

Rainer Dormels (2014)

Profiles of the cities of DPR Korea – Anju

This work was supported by the Academy of Korean Studies (KSPS) Grant funded by the Korean Government (MOE) (AKS-2011-BAA-2105)

Find an introduction to the project at

<http://www.univie.ac.at/koreanologie/index.php?id=digital-north-korea0>

This work has been published as a chapter in:

Rainer Dormels (2014): North Korea's Cities. Jimoondang. Seoul.

IV.2.8. Anju

A city with a long tradition as an administrative and military center

Anju is a city with a long tradition on the lower reaches of the Chŏngchŏn-gang, one of the four major rivers of North Korea. It is located at an old road for delegations that has exceeded the river. Originally the craft of Anju was based on the processing of agricultural products. In the 1970s, Anju became an industrial location due to the construction of a large chemical company. In 1987, Anju became a city (*si*).

Due to the population as well as the area size, Anju is ranked in the middle between the 27 cities of the DPR Korea. Numerous *ri* testify that large areas of the city have a rural character.

Table Anju–I. Basic data

Population	240,117 (Rank 15)
Area	433 km ² (Rank 16)
Population density	555 l./km ² (Rank 14)
Administrative divisions	21 <i>dong</i> /22 <i>ri</i> (49%) (Rank 22)
“Urban” population/“rural” population	69.8%/30.2% (Rank 23)

Anju is a walled town, which developed on the road from the South towards Uiju, and also developed into an important market town. The fact that Anju was of great administrative and military importance at the beginning of the Joson period and as well as in the Koryo period, is evidenced by the fact that the name of the Phyongan Province is composed of the initial syllables of the cities Pyongyang and Anju. The city walls of Anju consist of three parts, the inner wall, the outer wall and the new wall. The inner wall was

built in the Koguryo period, the outer wall at the beginning of the Joson time and the new wall in the 17th century.

The inner wall, which was constructed during the Koguryo period, was built west of the Kadu-san, and the Chŏngchŏn-gang in the North serves as a natural moat and it is located on the high bank of the river. The wall has an oval shape and a diameter of 2,280 m. The wall uses mountain ridges, high banks of the river and hills of the plateau. Remnants of the wall have been preserved. The Paeksang pavilion is located northwest of the wall. It was first built in the Koryo period. When the city wall was completed in the Joson period, the Paeksang pavilion was reerected. During the Korean War it was destroyed by the air raid of the U.S. Air Force and rebuilt in 1977 (Kondüre Mandüre 2005; IPA 3 2003, 289-290). Another tourist attraction is the Chilsŏng Park with its lake and the seven artificial islands, symbolizing the zodiac sign of the Great Bear. On one of these islands is the Chilsŏng Pavilion (Jong, Song Il 2011, 126).

Flood endangered downtown

The urban area can be roughly divided into two physical regions. On the one hand, in the north and northwest of the city, the flat land is located in the valley of the Chŏngchŏn-gang and in the West are the Western Korean Coast Lowlands. This location, in the flat country, and the closeness of the city center to the Chŏngchŏn-gang signify a special flood hazard for the city.

However, the south of the urban area is occupied by highland, which is a part of the Myohyang mountain range. With 534 m, the Madu-san is the highest elevation within the municipal area. Additional to the Chŏngchŏn-gang, which flows through the north of the city, the backed-up Yŏnphung-ho on the border to Kaechon is an important source for the water supply of Anju. It is also promoted as a tourist attraction by the name of “sea in mountain” (Jong, Song Il 2011, 125).

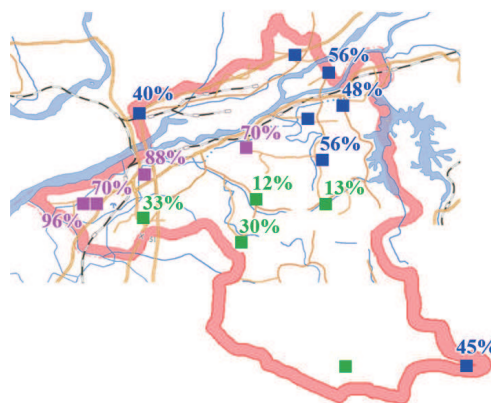


Figure Anju-I. Agricultural land in the ri

Table Anju-II. Climate values

Annual average	January temperature	August temperature	Precipitation
9.4°C (15)	-7.3°C (18)	23.8°C (11)	1.013 mm (11)

The agriculture of Anju primarily focuses on the production of grain, which mostly is rice and corn. Yet, in order to supply the urban population, the production of vegetables (Chinese cabbage, radish, spinach, and cucumber), fruits (pears, apples, peaches, grapes) and meat is brought forward as well. Pigs, ducks and chicken are kept in intensive livestock farms. The seat of the authority, which is responsible for the irrigation systems within the Phyongnam Province, is located in Anju. It was installed in 1956 (IPA-3 2003, 287).

Development into an industrial city after the construction of the Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex in the 1970s

Until the liberation from the Japanese occupation, there were exclusively weaving mills and breweries in this region. In the mid 1970s, Anju developed into a “new industrial city.” The main industries of Anju are the chemical industry, as well as the power generation and mechanical engineering industries. A special feature of the industrial structure is the 94% high proportion of the total industrial production of large companies that are financed from the state budget. IPA-3 (2003, 286) mentions here the Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex, the Chŏngchŏnggang Thermal Power Plant, the Anju Telecommunication Machine Factory, the September 28 Machine Factory, the Anju Tractor Accessory Factory, the Anju Silicate Brick Factory, the Silk Factory Anju, the Anju Export Garment Factory and the Ryongwŏn Mine.

Furthermore, there are also companies in the city that are funded by the municipal city, which mainly produce textiles, daily goods, food, medicine and furs.

This city is surrounded by major coal mines. Within the urban area, there are mines of iron, lead, graphite and limestone.

Table Anju-III. Ranking (in parenthesis: number of industrial companies or cultural institutions)

Anju	KOFC	MOU	IPA	KCNA	KIET	Summary
Ranks	14 (13)	16 (17)	11 (17)	15 (9)	12 (32)	16
Important	11 (4)	14 (2)	11 (7)		10 (14)	11 (8)
Culture			22 (3)			

Table Anju-IV. Ranking (Total number of companies in relation to population)

Anju	KOFC	MOU	IPA	KCNA	KIET	Summary
Ranks	11	15	7-10-22	9	10-6	11-5

The ranking of the number of companies is similar to the ranking of the population. However, Anju achieved a higher ranking in the number of important companies, which is reflected by the high number of state-funded large-scale companies.

Table Anju–V. Specification (in parenthesis: number of industrial companies)

Anju	Light Industry	Heavy Industry	Mining	Energy
KOFC	14 (3)	15 (8)	9 (1)	8 (1)
MOU	9 (11)	11 (5)	–	5 (1)
IPA	16 (7)	13 (7)	8 (2)	8 (1)
KCNA	17 (3)	11 (4)	–	4 (2)
KIET	11 (14)	22 (13)	11 (2)	2 (3)

A significant specialization on heavy or light industry cannot be ascertained. Both areas are represented in Anju with several important companies.

In chapter III.7.3. eight companies were identified as important for Anju: Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex, Anju Anillon Spinning Mill, Anju Silicate Brick Factory, September 28 Machine Factory (former Anju Trained Farm Machine Factory), Anju Telecommunication Machine Factory, Anju Silk Factory, Factory No. 121 (Anju Paper Factory), Chŏngchŏngang Thermal Power Plant.

The Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex is one of the most important petrochemical factories in the western region of North Korea. 1974, the year of the commencement of the Chemical Combine Namhŭng, is considered as the hour of birth of Anju as an industrial city. In 1976, they already began with the production. At the company, which is located in Namhŭng-dong, various chemicals such as urea fertilizer, polyethylene, acrylonitrile and polypropylene are produced. In this company even a Technical University exists, which is used for the training of technicians in the chemical field. It was built in August 1976. Also the Anju Anilon Spinning Mill is assigned to the Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex and operates since October 1987. Primarily staple fibers are produced there (IPA-3, 2003, 284-285). When the Anilon Spinning Mill was built, professionals from the GDR were employed, and the machines came from the VEB Textima project Karl-Marx-Stadt. The oil, which was processed in Anju, came from the Soviet Union and China. In the combine 10,000 people were employed. For these people and for the workers in the coal mines in the neighborhood, new homes were built (Becker 1988, 48-49).

The Anju Silicate Brick Factory is in operation since 1986. The area size of the property is 300,000 m² (IPA-3 2003, 285). At the September 28 Machine Factory, a wide range of pumps for mining, irrigation of fields, for the use in factories or on building lots are produced (IPA-3 2003, 284). The Anju Silk Factory is located in Namhŭng-dong

and mainly produces artificial silk and pure silk. Also silk scarves and ties for men are produced (IPA-3 2003, 284). The Factory No. 121 was established in 1980. Here, pulp as well as various paper products are produced (art paper, cardboard, newsprint, toilet paper etc.), but also soaps and alcohol (IPA-3 2003, 287).

The Chŏngchŏngang Thermal Power Plant burns coal from nearby mines and supply companies in the region such as the Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex with energy. The construction started in 1971 with Chinese technical assistance and, in 1976 (power plant 1) and 1977 (power plants 2-4), was completed (KOFC 2010, 155).

In 1975, shortly after the construction of the Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex, the Anju Hotel with a capacity of about 800 people, the Anju department store and the restaurant Anju Chilsŏnggak with a capacity of approximately 400 people were built hotel in Anju-up (IPA-3 2003, 284-287).

Three urbanized areas before the city founding in 1987

The current urban area of Anju can initially be divided into two parts, the northern densely populated part of the city of Anju and the southern, mountainous part, which was created in 1997 as Ungok-jigu consisting of seven *ri* of the city of Anju and one *ri* of the city Sunchon, although the latter in the meantime became a part of the city of Anju.

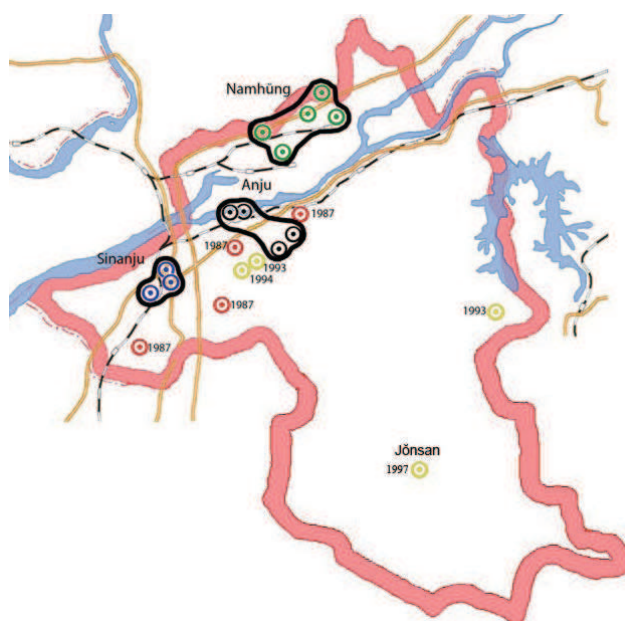


Figure Anju-II. Up, rodongjagu and dong

The southern part of the county demonstrated three clearly separated centers, even before Anju was appointed to a city in 1987:

1. the administrative center of the county (Anju-up)
2. Sinanju (“New-Anju”)
3. the *rodongjagu* of Namhŭng.

The old road, which has been used by diplomats between Pyongyang and Uiju, had crossed the Chŏngchŏn-gang in the walled city of Anju. Anju has developed into an important trading center. However, the railway line from Seoul to Sinuiju went past the town. On this line, therefore, the “New” Anju, Sinanju, developed. Anju stagnated and Sinanju prepared itself to surpass Anju. According to Lautensach (1945, 253), the newly founded Sinanju had 13,029 inhabitants due to vigorous growth, whilst Anju had 18,284 inhabitants. On the other hand, in 1974 in a *rodongjagu*, in Pakchon-kun, located in the north of Anju, the Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex was built. In 1980 the *rodongjagu* was added into the Anju-kun. Thus, the Anju-kun possessed together with the *up* and the two *rodongjagu* three urbanized areas. However, the development of new *dong* near the former *up* between 1987 and 1994 shows, that against expectations, which were entertained prior to 1945, the area around the old *up* of the *kun* became more developed than Sinanju. Thereby Anju/Sinanju had a different development than Uiju/Sinanju.

When Anju-kun was upgraded into a city (*si*) in 1987, the *up* and the two *rodongjagu* Sinanju and Namhŭng were divided into a total of twelve *dong*. Moreover, four new *dong* were created by the splitting from *ri* or the transformation of *ri*:

1. Anju-up

The former administrative center of Anju-kun, Anju-up, was split, at the same time as the designation of Anju into a city, into three *dong*: Tŭngbangsan-dong, Namchon-dong, Chilsŏng-dong. The rest was combined with Ryŏngyŏn-ri to Ryŏnyŏn-dong. These four *dong* are located in the center of the city. A tourist attraction is the Paeksang Pavilion in Tŭngbangsan-dong. In this *dong* modern apartment buildings have been built (Commie Travel). In Chilsŏng-dong the Chilsŏng Park with its pond is located, on whose edge the Anju-Chilsŏnggak restaurant was built. Also the Anju department store is in Chilsŏng-dong.

2. Sinanju

In 1952, Wŏnhŭng-ri emerged from three *ri* of the Sinanju-myon due the abolition of the *myon*. In 1963 the Wŏnhŭng-ri was formed as Sinanju-rodongjagu.

When Anju was granted a status as a city (*si*), Sinanju-rodongjagu on the one hand

was divided into Sinwŏn-dong and Wŏnhŭng-dong, although the remainder, with parts of the Songhak-ri, formed the Yŏkjŏn-dong. These three *dong* lie in the west of the city around the “Youth” Sinanju station in Yŏkjŏn-dong, where the Kaechon line (between Sinanju and Kaechon), which has been opened in 1915, splits from the Phyongui line (between Pyongyang and Uiju), which is the name used in North Korea to designate the main railway line of the country. In Sinwŏn-dong, the Sinanju Textile Factory is located.

Sinanju became a victim of violent US-bomber attacks during the Korean War, due to the railway bridges over the Chŏngchŏng-gang.



Figure Anju-III. Sinanju (2012)



Figure Anju-IV. Sinanju station (2012)



Figure Anju-V. Sinanju (North) (2012)

3. Namhŭng in the north of the city

In 1972 the Tŏksŏng-rodongjagu was founded within Pakchon-kun, which is situated in the northern border to Anju-kun, from Tŏksŏng-ri, as well as parts of Ryonghŭng-

ri and Namhŭng-ri. In 1980 it merged with the Anju-kun and was renamed Namhŭng-rodongjagu. When the city was founded the *rodongjagu* was divided into five *dong* (Namphyŏng-dong, Kubong-dong, Namhŭng-dong, Tŏksŏng-dong and Toksan-dong). The *dong* are located near the short railway branch line that is the Kubong line, which branches off from the main line eastwards, bifurcates into two parts and ends within the urban area of Anju. In this area the stations of Namhŭng, East Namhŭng, Kubongsan, and Chŏnghwaryŏk and the factories “Youth” Namhŭng Chemical Combine, and the Anjus Acrylic Spinning Company, the Anju Silk Weaving Company, the Paper Mill “No. 121” and the power plant Chŏngchŏngang are located.

4. New *dong*-formations in the course of the city founding

In addition to the twelve *dong* that emerged from the *up* and the two *rodongjagu*, four additional *dong* arose during the city founding. Two of them emerged close to the old *up*: Chŏngchŏngang-dong as a split-off of Wŏnphung-ri east of the city center, and Phungnyŏn-dong, which is a split-off of Misang-ri, southwest of the city center.

Two other *dong* originated in the southwest of the municipal area: Changsong-ri turned into Changsong-dong and in the southwest corner of the city Chŏngsong-ri became Chŏngsong-dong.

Changes after the city founding

Overall, Anju had thus 16 *dong* at the time of the foundation of the city. In 1993 and 1994 three more *dong* that were converted from *ri* were added: in 1993 Songam-dong and Misang-dong, in 1994 Munbong-dong.

1. Urbanization of the center in the South-Southwest direction

Misang-dong and Munbong-dong lie south of the old *up* and north of Changsong-dong. Therefore an expansion of the urbanized area of Anju from the city center towards the South-Southwest is ascertained.

2. Reduction of the municipal area in favor to Kaecheon

Songam-dong is located in the outer southeast of the municipal area of Anju on the border to the city of Kaecheon. In 1997, they reduced the municipal area of Anju when part of Songam-dong (Anju-si) was formed into Ryongwŏn-dong of Kaecheon-si.

3. The formation of the Ungok-jigu in 1997

Seven *ri* south of the city (Ryongbok-ri, Ryongdam-ri, Ryongjŏn-ri, Junhŭng-ri, Ripsŏk-ri,

Panryong-ri, Kuryong-ri) together with Sinhŭng-ri (Sunchon-si) form the Ungok-Chigu, an area with a status on the level of a *kun*. The working-class district of Jönsan is formed from parts of Ryongbok-ri and Junghŭng-ri. This Ungok-jigu is presented on new maps as part of the city of Anju.⁴¹

Statistics

Urbanized areas before the city founding (*up* and *rodongjagu*)

1939-1949, 1952-1987 Anju-up (1)

1963-1987 Sinanju-rodongjagu (2)

1972-1987 Namhŭng-rodongjagu (first Töksöng-rodongjagu, 1980 renamed Namhŭng-rodongjagu) (3)

	<i>Dong</i> -formation	<i>Dong</i> -splitting
1987 (16)	4	(9)
1993 (18)	2	-
1994 (19)	1	-

Anju – a city with different historical roots

If you genetically divide the North Korean cities roughly into three groups, the first group includes cities, which were an administrative center already before the influence of the Japanese in the Joseon-time, the second group includes cities that have been established by the Japanese or whose foundation is attributed to measures of Japanese participants, and the third group contains those cities that were founded after 1945 by the DPR Korea.

Therefore, it is possible to divide the urbanized regions of Anju into three areas, which can be assigned to each of the three groups described above. The city center of Anju is genetically traced back to a fortified old town. Sinanju owes its existence to the fact that the railway line from Seoul to Sinuiju had left Anju located in the East, and in the 1970s, Namhŭng was built from the ground up.

41 Even the DPR Korea 2008 Population Census (2009) and PSC-8 (2009) do not call the Ungok-jigu a separate administrative unit. According to IPA-3 (2003) and IPA-4 (2003), Anju has 19 *dong* and 14 *ri*, and the Ungok-jigu consists of one *ku* (*rodongjagu*) and eight *ri*. According to PSC-8 (2009, 397), Anju (obviously without Ungok-jigu) has 20 *dong* and 14 *ri*.

Whenever the region is ravaged by floods, the city on the Chŏngchŏn-gang always makes the headlines. The oil import dependency of the city due to the high importance of the Namhŭng Youth Chemical Complex must have become a serious problem for the city due to the changes in the foreign policy conditions.