

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

January 11, 2019

Via FedEx

CONFIDENTIAL

Balazs Szalontai  
Korea University, Sejong Campus  
Division of Public Sociology and Korean Unification  
2511 Sejong-ro  
Sejong, 339-700  
Republic of Korea

Re: RCT 2016-04

Dear Dr. Szalontai:

I write regarding the research misconduct proceedings in the above-captioned case. In accordance with Columbia University's Institutional Policy on Misconduct in Research, this letter is to notify you that the University's Standing Committee on the Conduct of Research (the "Standing Committee") has completed its review of the Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee (the "Report") investigating your allegations of research misconduct against Dr. Charles Armstrong relating to his 2013 book *Tyranny of the Weak: North Korea and the World, 1950-1992* (the "Armstrong Book"), as well as earlier publications.

The Standing Committee met on December 14, 2018 and voted to accept the Report's findings that Dr. Armstrong committed research misconduct through plagiarism and fabrication. The basis for the decision was that the investigation had been carried out in accordance with the Misconduct Policy, and that the conclusion was reasonable and supported by the record.

The Standing Committee voted to modify the Report's recommendations for corrective action. The Standing Committee's recommended corrective actions, in their entirety, are as follows:

1. Following the completion of the administrative procedures under the Institutional Policy on Misconduct in Research, the University should notify the American Historical Association, Cornell University Press, and the Weatherhead East Asian Institute of the outcome. Moreover, given the public character of the dispute over the

past two years, the University should consider issuing a public notice of some kind. Such a release would publicly validate the accuracy of your statements.

2. With respect to existing copies of the Armstrong Book, the University should request that Cornell University Press take the following steps to avoid confusion between the first edition of the book and subsequent, corrected editions:
  - a. Modify the electronic version of the Armstrong Book to indicate clearly that it is a corrected version of the original edition, including a new cover.
  - b. Modify the hard copy of the Armstrong Book to indicate clearly that it is a corrected version of the original edition, including a new cover or banner or sticker that would indicate "corrected edition."
3. Neither the original first edition nor the corrected first edition of the Armstrong Book should be used as a textbook in Columbia courses.
4. If a new edition of the Armstrong Book is released, Dr. Armstrong should address further errors you identified. Cornell University Press should be notified that Dr. Armstrong has been directed to correct any further errors.
5. The Provost and the Executive Vice President for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences should be notified of the outcome of this Investigation and the Provost should receive a copy of the Report, even if there is no appeal by Dr. Armstrong.

The bases for the modifications to the Report's recommended corrective action included the following:

1. The Standing Committee rejected the Report's recommendation that the University should provide you with a gift of research funding. The Standing Committee determined such an action would be beyond the scope of the Misconduct Policy.
2. The Standing Committee rejected the Report's recommendation that Dr. Armstrong be required to provide acknowledgment of misconduct to you and in the preface of any future editions of the Armstrong Book. The Standing Committee did not think it would be feasible to compel Dr. Armstrong to take such action, and that such a recommendation would be inconsistent with the purposes of the Misconduct Policy.
3. The Standing Committee found the research misconduct identified in this case to be egregious and that its role includes assuring that appropriate notifications are made to relevant institutional leaders, in this case the Provost and EVP for the Arts and Sciences.

This case now will move to the adjudication phase during which the Executive Vice President for Research may accept, reject, or modify the recommendations of the Standing Committee.

Please feel free to contact [redacted] if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

cc:

[redacted]