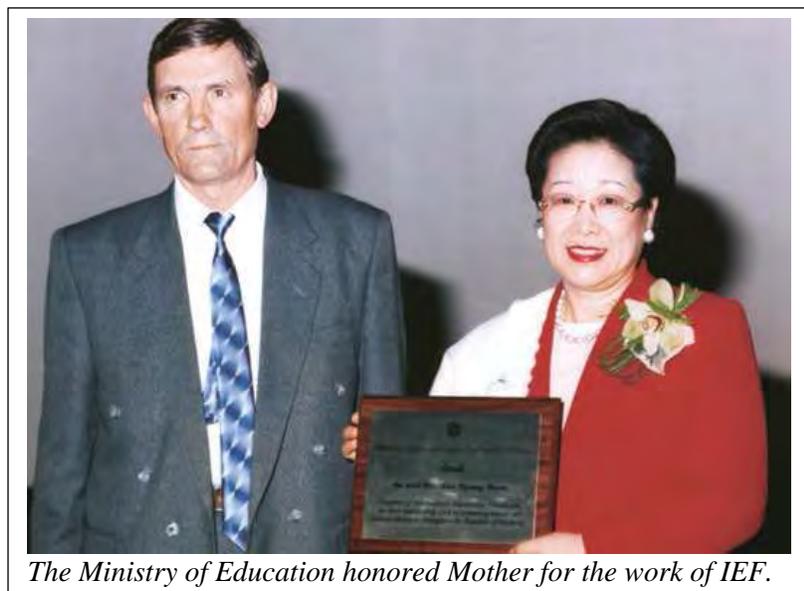


Moldova's Reunification and Korea's Reunification

Mihai Calestru
February 2015



The Ministry of Education honored Mother for the work of IEF.

In late September 2014, Rhoo Khiljae, head of the Korean government's Ministry of Unification, which the government created seven years after the Korean War, said, "Next year will mark the seventieth anniversary of the nation's liberation and division. In only one more generation, Korea will have been divided for a hundred years." Naturally, the longer a nation remains divided the more difficult it is to piece together.

In order to gain insight into the practical aspects of national reunification, let us look at another

pair of nations whose circumstances loosely parallel those of the two Koreas. By learning a few details about what achieving this deeply cherished goal of our True Parents entails, we may find that members globally can invest more power and determination into praying for successful unification, the work of which will likely be mainly in Korean hands. Additionally, when looking at nations that have sought to reestablish or to forge a national identity, we can foresee what lies ahead as we engage in the process of establishing Cheon Il Guk globally.

Moldova and Romania

The names Moldova and Romania disguise the fact that these are more than simply neighboring countries. Yet, calling them a "divided nation" is not satisfactorily accurate. One Romanian described the situation of her country's history in this way: "Romania is a unitary country. However, for over a thousand years, its three constituent regions (Transylvania, Walachia and Moldova) have been separated, with people living under the domination of very different cultures within the Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman or Russian Empires."

In fact, some members of the native populations do speak of Romania and Moldova in a way that echoes wording used by many Koreans. "Our culture is the same," said Mr. Vlad Postolache, a Moldovan music teacher. "I don't know why anybody would be opposed to unification." Alluding to the fact that Romania has joined the European Union, while Moldova has yet to do so, he added, "Romania's roads are not great but they are under Europe's care, and they know which path to take. They already have a direction. The fastest way to our becoming part of the European Community is unification with our motherland, Romania."

Granted, modern Moldova has an ethnically diverse population and not even all those of Romanian ethnicity share Mr. Postolache's views. Nevertheless, what might cause any Moldovan to refer to Romania as "our motherland"? At times in history, they were one nation.

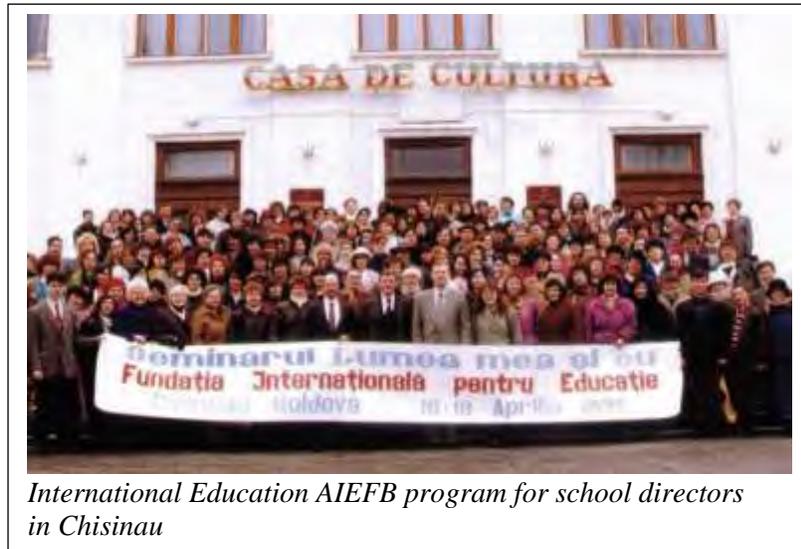
Moldova's early history

Modern Romania and Moldova shared the same homeland beginning at least in the days that they were part of the Dacian Kingdom, which began nearly a century before the birth of Christ (circa 100 bc–ad 106). Roman Emperor Trajan (who ruled ad 98–117) initiated two wars against the powerful Dacian Kingdom, ultimately prevailed and annexed it to the Roman Empire. Thereafter, the people of Dacia adopted Latin, the language of their conqueror. The Romans abandoned Dacia in 271. The Daco-Roman people became Christian in the fourth century.

In the first half of the 1500s, what is modern-day Moldova became part of the Ottoman Empire. Not all of the Ottoman's vast empire was gained by armed conflict. Often, they gained territory by marrying into local monarchic families. At other times, they were invited to rule an area. According to history professor Mary Neuburger, "People essentially decided to work for the Ottoman rulers in exchange for security, for weapons, for supplies. They became part of the Ottoman militias and they did bring stability to the region." This arrangement is known as suzerainty. Sometimes, instead of working directly for the suzerain, the protected state might give the suzerain a portion of its crops, precious metals or valuables.

The Ottoman Empire would take care all "international affairs," and provide protection, while the local rulers would maintain control of their domestic affairs, including religious ones. Korea had the same relationship under China for centuries before about 1900.

Evocative cultural icons



Someone designated a national poet tends to express the most cherished values of a nation in verse form. About Mihai Eminescu (1850–1889), one can read, "Eminescu listened to the stories of the 'common people' which he encountered at every step of his way. He memorized them with his mind and soul and later, they had a lasting impact on his poetry.... Most of his work brings up the ideas of heroes, freedom, equity and national spirit." That both Romania and Moldova have honored the same person as their national poet says much about

these nations having an overlapping identity. By way of contrast, is it likely that France and the United Kingdom or even Canada and the United States could name the same figure as a poet laureate for their nations?

In *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture*, the author Charles King described another shared hero and objects that evoke patriotism or sentimentality for citizens of both countries: In the early 1300s, Dragoș, a Romanian prince (*voievod*) from west of the Carpathian Mountains, set out across the wooded slopes on a hunt. At one point in the journey, having ventured far to the east, the party came upon a wild European bison, an aurochs, in a mountain stream. Dragoș unleashed his hounds on the unfortunate creature, and in the ensuing melee his favorite dog, Molda, was gored by the ox and drowned. Distraught at the loss, Dragoș decided to name the stream in honor of the hound, take the aurochs's head as his personal crest, and build a principality in the newly christened Moldovan land. The aurochs-head emblem can be seen today on the [national] seals of both Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

Same history, separate present

Like Romanians and Moldovans, Koreans on either side of the border revere some of the same historical figures -- Admiral Yi Sun-shin (1545– 1598), for example. Yi is the only historical figure that South Koreans call a saint-hero. He successfully fended off an invasion by Japan in 1592 and gave his life in thwarting another invasion by Japan that began in 1597. In Seoul's Gwanghwamun Square is a statue of Admiral Yi, on a large concrete base, that reaches as high as a five-story building. Near the bottom of the base, is a miniature "turtle ship," which is an early form of ironclad vessel that the admiral made famous. Koreans universally take great pride in the ingenious design of this vessel.

North Koreans, too, highly esteem Admiral Yi. Soon after the Korean War, North Korea gave a medal bearing Admiral Yi's name to its most senior naval officers for rendering distinguished service. Today, they award lower ranking naval personnel with the Order of Yi Sun-shin. Like their southern brethren, North Koreans have floating versions of turtle ships to help instill patriotism in schoolchildren.

Great power politics

In John Mearsheimer's book, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, he described "great powers" as nations that "shape the international system" and that "seek to maximize their share of world power." Unquestionably, life can be harsh, and people in many nations have suddenly found themselves in insufferable circumstances -- families and lives destroyed, crushed by events initiated by distant actors seeking "to maximize their share of world power." Both the Koreans and Moldova and Romania experienced this.

Great powers versus Korea

The Koreans divided some years before the Korean War. As William R. Keylor, explains in *The Twentieth-Century World and Beyond*, "In August 1948, after free elections conducted under the supervision of the United Nations, the Republic of Korea was formed in the south.... The following September, a People's Democratic Republic of Korea was established in the northern city of Pyongyang

under the leadership of the revolutionary Communist militant Kim Il Sung."

The Soviet army had occupied northern Korea and the US army had occupied southern Korea to facilitate the repatriation of Japanese soldiers and civilians and the return of Korean people from Japan and elsewhere. Yet, these armies were gone before June 25, 1950, when the war began. As Keylor put it, "Whereas the mutual disengagement of Soviet and American military power from divided Germany proved an impossible goal, the two superpowers had little difficulty in withdrawing from divided Korea, the Russians by December 1948 and the Americans by June 1949." Thus, when the war began a year later, initially, it was an inter-Korean affair.

Great powers versus Moldova



Moldovan folk dancing is known for high energy and an optimistic spirit.

Since the time of Tsar Pyotr I (Peter the Great, 1672–1725) Russian rulers sought access to the Black Sea because they coveted the security that having a port that did not freeze in winter would give them. Three hundred years earlier the Ottoman Empire had arisen out of modern-day Turkey. By the time Tsar Pyotr was born, it sprawled across three continents. The territory of modern day Moldova stood in a pathway to the Black Sea and thus was a battleground at times in some of the eleven wars between the

Ottoman Empire, which Moldova was then a part of, and the Russian Empire. The 1812 Treaty of Bucharest resulted in the Russian Empire gaining the part of Romania that is modern-day Moldova.

Being far from Moscow, when Russia was still under the Tsar, Vladimir Lenin had his underground Bolshevik newspaper printed in Moldova.

As World War I began, Russia was a combatant, under the Tsar. In the midst of the war, however, the German government transported Lenin by train to Petrograd, where he arrived in April 1917. He then began to foment the revolution that broke out that October. Once the Communists gained control, they pulled Russia out of World War I.

With the change of power in Russia, Moldovan politicians created a National Council and initially declared the Democratic Moldovan Republic. At first, they voted to remain tied to Russia in a federation, but they quickly reversed directions and declared complete independence in February 1918. Two months later, the Moldovan people voted to reunite with Romania.

Language and unity

Influential philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) saw a direct link between nation building and language. He asked, "Has a nation anything more precious than the language of its fathers?" The Soviets retaliated against Moldova for leaving their union by creating what was to become the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR) on the east bank of the Nistri River. It included territory that is today part of Ukraine and all of what is today an (unrecognized) rogue, breakaway territory of Moldova.

The Soviets seemingly created the MASSR with the sole purpose of driving a wedge between Romanians and Moldovans. Most significantly, they created the fiction that the Romanian and Moldovan languages were different.

As Charles King explained, "A new people and language suddenly seemed to spring onto the world stage. In the small MASSR, established on the western border of Soviet Ukraine in 1924, Moldovan histories, textbooks, grammars, newspapers, and other publications were hailed by the Soviet authorities as the first fruits of a Moldovan nation in the making...."

Soviet propagandists began to agitate for the unification of all Moldovans, who lived mainly in portions of Ukraine and the Romanian province of Bessarabia, into a single Soviet Moldovan state."

Regarding the Korean language, North Korean defectors learn the term "Chosun Dynasty" in South Korea. This is one difference in their languages. North Koreans call themselves *Choson-jeok*, or the Chosun People. "Chosun" is never associated with what North Koreans call only "the Feudal Era." In line

with North Korea's ideology, King Sejong, the most famous figure of the Chosun Dynasty, is vilified in North Korea, not revered, as he is in South Korea. North Koreans, too, set out to remake the Korean language. In 1966, they declared that their national language is Muhhwa-eo (cultured language).

Two policies effect what became part of Muhhwa-eo. They replaced Korean words that had foreign origins; that is, those based on Chinese characters, which had long been standard words in Korean, and loan words, which had entered Korean from other languages. The second policy was a preference for the language of the "working class." This meant that the government made slang used by poor people into official terms and they banned formerly proper terms. It is as if in the United Kingdom, the slang word "brolly" were the only acceptable word, and "umbrella" could not be used.

A tiny sampling of words that have changed completely in North Korea includes: vegetables, girl, lettuce, much, very, proud, displeas, wilt, Korean clothing, toothpaste, ability, ice cream, knock, irony. Another change, which the author of a book on the North Korean language explained to Voice of America, was that some terms like "*seon mul*," a common term in South Korea that means "gift" can only be used by one person in North Korea, the top leader, Kim Jong-un.

Mr. Yong Un Han, the director of a South Korean government-funded project to create a Korean People's Comprehensive Dictionary (for Korean from both sides of the border) told the UK's Guardian newspaper in November that in everyday speech one-third of the language is different, and in specialized fields, that portion rises. Defectors testify to being stunned and depressed that after risking their lives to rejoin their "kinfolk" in South Korea, they cannot understand what people say. The South Korean government holds classes to teach them Korean.

The second separation



An interfaith conference in Chisinau, Moldova's capital city

After the Bolshevik Revolution, Moldovans and Romanians lived again as one. However, at the beginning of World War II, Russia and Germany had signed a non-aggression agreement, the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, which included a secret protocol on how they would divide parts of Europe. Article III of the protocol specifically stated that the "the Soviet side" wanted Moldova. Thus, near the end of the war, the Soviet Union retook Moldova. About this, a Moldovan journalist,

Oleg Brega, said, "We are the orphans of Europe.

We are a bastard state created in one night by two tyrants, Hitler and Stalin, who cut Europe in two." On its own, Romania became a socialist state that suffered its own form of communist travails. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the Republic of Moldova declared itself "a sovereign, independent and democratic state, free to decide its present and future, without any external interference, keeping with the ideals and aspirations of the people within its historical and ethnic area of its national making" on August 27, 1991.

For the purpose of this article, a matter of importance is that in the years since 1991, Moldovans have chosen not to rejoin Romania. Although Romania is among the poorer countries in the EU, the average income there is noticeably higher than in Moldova. Moldova faces many serious problems, such as many grandparents raising children because both parents have spent years working abroad, and that their main market, Russia, has found ways to keep out their products.

Toward Korean reunification

What can we learn from Moldova–Romania about Korean reunification? First, that the process will be difficult and will not occur automatically is clear. For decades, pundits have predicted the imminent collapse of the North Korean regime. Our movement is among those groups that want to help North Korea improve its economy so that the North Koreans will not feel belittled by the success of South Koreans and so that the economies can more easily unite. The South Korean government has been working hard for many decades effect reunification, but it has yet to occur.

(To learn more about the process, please visit eng.unikorea.go.kr) One point that inspires hope is that despite its history, Moldova's heart remains intact. As former church national leader, Mr. Mihai Calestru, wrote, "Despite secular and western liberal 'values,' Moldova is still very religious and family values-oriented society. Divine Principle is attractive to all ages because of its emphasis on the family role in

educating healthy children, a prosperous community, peaceful nations and world.

Moldovan people, despite being for many hundreds of years under foreign occupation, did not lose their deeply rooted culture of peace, a welcoming heart and hospitality for all neighbors and guests."

Readers may be curious about our movement in Moldova. Mr. Calestru, when asked what challenges the movement in Moldova currently faces, gave the following response: On the church side, during over twenty years of activities, major challenges and concerns were developing a continuous education system for core members and a church leadership pipeline. Without a solid foundation of dedicated church members and leaders, the influence of other initiatives is not sustainable.

As a relatively young movement, our growth slowed when members made the transition from single life to family life, with its complications. People going abroad because of financial needs marked our church community as it did the nation. This has begun to improve with the recent arrival of missionaries from Korea, Japan and Ukraine that moved to Moldova to invest themselves fully into church development and national restoration, after our country became one of the strategic nations under the Vision 2020 plan.

Looking for solutions to the existing social and economic problems of the Republic of Moldova, we realize again the value of True Parents' teachings and life examples of living for the sake of others. Currently in our internal politics and external relations, Moldova is in crisis. Regional conflicts and pressure or influence from neighboring countries (the Russian Federation and European Union) show the vulnerability of the nation without a clear national idea that can mobilize and unite our citizens despite ethnicity, faith or race.

This search for national identity and a national idea can start from people of faith and religious groups that look from a spiritual perspective. For the Unification Church, this is also an opportunity.

Our True Parents' peacemaking legacy could serve as a source of inspiration. Our responsibility and duty is to reveal this treasure to the most talented, creative youth and unite them in the restoration of our nation and inspire them to devote themselves for the sake of restoring other nations and the world."