



Tübingen Korean Studies Lecture Series

Summer Semester 2025, Wednesdays 18:00 c.t., Wilhelmstraße 133, R. 30

"The geography of rail transport in the early 20th century Korea"

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May 07th, 2025

Wookung Huh, 허우궁, is emeritus professor of geography at Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea. He studied geography at Seoul National University (B.A. and M.A.), and at the Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, USA (Ph.D.) His research interest includes geographies of transportation and communication; old maps; and geographic visualization. He served the Korean Geographical Society, as the Vice President (1997-1998) and President (1999-2000).



A rail line between Seoul and Incheon, the outer port of the capital city, was opened in 1899 for the first time ever in the Korean Peninsula. Afterwards a rail network was rapidly expanded throughout the Peninsula by Japan, up until the end of the Pacific War in 1945. This study examines the geographic nature of such Japan-built rail network, the characters of individual line segments of the network, and passenger and freight flows on the network. The study goes on to explore how much the contemporary rail system of S.Korea is indebted to the old-day rail network; how much the old and new rail systems are different from each other in their nature; and in what ways the Japan-built network has intervened the urban system of the country and the emergence of national corridors.