

## **Socialism Beyond Borders: Separation and Synchronicity on the Korea-China Frontier, 1989**

에드 풀포드 (Ed Pulford), University of Manchester

This paper draws on a combination of anthropological and historical methods to discuss how life in the Korea-China borderlands in 1989 sheds light on wider regional and global dynamics in the last days of the Cold War. Given the two polities' structural similarities as socialist states, the border between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the People's Republic of China represented a specific kind of divide in the twentieth-century context. Thanks to cognate processes of boundary-drawing, both physically at the inter-state border and symbolically through taxonomical regimes of high socialist modernity, and a cross-border population of ethnic Koreans (Joseonjok) in China, there was much that was shared across the Rivers Tumen and Yalu. Yet notional ideological solidarity and formal similarity did not necessarily make intra-socialist borders any more permeable or less fractious than those between the socialist and capitalist worlds, even during the 1950s-60s when, under the aegis of wider amity with the Soviet Union, celebrations of "unbreakable" Sino-Korean Friendship were ubiquitous. This, I argue here, was a result of a state of affairs I call "socialism in several countries," a spatial and – crucially – temporal order wherein political boundary-reinforcement measures, from border infrastructure to ethnic classification and population movements, elided with symbolic representations of difference which circulated at the level of state culture through staged national performances. In demonstrating this by drawing on long-term ethnographic and historical work in Yanbian Korean Autonomous prefecture on the Sino-Korean border, with a specific focus on the pivotal year of 1989, this paper offers new border-rooted perspectives on socialist internationalism and its separating effects in space and time. Through multiscalar consideration of both the borderland lives of local Joseonjok and events of a more geopolitical character in the last years of the Cold War, we can discern how inter-state and inter-ethnicity divides produced by cross-border adaptations of Stalinist statism interfaced with socialism's universalist claims to be applicable to all nations. This adds to existing research which reveals Cold War divides as multiple and, perhaps, suggests new ways of tracing the roots of rifts in the socialist world from the 1960s to the 1990s.