

## GWIKS Soh Jaipil Circle

### The Second Talk: Why Is There No Rebellion in North Korea?

Considering its dire economic conditions and abrupt leadership changes since the 1990s, North Korea has been considered one of the most likely autocracies that could experience a large scale rebellion. In reality, however, there has been no such internal turmoil so far. What can account for the absence of rebellion in North Korea? Professor Jung sought to answer this question based on the understanding of how rebel groups emerge in autocracies. Since rebel groups are generally formed by a small number of the relatively well-educated who have support networks and political grievances toward the inner circle of ruling elites, we argue the North Korean regime established an effective elite control system that prevents an elite schism from developing into a rebellion. To support this argument, Professor Jung drew empirical evidence from the historical development of elite control system in North Korea and in-depth interviews with high-ranking North Korean defectors.

With  
**Dr. Jai Kwan Jung**



**Jai Kwan Jung** (Ph.D., Cornell University) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Korea University. Prior to joining Korea University, he was a Korea Foundation Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science and the Elliott School at the George Washington University. His research interests include political conflict and violence, party politics, and inter-Korean relations. His work has appeared in a number of academic journals such as *Democratization*, *European Journal of Political Research*, *International Political Science Review*, *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, *Mobilization*, and *Pacific Focus*. He is now working on a book project on a comparative study of the North Korean Regime's durability.

Moderated by  
**Celeste Arrington**



**Celeste Arrington** is a Korea Foundation Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at GW. She is one of the core faculties of GWIKS and a member of the Mike and Maureen Mansfield Foundation's U.S.-Japan Network for the Future and its U.S.-Korea Scholar-Policymaker Nexus. She specializes in comparative politics, with a regional focus on the Koreas and Japan. Her research interests include civil society, social movements, democratic governance, law and society, policymaking processes, the media and politics, and qualitative methods. She is also interested in the international relations and security of Northeast Asia and transnational activism.



*The Soh Jaipil Circle is named after the famous champion of Korean independence who earned a medical degree at GW. The circle will bring together people from the academic and think tank communities for serious and engaged conversations of Korea issues.*

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