelligence services existed before World War II, they were scattered, with no clear chain of command or reporting and subject to internecine struggles over jurisdiction.⁸ The establishment of the Coordinator of Information (CoI) in July 1941, and renaming it as the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in June 1942, was one response, but other intelligence units were initiated or reinvigorated, especially after Pearl Harbor.

Pearl Harbor showed the potentially devastating consequences of uncoordinated intelligence. There were a number of reasons why the United States was not prepared for the Japanese attack, but an important one was its fragmented and poorly managed intelligence organization in which relevant pieces of information were not passed on. Even when they were shared, they were not brought together, their overall strategic importance recognized, and appropriate strategic action taken.

The attempt to coordinate military intelligence and provide integrated information drawn from across all military branches began two days after Pearl Harbor with the establishment of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC; Marchio 1996). But JIC’s early history was mired precisely in the kinds of disputes over jurisdiction, membership, and authority that it was set up to avoid.⁹ By 1943 that began to change with two new committees established to supplement JIC. The Joint Intelligence Collection Agency (JICA) was charged with gathering, screening, and transmitting intelligence to Washington from all agencies especially those operating in regional theaters (Marchio 1996). The Joint Intelligence Study Publishing Board (JISPB) was initiated to produce and disseminate regional studies of potential foreign area operations. JISPB’s mandate was specifically to avoid duplication. In the past, CoI/OSS, the Office of Naval Intelligence

(ONI), which had funded some of Carl Sauer’s research, and G-2 (U.S. Army intelligence) had each separately researched, written, and distributed their own regional studies with significant overlap. There would now be only one report: JANIS. From the beginning geographers were involved.

The idea for JANIS was first mooted in summer 1942, and a template drawn up for the volumes. Following criticism that it was insufficiently sensitive to “actual areal descriptions,” it was redrafted. Finally, an acceptable “Outline Guide” was agreed to in April 1943 (albeit modified further over time).¹⁰ The mandate for JANIS reports was “to make available in one publication . . . all the necessary detailed information upon which may be based a war plan . . . in a given area.”¹¹

The 1943 Outline proscribed that JANIS reports begin with physical geography, then move to a description of the region’s human geography—“Cities and Towns,” “Resources and Trade,” “People and Government”—and finish with chapters on communication and transportation, including “Roads” and “Port Facilities.” The reports were descriptive and narrowly instrumental. “In the compilation of JANIS,” the guide to preparation instructed, “repetition, verbosity, ambiguity, and long and involved sentences will be avoided.”¹² The volumes were anonymized and confidential. Each report was about a different strategic region, and packed with photographs, maps, and comprehensive detail about topography, resources, infrastructure, and other geographic features. They were certainly not the classic Vidalian regional monograph, nor were they even like the British military intelligence version, the *Naval Intelligence Handbooks* that were more synthetic, fulsome, and winningly written.¹³ They got the job done, however, at least according to J. A. Russell (1954), who, in reviewing

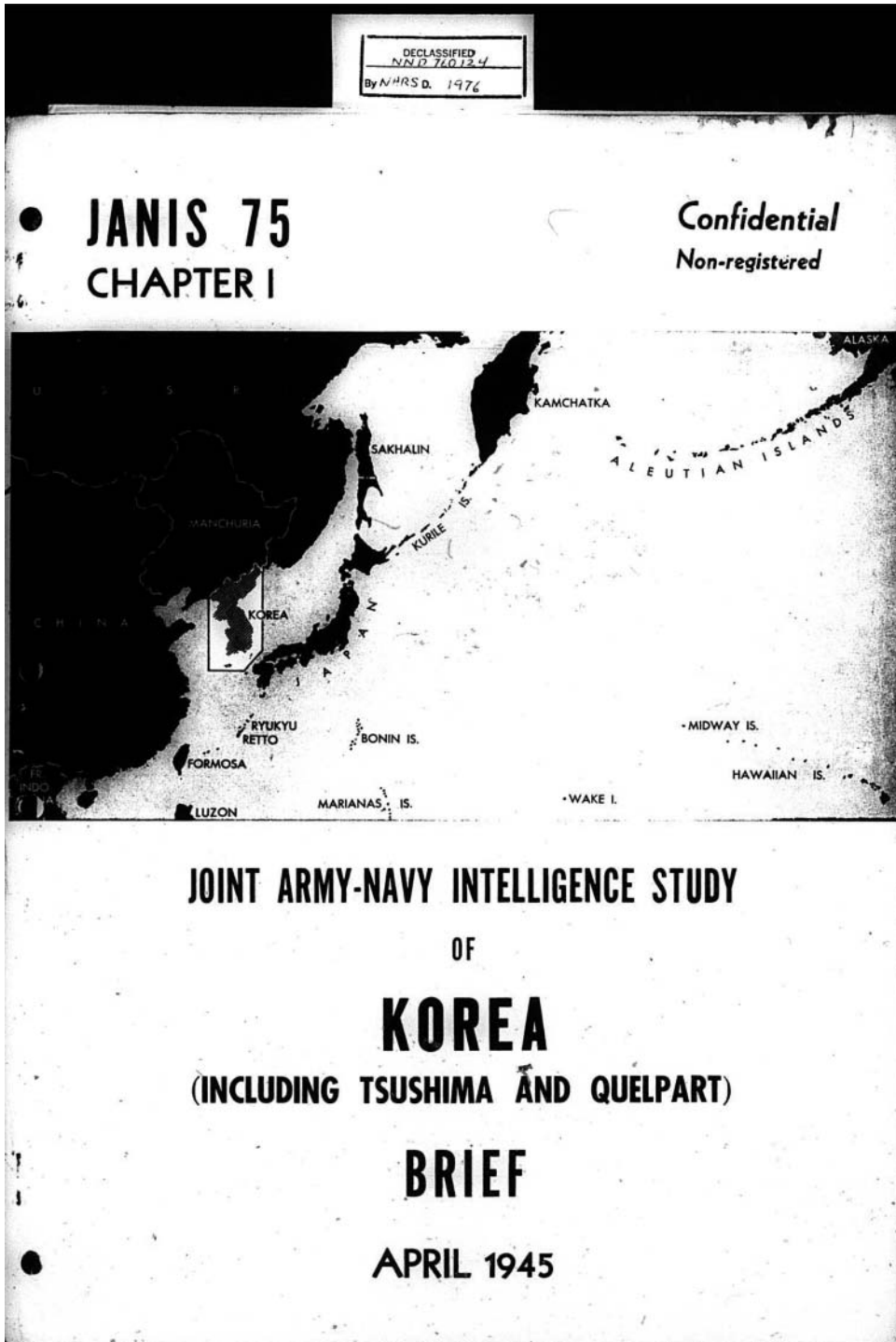


Figure 4 Cover of the JANIS Study of Korea.

the fifty-year contributions of U.S. geographers to “military geography,” described JANIS as “perhaps the finest example of wartime area reports. . . . [T]he range of topics covered, the variety of sources tapped, and the high quality of the writing and the

cartographic work placed them among the major geographic achievements of recent decades” (491).

Getting to that point was not always easy, though. Geographer Richard Hartshorne, at the time Chief of the Geographical Division at OSS, contributed to

rewriting the initial Outline Guide to make it conform to an appropriate blueprint of geographical description. And even after the Outline was redone, there were troubles. Geographer Kirk Stone was OSS's first appointment to JISPB, but within two months he wrote a cantankerous memo to Hartshorne. He claimed several of his fellow Board members were "deadheads," concluding that "perhaps this Board should be dissolved . . . before . . . it unduly wastes money that could go to the production of bullets rather than second-rate intelligence." He was particularly frustrated by the old problem of acquiring information from other branches of military intelligence that continued only to "fight harder to build their fences higher."¹⁴

Stone was replaced by another geographer at OSS, Edward Ullman, who joined the JISPB in January 1944, later becoming Director for six months from December 1945. He was especially concerned with reformulating JANIS, saying after he left military service that it was "in this capacity I made my greatest practical contribution."¹⁵ Ullman brought in geographer Edward Ackerman as a consultant to modify JANIS. He originally had been at CoI/OSS but had returned to Harvard in September 1943 to teach. In June 1944 Ackerman provided a nineteen-page memo with detailed suggestions for change and very much in line with Ullman's own sensibilities.¹⁶ Ackerman thought the problem with JANIS reports was that they had become an "encyclopaedic regional anthology"; they needed to become more focused, topical, systematic, and specialized.¹⁷ As Ullman later wrote to Ackerman summarizing their discussions, if JANIS "tries to cover everything, it will produce . . . a mess. On the other hand, there are some adjustments that could be made towards producing as good geography of foreign areas as possible for use by the US government."¹⁸ Those adjustments involved a more organized or functional approach (as Ullman sometimes called it). Contributors needed to be specialists, which "allowed workers trained in specific fields to concentrate on the field they knew. . . . The result is a better, more useful product than the previous Strategic Surveys and ONI [Office of Naval Intelligence] Monographs."¹⁹ With this proposal, Ackerman, along with Ullman, were in effect redefining the character of what later became known as human terrain analysis. They were changing it from the typological collection of facts into something more targeted and incisive, conceptually chiseled by a sharper and more directed thematic purpose.

This move that Ackerman and Ullman were suggesting in the form of JANIS reports, and which Ullman implemented as director, pointed to the production of a different kind of regional geography. It was to be instrumental, systematic, cooperatively produced by disciplinary experts, and scientific. It represented the glimmerings of a new Cold War, social-scientific sensibility that would later become increasingly dominant within U.S. universities and

would eventually come to define the larger discipline of human geography (Barnes and Farish 2006). Of course, Ackerman and Ullman did not and could not realize that at the time, but they knew that the old way of presenting geographical information about regions was inadequate to the task. Partly through their interactions with other social scientists at CoI/OSS, they believed there was another way, which they began to articulate, however hesitantly (Barnes 2006). It was not rocket science. Nonetheless, it was different, implying new concepts, relations, and practices. It was not the deeply technological, data heavy, statistically laden form that regional geography was to become under contemporary HTS, but it was a step on the road to it. That's what the *NGC Student Guide* recognized.

JANIS Study 75: Korea

The JANIS report on Korea, "Study 75," has been largely forgotten (it is not easy even to find a copy; see Figure 4). As Figure 5 shows, JANIS studies focused on East Asia at a time when the United States was consolidating its empire through the Pacific theater (Cumings 2009). In April 1945, Korea was still under the Japanese imperium, but four months later would gain its formal political independence and undergo peninsular division (15 August 1945) shortly before the establishment of a U.S. military government in southern Korea (9 September 1945). The plan for the trusteeship of Korea was discussed at Yalta in February 1945 as the JANIS report was being prepared, but there is no explicit reference to these plans in the text. It seems highly unlikely that the two U.S. colonels, Dean Rusk and Charles H. Bonesteel, consulted the JANIS report before they selected the thirty-eighth parallel as the dividing line for the Korean Peninsula. Apart from anything else, they had only thirty minutes to study the map and to draw the line (Cumings 2005).

Although the JANIS report does not seem to have played any direct role in dividing the country, it had other influences. It was read by a U.S. education officer, almost totally ignorant of Korea, who came to Seoul from Okinawa to administer the education policies of the military government in Korea (Armstrong 2003). It was also read by the military and civil affairs occupiers of Korea, serving as a guide for the U.S. military government.²⁰

The text includes fifteen chapters and "plans."²¹ The latter divides the peninsula into fifty-two planning regions, each with its own map but with no individual rationale for existence (see Figure 6). The chapters are thematically organized around physical geography (topography, coasts, climate and weather), human geography (cities and towns, people and government, health and sanitation, etc.), and military geography (naval and air facilities, etc.) of the Korean Peninsula. When the JANIS Korea report is cited in scholarly publications, it is typically praised for its

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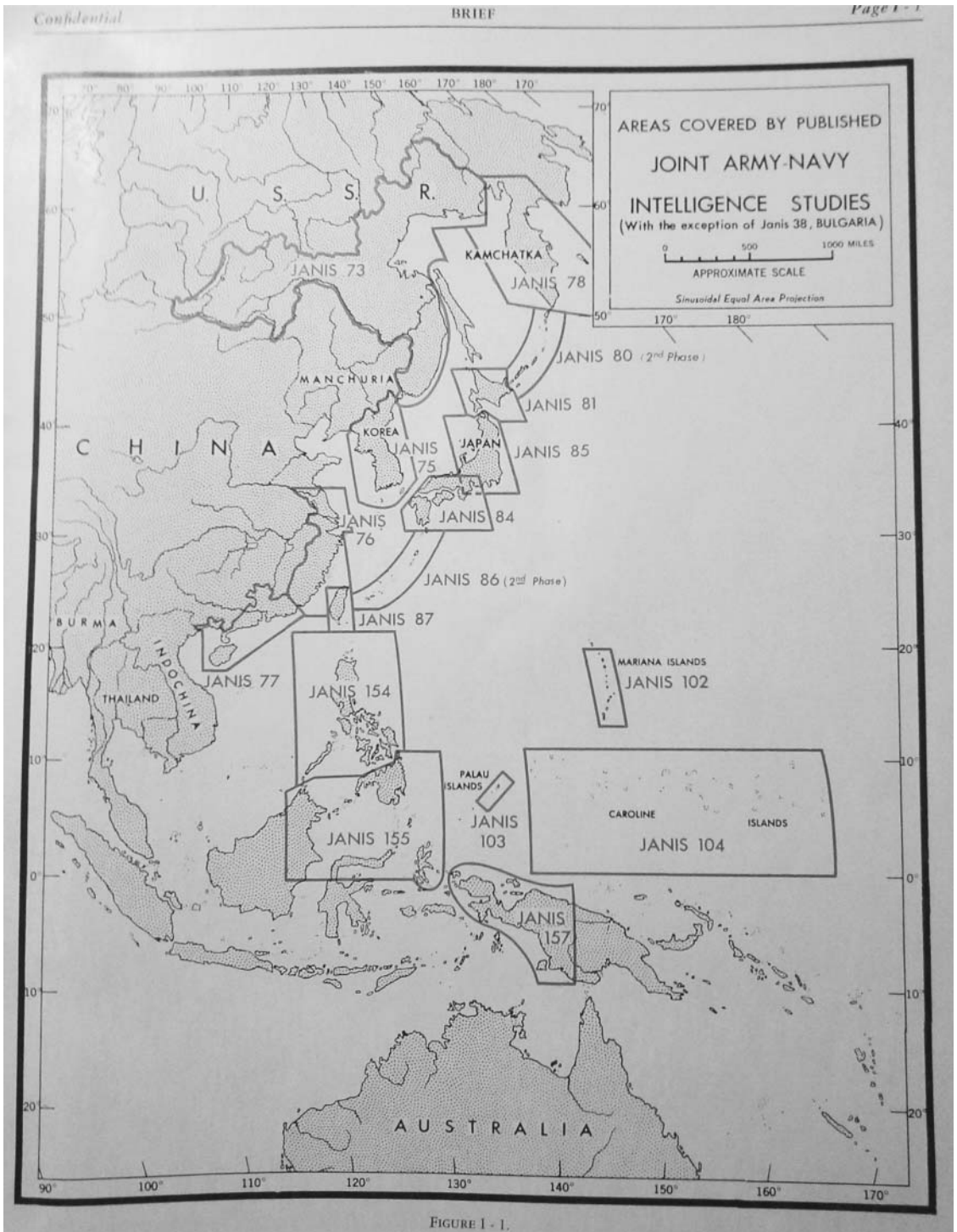


Figure 5 Map of JANIS studies, which targeted the Asia-Pacific theater.

thoroughness and accuracy as a comprehensive ethnography and geography of Korea (e.g., The Editorial Committee on the History of Gyeonggi Province 2005). Cumings (1981) said the JANIS Korea report is a “remarkably accurate source on

Korea in 1945” (129). The OSS agents in Korea claimed that the document could even replace all materials on Korea before April 1945 (The Editorial Committee on the History of Gyeonggi Province 2005; Wilson 2013).

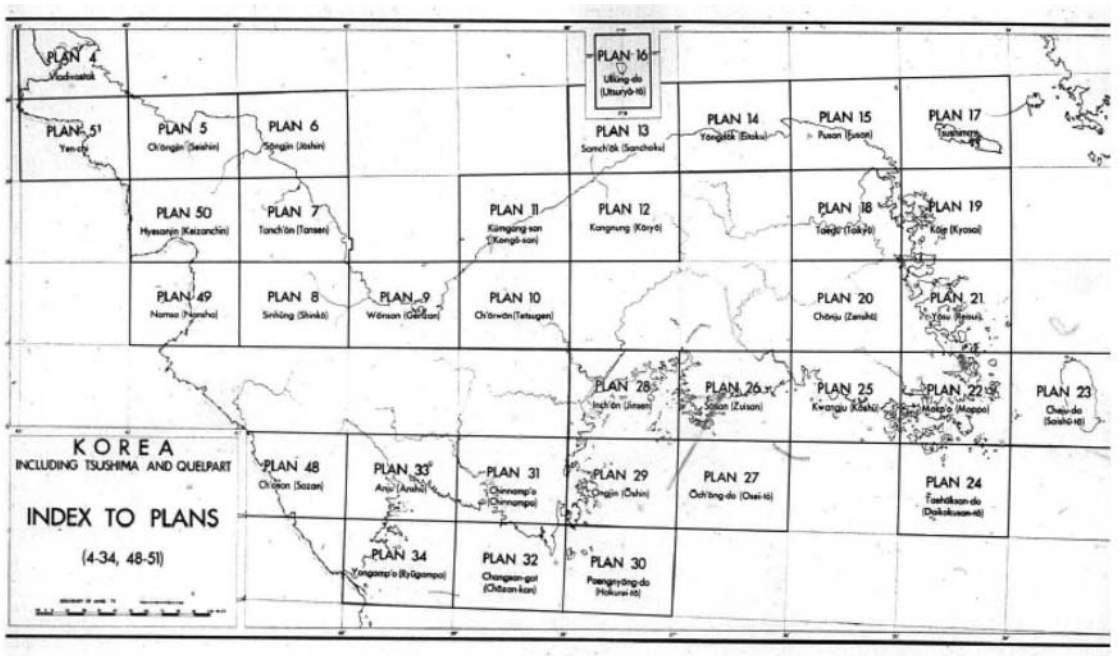


Figure 6 Plans of the JANIS report.

The term *human terrain* as such does not appear in the JANIS report. Nevertheless, its meticulous description of Korea's social geography, described in terms of human geography and regional geography, anticipated contemporary U.S. Army practices.²² U.S. interests in studying the human geography of Korea circa 1945, its social life and culture—human terrain *avant la lettre*—is presented in JANIS as at once an objective and sympathetic study of the Korean people and one that documents their opposition to Japanese imperialism. This political-aesthetic appreciation of Koreans might seem laudatory, but in retrospect it clearly reflects a concern with the prospects of winning hegemony in postwar Korea.

The report's Foreword explains that the "purpose of [the JANIS] study is to make available, subject to limitations of time and material, one publication containing all the necessary detailed topographic information upon which may be based a plan for military operations in Korea." Although correct, this statement should be clarified in two respects. First, the report presupposes the possibilities not only for military operations in the Korean Peninsula but also for the occupation and domination of Korea. Second, the report provides more than topographic information. It also presents the human geography of the Korean Peninsula, especially in Chapter 10, "People and Government," which contains for us the most important point—the U.S. geopolitical vision of the Korean Peninsula before its occupation.

The usual understanding of the role of the United States on the Korean Peninsula during the 1940s was that it had no plans for occupation. As Roehrig (2006)

wrote, "The United States had given little thought to eventualities in post-World War II Korea and virtually no preparations had been made for the military occupation that was to follow" (116). Yet this is belied by the JANIS report and its assertion, in effect, of the importance of understanding the minds of the Korean people. The emphasis given to human terrain—human and regional geography in the terms of the report—demonstrates that the subsequent U.S. domination of the southern part of the peninsula after the independence of Korea was neither unintentional nor accidental.

Read from the vantage of the present, one of the most striking qualities of the JANIS is that Korea's human terrain was seen as thoroughly dominated by Japanese imperialism. The report frequently mentions the arbitrary forms of violence to which Koreans were subjected, as well as Korean aspirations for independence. For instance, Chapter 10 discusses Koreans' "attitudes toward foreign control": "Koreans . . . have a strong desire for immediate and complete independence. Most of them believe in their ability to govern their country adequately and would prefer the initial inefficiencies of administrative inexperience to the danger of extended control by some successors to Japan" (1945, X-3). Notably, the authors of the JANIS report went on to suggest that Korea's situation could be improved if foreign control were to transfer to the United States, as many Koreans would prefer U.S. domination. The text says, "If Korea should be subject to control by a single nation, there is probably a majority who would favor the United States" (X-19). Similarly, it finds in Korea's unitary language and

cultural traditions some basis for self-government but criticizes Koreans for “a long tendency toward political factionalism and lack of group cooperation” (X-5). The question of the future trusteeship of Korea hangs like a shadow over this analysis.

Consider the treatment of Korean sentiments toward the police. Noting that most Koreans deeply resent the police force for their arbitrary and abusive cruelty, the JANIS report concluded that “Since Koreans in the police force are either pro-Japanese or in subordinate positions, *it will probably be necessary in the early stages of occupation* to provide close supervision and supplementation until it is possible to recruit additional Koreans to fill vacant posts” (I-42, italics added). These lines were written before April 1945, when the JANIS report was published. The U.S. military did not formally occupy Korea until 8 September 1945, however. Again it shows that even before the end of the war the U.S. military contemplated the domination and occupation of the region. As it turned out, however, the U.S. military government could not follow JANIS’s advice. To suppress communist forces, the military government had no choice but to resort to pro-Japanese police forces. In the words of Roger Baldwin, “If you feel that the pro-Japanese collaborators must be purged . . . then you are a communist” (cited in McCune 1947, 616). Some of the Korean police officers who collaborated with the Japanese colonial state subsequently controlled the Korean national police throughout the U.S. military government and the Rhee Syngman administration (Han 1974). The U.S. military neither transformed nor replaced the Japanese colonial governance but made it durable in postcolonial Korea. In retrospect, then, when the anonymous authors of the JANIS report described Korean distaste for Japanese police—as one element of the human terrain—they were carrying out surveillance to facilitate a different, more effective form of colonial policing.

Conclusion

We conclude by drawing out two lessons of our reading of the JANIS report on Korea. First, reading this report today reminds us of the need to criticize the historical silence around the U.S. role in shaping modern Korea and its violent geography. Although Korea was represented and imagined by JANIS as dominated terrain before the Korean War, the U.S. occupation and division of the peninsula is now largely forgotten (or repressed) in U.S. historiography (e.g., Cumings’s [2010] “forgotten war”). Ignoring the prescient suggestion in the JANIS report, the U.S. military government relied on the despised Japanese police machinery (and their collaborators) to reconstruct the Korean state (Cumings 2010). Also noteworthy is the fact that nothing in the JANIS report suggested that any thought was given to the potential entry of the Soviet Union into Korea, or the later U.S. partitioning of the

peninsula into North and South (in August 1945).²³ Although the JANIS report indicated that the U.S. military prepared maps and geographical intelligence for the domination of Korea, it did not carefully plan the division of the peninsula.

This brings us to our second point. The NGA’s reference to JANIS as a predecessor of human terrain is entirely appropriate. JANIS Korea is paradigmatic for contemporary geographical work on human terrain. The U.S. military’s geographical study of human terrain is—at least in potential—always already geographical knowledge for occupation, division, and war. JANIS represented Korea as a space amenable to U.S. domination just as human terrain mapping does the same for other spaces today. This is the real meaning of NGA’s reference to JANIS. Geographers who support human terrain analysis should remember that beneath this application of geographical knowledge lurks imperial violence. Hence, to read JANIS Korea at this time is not simply to dust off an old declassified document. It is the heir to the recent operations of the U.S. Army Human Terrain System from Iraq and Afghanistan to the Pacific and Central America (Madsen 2013; Wainwright 2013a).

And because the valences of U.S. imperial imagination still dominate the Korean Peninsula, we might yet see a reprise of JANIS Korea. Miner (2013) argued that in the event of a North Korean collapse, “any intervening force must achieve minimal levels of stability in terms of physical and human geography.” To this end, he stressed the importance of “establishing cultural awareness and mapping the human terrain” of “the unconventional state of the modern era.”²⁴ Miner is not alone in this idea. In her paper for the U.S. Army War College, Jager (2007) argued:

[I]t is not too late to apply the lessons that we have learned there [Iraq] to deal with other troubled spots in the world, namely North Korea, Iran, and China. If cultural knowledge has been able to reverse some of the operational and tactical blunders set forth by Rumsfeld’s Pentagon, perhaps it not too late for culture to also rescue the United States from the strategic failures of the Bush Doctrine. (24)

We are dubious that cultural and geographical studies of North Korea could “rescue” U.S. military strategy. Regardless, the merit of these statements is that they remind us of the Korean provenance and persistence of the U.S. military’s human terrain strategy. Today, of course, this strategy is by no means limited to the Korean Peninsula. The U.S. military is working to expand the HTS across the world, and this can only lead to a deeper collusion between the military and human geography. A counterpoint conception of geography is urgently needed. Like the AAA, we believe that it is time to renounce geography’s

historical role as an agent of empire, and instead to embrace geography's role as an agent of critical thought. ■

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Notes

¹ According to the U.S. Army HTS Web site:

[HTS] developed from the deteriorating situation in Iraq and Afghanistan during 2005–2006. . . . Combat commanders did not have a good understanding of the cultural and social implications of military operations in urban environments. The result of conducting operations without local sociocultural knowledge produced negative affects among the local populations. . . . [I]n 2006 the U.S. Department of Defense validated the urgent need for sociocultural support (human terrain concept) to combat commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan and funding was provided through the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO) as part of their organizational goals. . . . In early 2006, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command G-2, supported by JIEDDO, responded to the operational need by developing a concept to provide social science support to military commanders in the form of Human Terrain Teams (HTTs). HTTs, composed of individuals with social science academic backgrounds, would deploy with tactical units to assist in bringing about knowledge of the local population into a coherent framework. . . . Two HTTs were assigned in Afghanistan (February 2007) and three HTTs to Iraq between 2007 and 2008, directly supported by a Reachback Research Center (RRC) and a subject matter expertise network (from the academic and military community) in the United States (<http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/history.html>).

² The outcry surrounding the Bowman expeditions and growing activity of the U.S. military in human geography has generated a prominent public discussion about the relationship between the U.S. military and the AAG (see, e.g., Shepard 2013; Wainwright 2013b).

³ See more about the HTS on the Web site of the U.S. Army Human Terrain System at <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/>.

⁴ Even the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has established a Cultural Mapping program (CMAP), led by a geographer (see <http://www.ercd.usace.army.mil/Media/FactSheets/FactSheetArticleView/tabid/9254/Article/476690/cultural-mapping.aspx>).

⁵ From the fact sheet of the National Geospatial-Intelligence College (https://www1.nga.mil/MediaRoom/Press%20Kit/Documents/Factsheets/NCE_College.pdf).

⁶ On the history of human terrain, see González (2009).

⁷ Jerome Dobson (2013), founder of the Bowman Expeditions, described himself as a true “believer[r] in the power of

geographic knowledge for doing good” and defended his team for their “abiding dedication to the indigenous people of Oaxaca and our neutrality in all things political.”

⁸ Office of Strategic Services: America's First Intelligence Agency (<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/oss/art02.htm>).

⁹ A useful history of the Joint Intelligence Committee is Valero (2007).

¹⁰ Memo: Proposed outline for Joint Strategic Monographs, William L. Langer to all section heads, 27 July 1942, RG 226, Box 1, Folder 3, The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Memo: Proposed outline for Joint Strategic Monographs, George Brightman to Richard Hartshorne, 13 August 1942, RG 226, Box 1, Folder 3, NARA.

¹¹ Memo: War and Navy Departments and OSS, 1 July 1943, RG 226, Entry 1, Box 1, Folder 2, NARA.

¹² Memo: War and Navy Departments and OSS, 1 July 1943, RG 226, Entry 1, Box 1, Folder 2, III-1, NARA.

¹³ The Naval Intelligence Handbooks were written primarily by British geographers, with H. C. Derby taking on a significant editorial role. Some were used as texts in regional geographical courses in the United Kingdom until the 1960s (see Clout 2003; Clout and Gosme 2003).

¹⁴ Kirk H. Stone to Richard Hartshorne, 13 July 1943, RG 226 Box 1, Folder 20, NARA.

¹⁵ Edward Ullman to Donald Hudson, 7 November 1950, Ullman Papers, Box 8, Folder 23, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

¹⁶ Memo: E. A. Ackerman to Lt. E. L. Ullman, “Report on examination of past JANIS publications and present recommended research procedures,” June 1944, Box 14B, no file name, Ackerman, Edward A. Papers 1930–1973, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming at Laramie, WY.

¹⁷ Memo: E. A. Ackerman to Lt. E. L. Ullman, “Report on examination of past JANIS publications and present recommended research procedures,” page 2. June 1944, Box 14B, no file name, Ackerman, Edward A. Papers 1930–1973, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming at Laramie, WY.

¹⁸ Edward L. Ullman to Edward Ackerman, 2 January, 1946, Ullman Papers, Box 1, Folder 17, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

¹⁹ Edward L. Ullman to Edward Ackerman, 2 January, 1946, Ullman Papers, Box 1, Folder 17, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

²⁰ Armstrong (2003) claimed “the occupation of Korea was an afterthought of U.S. military planners. . . . [Thus] The most prominent aspect of the U.S. attitude in the initial year or two of occupation . . . was neglect” (73).

²¹ The intelligence categories of the JANIS Korea report follow the 1943 Outline.

²² Palka (1995) explained: “Because human activities can drastically alter physical landscapes, continual assessment is required of both the physical and human geography of the region. This reasoning gave birth to the Joint Army and Navy Intelligence Studies that were essentially the regional geographies of selected theaters” (203).

²³ The report only briefly mentioned pro-Soviet sentiment among Koreans in the large cities and northern border regions (X-19).

²⁴ Kurt Campbell (2013), a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, wondered how “this Asian hybrid of Hobbes and Orwell [is] even possible in 21st century northeast Asia, the veritable cockpit of the global economy?”

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