



Korea (South and North)

Scott Pearson
Professor Emeritus
Stanford University

This essay focuses on the political, economic, and cultural history of Korea. I discuss the rise, accomplishments, and fall of Korean kingdoms over 23 centuries – Old Choson (4th-1st centuries BCE), Paekche, Koguryo, and early Silla (3rd-7th centuries CE), later Silla (668-935), Koryo (918-1392), and Choson (1392-1910). I also examine Japanese colonialism (1910-1941), World War II (1941-1945), the Korean War (1950-1953), and the contrasting paths taken by South and North Korea (1953-present). I wrote these lectures for a cruise in Japan and South Korea aboard *The World, Residences at Sea* in 2014.

I first discuss how Korea was unified in the 7th century, how the Korean kingdoms created wealth, and how Japan colonized Korea in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I next look at economic change under Japanese colonial rule, why Korea was partitioned at the 38th parallel, and why the Korean War was a stalemate. I then analyze South Korea's economy – why it was stagnant in the 1950s, boomed between 1961 and 1997, and slowed after 1997. In contrast, I look at why North Korea's economy first grew (1945-1975) and then shrunk (after 1975) and why

and how North Korea developed nuclear weapons. I append a time line, a bibliography, and a description of sites that I visited in South Korea.

Korean Kingdoms (4th century BCE-1910)

Ancient Kingdoms (4th century BCE-7th century CE). By the 4th century BCE, several small states had emerged on the Korean peninsula with sufficient strength and viability to attract the attention of Chinese historians. Old Choson (4th-1st centuries BCE), located in the region encompassing southern Manchuria and northwestern Korea, was the most formidable. The first large, dominant political entity on the peninsula, Old Choson was a political federation of walled towns with a population of horse-riding people wielding bronze weapons.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:History_of_Korea-108_BC.png>

Old Choson (Gojoseon), 4th-1st centuries BCE

The state of Paekche grew to prominence in the 3rd century CE, controlling the core area of Korea around modern Seoul. That decentralized, aristocratic state combined Chinese and indigenous political traditions, initiated the practice of royal patrilineal succession, and adopted Buddhism as the state religion. During that time, the state

of Koguryo (Goguryeo) dominated the harsh climatic region of northeastern Korea and eastern Manchuria.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Three_Kingdoms_of_Korea_Map.png>

*Korea's Three Kingdoms, Paekche, Koguryo, and Silla –
3rd-7th centuries CE*

The Koguryo legacy is considered the genesis of mainstream Korean history by North Korea, while South Korea emphasizes the

importance of the kingdom of Silla, sited in the southeastern part of the peninsula. Silla was ruled by a wealthy, cultured elite, from its capital at Kyongju, north of Pusan. Kong Naemul (356-402) established hereditary rule over Silla as a large, consolidated kingship, although strong, centralized government did not emerge until the second half of the 5th century when the capital became the administrative and economic center. Plowing and irrigation were introduced in the early 6th century, and the subsequent rise in agricultural output catalyzed further political and cultural developments such as the adoption of an administrative code and Buddhism as the state religion.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gyeongju-2.jpg>>*

Silla Burial Mounds – Kyongju’s Tumuli Park, 4th-6th centuries

The three kingdoms of Paekche, Koguryo, and Silla were subject to strong influence from China, including the introduction of Chinese models of statecraft, Confucian philosophy and education systems, and the Chinese written language. The period of the three kingdoms came to an end in 668, following a century of conflict, when Silla vanquished the other two with military support from Tang China and unified Korea.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Confucius_Tang_Dynasty.jpg>

*Confucius, Depicted as a Court Official –
Painting by Tang Artist Wu Daozi, 8th century*

Silla and Koryo Kingdoms (7th-14th centuries). Silla (668-935) brought nearly the entire Korean peninsula under its control following

its military victory in the 7th century. The kingdom's people enjoyed one of the most advanced civilizations of the world. The capital, Kyongju, was home to perhaps 1 million residents, and the aristocratic elite led extravagant, highly cultured lifestyles with thousands of slaves, large herds of livestock, and fortunes in finely worked gold. However, splintering and factionalism among regional leaders eventually precipitated a rebellion against the central authority that irreparably weakened the state and led to Silla's decline during the 9th century.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons available at*
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anapji_Pond-Gyeongju-Korea-2006-10.jpg>

*Anapji Pond, Gyeongju National Park, South Korea –
Created in 674 in the Capital of the Silla Kingdom (668-935)*

Meanwhile, a section of the Koguryo kingdom, now called Parhae, persevered in the north. During the 8th century, Parhae gained control of the northern part of Korea, all of northeastern Manchuria, and the Liaot'ung peninsula. In the 9th century, a Parhae leader named Wang Kon (Taejo) defeated Silla and named his expanded kingdom Koryo (meaning 'high mountains and sparkling waters'), a shortened version of Koguryo, from which comes the modern name of Korea. Wang Kon solidified his power base by marrying a Silla princess and co-opting the Silla aristocracy, and he established a dynasty that ruled the unified peninsula for nearly 500 years (918-1392).



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wang_Kon.jpg>*

*Parhae King Wang Kon (Taejo) (877-943) –
Created and Ruled the Koryo Kingdom (918-1392)*

Following Chinese models of Confucian statecraft, the elite Confucian bureaucratic scholars in Koryo dominated land ownership. Land and its produce became private property of the elite, subject to taxation, and could be bequeathed. Tenant laborers worked the land and paid rent in kind. The power base of the aristocracy rested on land ownership rather than government positions, although one could create

access to the other. The formalization of those arrangements produced the pattern of highly concentrated land ownership that persisted through the Japanese colonial period. The Koryo kingdom engaged in trade, especially with China, exchanging gold, silver, and ginseng for silk, porcelain, and wood-block books. Arab ships traded spices and medicines for leather and furs. Japan was a secondary trading partner.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Goryeonobles.jpg>>

*Koryo Period (918-1392) Painting –
Depicting Estate-owning Koryo Bureaucrat-Nobles*

In 1231, Mongol forces drove the Koryo government from the peninsula, and, following another invasion in 1254, the Koryo dynasty was forced to amalgamate into the Mongol power structure. The Mongols used Korean forces and ships in their unsuccessful attempts to invade Japan in 1274 and 1281.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Takezaki_suenaga_ekotoba3.jpg>

*Japanese Samurai Boarding Mongol Ships, 1281 –
Before Kamikaze Destroyed the Mongol Fleet*

Choson Kingdom (1392-1910). Still under Mongol suzerainty, Korea later became an arena for ongoing conflict between the Mongols and China's Ming dynasty (1368-1644). A Korean general, Yi Song-gye, exploited the conflict by turning on his Mongol allies, taking the Koryo capital at Kaesong, and founding the Choson dynasty with its capital at Seoul. That dynasty reigned from 1392 until the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%EC%A1%B0%EC%84%A0_%ED%83%9C%EC%A1%B0.JPG>

*King Taejo (Formerly General Yi Song-gye, reigned 1392-1398) –
Founded the Choson Dynasty and Established Its Capital in Seoul*

Yi Song-gye, who was consecrated as King Taejo, reformed land ownership to enhance control by the central authority and weaken the landed aristocracy. By declaring all land to be the property of the state, he undermined the influence of Buddhist temples and local elites and enhanced the potential for tax collection by the central government. The Choson Kingdom was closely affiliated with China and became China's

most important satellite state under both the Ming and Qing (1644-1912) dynasties. Choson's system of governance, modeled after that of China, relied on an agrarian bureaucracy ruled from a powerful center by Neo-Confucian scholar-administrators. However, landed aristocratic families remained a strong force.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gyeonghuigung.01.jpg>>

*Gyeongbok Palace, Built in 1395, Seoul –
Primary Royal Palace of the Choson Dynasty (1392-1910)*

Yi Song-gye reformed land ownership to enhance control by the central authority and weaken the landed aristocracy. By declaring all

land to be the property of the state, he undermined the influence of Buddhist temples and local elites and enhanced the potential for tax collection by the central government. The Choson Kingdom was closely affiliated with China and became China's most important satellite state under both the Ming and Qing (1644-1912) dynasties. Choson's system of governance, modeled after that of China, relied on an agrarian bureaucracy ruled from a powerful center by Neo-Confucian scholar-administrators. However, landed aristocratic families remained a strong force.

The most outstanding ruler of the Choson dynasty was King Sejong (r. 1418-1450). Under his leadership, Choson Korea carried out practical research in agriculture, medicine, and pharmacology and developed a standardized system of weights and measures. Sejong is renowned for overseeing the creation of the first Korean alphabet, *hangul*, with 10 vowels and 14 consonants.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sejong_the_Great_Bronze_statue_02.JPG>

*King Sejong the Great (1418-1450) –
Creator of Hangeul, 24-Letter Korean Alphabet*

Agricultural output expanded during the Choson era, particularly during the early 17th century with the introduction of new transplanting methods, double cropping, and irrigation. Agricultural labor-saving techniques allowed increased production of non-food crops, such as ginseng, tobacco, and cotton.

In a sharp departure from the Koryo period, trade and commerce became less important under the Choson dynasty. Commerce was feared as a threat to the rigid system of social and political control, and the Confucian class system put merchants at the bottom of the social scale. Confucian social institutions stifled foreign trade, which was run through state monopolies, making Choson the least commercial of the East Asian nations. Trade with China was part of a tribute system rather than commercial exchange. Even in the late 19th century, the Choson kingdom had no commercial class or major commercial centers.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Danwon-Huwonyuyeon.JPG>>

Neo-Confucianist Yangbans (Nobles) Avoided Commerce in Choson Kingdom – Painting of Yangbans, 18th century

Transition to Japanese Imperial Control (1876-1910). When Western powers opened China and Japan in the second half of the 19th century, the largely autarkic Choson resisted outside influence, comfortable in its position of relative isolation and privilege within China's sphere of influence. However, in a classic instance of gunboat

diplomacy, Japan forced Choson to acquiesce to the Treaty of Kanghwa in 1876, giving Japanese traders the rights of extraterritoriality and opening several Korean ports to international trade.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:UnyoBattle.jpg>>

*Japanese Gunboat Diplomacy Forced the Opening of Korea in 1876 –
Japanese Ship Unyo Attacking Kanghwa Island, 1875*

Seeking to balance growing Japanese influence in Korea, China compelled the Korean rulers to sign similar treaties with the United States, Great Britain, and Germany in 1882. (The treaty with the U.S. included the design of the Korean flag, still used by South Korea today).

Choson agreed to additional treaties with Russia and Italy in 1884 and France in 1886.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Children_kabuki_theater_in_Nagahama_\(lady_Shizuka,_10_y.o.\);_2013.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Children_kabuki_theater_in_Nagahama_(lady_Shizuka,_10_y.o.);_2013.jpg)>

Traditional Kabuki Theater Venerated the Japanese Imperial Past

But Japan quickly gained the upper hand. Japan invaded Korea in 1894, after the Choson government had invited Chinese troops into the country to help quell the Tonghak Rebellion. Japan effectively controlled Korea after China acknowledged Korean autonomy in the Treaty of Shimonoseki (1895), following Japan's military victory over China in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895. Japanese advisers sat in

every Korean ministry, and Japan dictated the terms of a new constitution that concentrated power at the center.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:First_Chinese_Japanese_war_map_of_battles.jpg

The Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) – Japan Defeated China and Gained the Independence of Korea and Control of Taiwan

Japan gained further recognition of its interests in Korea from Russia in the treaty brokered by Theodore Roosevelt to conclude the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). In a secret agreement, the United States agreed to give Japan a free hand in Korea in return for Japan's recognizing American suzerainty in the Philippines. Japan declared a protectorate in Korea in 1905. In 1909, a Korean patriot assassinated Ito Hirobumi, a prominent Japanese official and Resident General in Korea.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Prince_Ito_and_Crown_Prince_of_Korea.jpg>

*Ito Hirobumi, Japan's Resident General in Korea –
and Yi Un, the Crown Prince of Korea, 1907*

Japan then annexed Korea in 1910, renamed the country Chosen, and placed a Japanese Governor-General in charge of its new colony. Japanese imperialism in Korea was based on several motives – to prevent Korea (“the dagger pointing at the heart of Japan”) from falling under the control of an imperial competitor, to gain international prestige as a rising imperial power, and to benefit economically from Korean raw materials and preferential access to the Korean market.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Location_Japanese_Empire.png>

*The Japanese Empire in 1910 –
Japan, Taiwan, Kwantung, Karafuto, and Korea*

Japanese Colonialism, Partition, and the Korean War (1910-1953)

Japanese Colonialism (1910-1945). After the annexation of Korea in 1910, the Japanese military and bureaucrats came to control every sphere of activity in the country. Initially the relationship followed the classic colonial model, in which Korea served Japan as a source of cheap agricultural imports and a market for manufactured exports, and Korean agricultural output grew substantially in the 1920s. Japan reinforced the traditional landed aristocracy (*yangbang*) by implementing contract laws and a cadastral survey, and land not owned by the *yangbang* was bought up by the Oriental Development Company and Japanese-owned agricultural cooperatives.

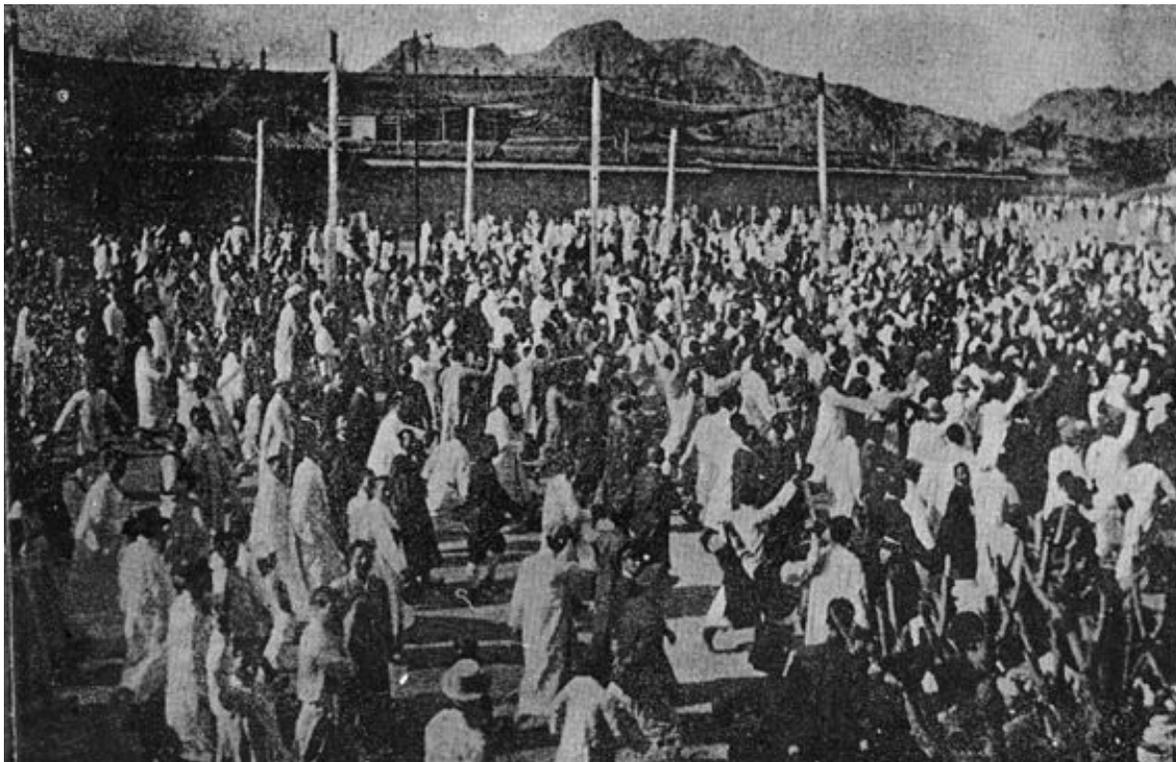


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Production_still_from_%22Final_Straw, Food, Earth, Happiness%22_shows_rice_harvesting_on_a_natural_farm.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Production_still_from_%22Final_Straw,_Food,_Earth,_Happiness%22_shows_rice_harvesting_on_a_natural_farm.jpg)>

*Japanese Controlled Land and Exported Rice to Japan –
Harvesting Rice in Hongcheon Province, South Korea*

The erosion of traditional tenancy rights and the creation of a class of dispossessed rural poor fueled anti-colonial resentment. After the former Korean emperor, Kojong, died in early 1919, resentment boiled over into a popular protest movement, mobilizing over one million people. By the end of the summer of 1919, over 50,000 Koreans had been imprisoned, 7,000 were killed, and the brutality of Japan's colonial rule shocked many Japanese as well as the Western world. Rural dislocation also created a flow of emigrants to Japan, seeking work as

coal miners, construction workers, and unskilled factory laborers. The number of Koreans in Japan ballooned from a few thousand in 1910 to 300,000 by the late 1920s.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:\(Red_Cross_pamphlet_on_March_1st_Movement\)_KADA-shyun15-012~12.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:(Red_Cross_pamphlet_on_March_1st_Movement)_KADA-shyun15-012~12.jpg)>

Koreans Demonstrated Against Japanese Occupation – 7,000 Killed, 50,000 Imprisoned in the Samil Independence Movement, 1919

In the 1930s, Japan also spurred industrialization on the Korean peninsula, with considerable success. Between 1911 and 1938, average annual growth in Korea outpaced that in Japan – 3.57 percent compared

to 3.36 percent. But because of the transfer of wealth from Korea to Japan, the standard of living of most Koreans declined during the colonial period.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hungnam_korea.jpg>

*Hungnam Works of Nippon Chisso, 1927 –
World's Second Largest Complex for Manufacturing Chemicals*

A Japanese state-owned enterprise, the South Manchurian Railway Company (SMRC), took over Korean railways in 1933 and doubled rail lengths within ten years. The Japanese also expanded the road network from virtually nothing to 53,000 km by 1945, more than half of the total in all of China. By 1945, Korea had the most developed infrastructure of any country in Asia except for Japan.

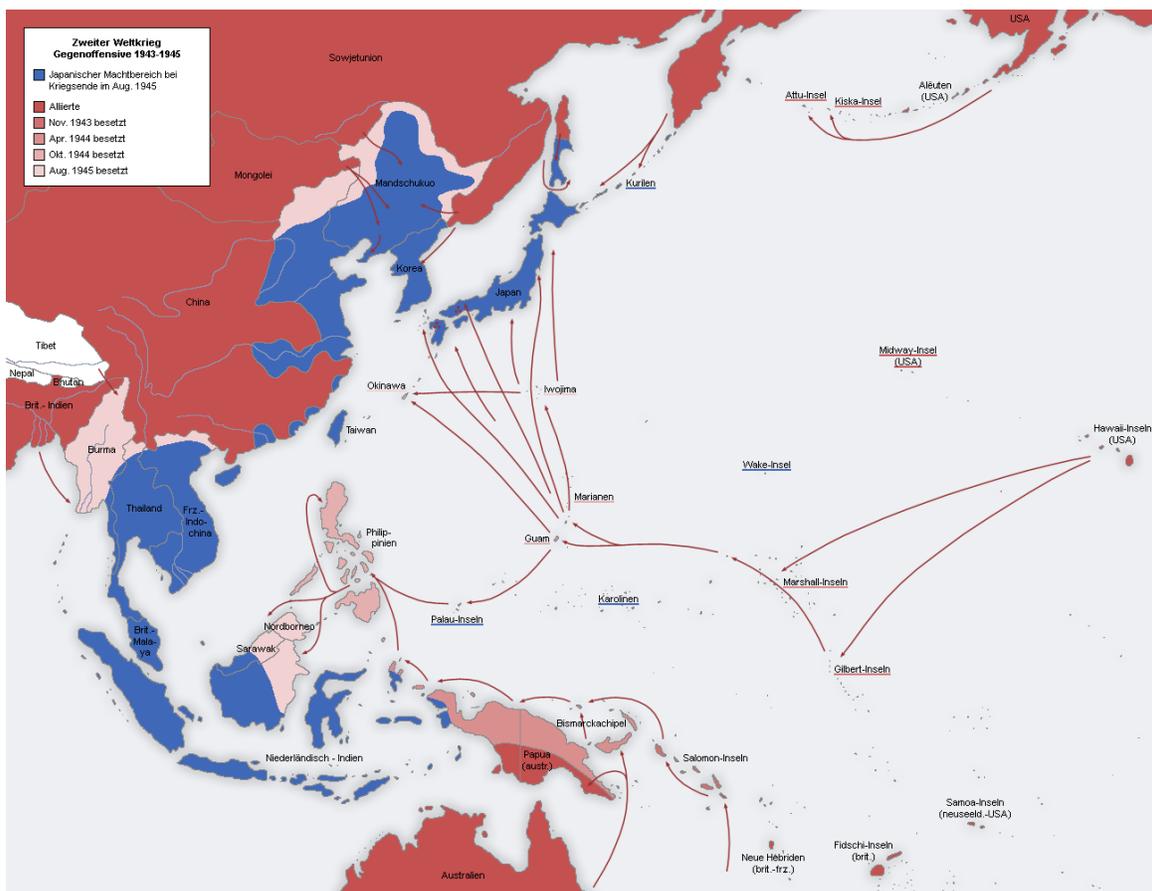


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:South_Manchuria_Railway_LOC_03283.jpg>

*Japan's South Manchuria Railway Corporation –
Doubled Railway Mileage in Korea (1933-1943)*

Industrialization led Korea out of the Great Depression, with manufacturing growth rates averaging more than 10 percent per year. The near-total absence of taxes and regulation made for a “capitalist paradise”, and the zaibatsu dominated with generous government support, accounting for as much as 75 percent of total capital investment by 1940. A new zaibatsu, Nitchitsu, accounted for one-third of direct investment in Korea, with firms in magnesium, coal, oil, explosives, aluminum, and zinc. Nitchitsu also owned 90 percent of Korea’s electric resources, including the Suiho dam (the world’s second largest at the

time), and Nippon Chisso, the world's second largest chemical complex. The Depression and industrialization further fueled Korean population flows to cities in Korea, Manchuria, and Japan. In 1941, 1.4 million Koreans were in Japan. By the end of the war, that number reached nearly 2 million, making up one-third of the industrial labor force in Japan.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Second_world_war_asia_1943-1945_map_de.png>

*Allied Counter-offensive Against Japan, 1943-1945 –
Korea Was an Integral Part of Japan during World War II (1941-1945)*

Post-World War II Partition (1945-1950). In 1943, the Allies began to consider Korea's future. They decided on an international trusteeship period to educate the Koreans on democracy and self-governance. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the United States conceded the possibility of Soviet control of Korea when it sought Soviet support for an offensive to drive Japan from the Asian continent. However, after Japan's surrender (August 15, 1945) the Americans reconsidered and issued General Order #1, laying out the 38th parallel partition. Japan's withdrawal left a vacuum that the Soviets could easily have filled. But they observed General Order #1, avoiding confrontation with the US over Korea because of their larger stakes in Eastern Europe.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maryland_National_Guard_\(15891153193\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Maryland_National_Guard_(15891153193).jpg)>*

*General Order #1, 1945, Partition of Korea –
American Soldier On Guard at the 38th Parallel*

The Americans arrived one month later to initiate their administration of the south from Seoul. Japan had installed Yo Un'hyong as head of an “interim administrative committee”, and Yo had formed the Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence (CPKI). The CPKI established provincial chapters in Korea’s 13 provinces as well as local level “people’s committees” and proclaimed the Korean People’s Republic (KPR). Despite the KPR’s moderate

platform, conservative Koreans and former Japanese authorities persuaded the Americans that they were Soviet-inspired communists.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anti-Trusteeship_Campaign.jpg>

*South Koreans Protested Declaration of Allied Trusteeship –
December 1945*

The head of the United States Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), General John Hodge, refused to recognize the KPR or the people's committees. Instead, the Americans supported the creation of Syngman Rhee's Korean Democratic Party (KDP), mainly comprising the conservative landed aristocracy. In his bureaucracy and National Police, Hodge included Koreans who had served in the Japanese colonial regime. The USAMGIK thus antagonized labor unions, alienated

peasant associations, and incurred the wrath of the Korean population, provoking widespread rebellion that the Americans suppressed.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_reed_hodge.jpg>*

*General John Hodge (1893-1963) –
Military Governor of South Korea, 1945-1948*

Whereas the Americans essentially recreated the Japanese occupation, in the north the Soviets dismantled all remnants of the colonial regime. Rather than impose a foreign military authority, the Soviets worked through the KPR people's committees that the Americans disbanded in the south. The Soviets implemented land reform, nationalized the largest industries, and instituted various labor

reforms. At the December 1945 Moscow Conference, the US, USSR, Great Britain, and China agreed to administer Korea under a four-party trusteeship, with the USSR and US coordinating policy through a Joint Soviet-American Commission. News of the conference provoked pro-independence demonstrations throughout Korea, supported by rightists as well as communists.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Welcome_Celebration_for_Red_Army_in_Pyongyang_g2.JPG>

*Soviets Generated Popular Support for People's Committees –
Soviets Welcoming the Red Army in Pyongyang, 1945*

However, Soviet pressure compelled the communists to favor the Moscow agreement, and Kim Il Sung systematically removed opponents

of trusteeship from the north, eliminating possibilities for national unity. Syngman Rhee and his KDP formed the National Council for the Rapid Realization of Korean Independence, intending to ignore the trusteeship arrangements. The Joint Commission, meanwhile, was unable to agree on which Korean groups to include in the process toward independence. As Soviet-American cooperation during World War II faded into the Cold War, coordinating policy on Korea became impossible.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kim_Il-sung_in_1950.jpg>

Kim Il Sung (1912-1994, Pictured in 1950 – Supreme Leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), 1948-1994

After the Joint Commission collapsed, the US took the issue to the United Nations, which in November 1947 authorized a UN presence (United Nations Temporary Committee on Korea, UNTCOK) in Korea to oversee elections. However, the Soviets barred UNTCOK, and elections proceeded only in the south. Syngman Rhee favored that decision, but most Koreans believed that separate elections would cement the partition. Despite a widespread boycott, the results of the May 1948 elections were held by the UN as reflective of the national will in the south. The elected representatives drafted a constitution for a newly formed Republic of Korea (ROK) in the south and elected Syngman Rhee as the ROK's first president. The USSR then organized elections in the north, establishing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on September 9, 1948 with Kim Il Sung as its first premier.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons available at*
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Syngman_Rhee-TIME-1953.jpg>

*Syngman Rhee (1875-1965), Pictured in 1953 –
First President of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), 1948-1960*

The Korean War – Outbreak and Invasions (1950-1951).

Although both the Soviet Union and the United States had sought a unified, stable Korea, each envisioned a Korea within its own sphere of influence. The provisional governments under trusteeship had preserved the possibility of peaceful unification, but UN recognition of the Republic of Korea in the south and Soviet-bloc recognition of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the north shattered that

illusion. Beginning in 1948, the rhetoric of the two Korean governments emphasized that military means would be required for unification.



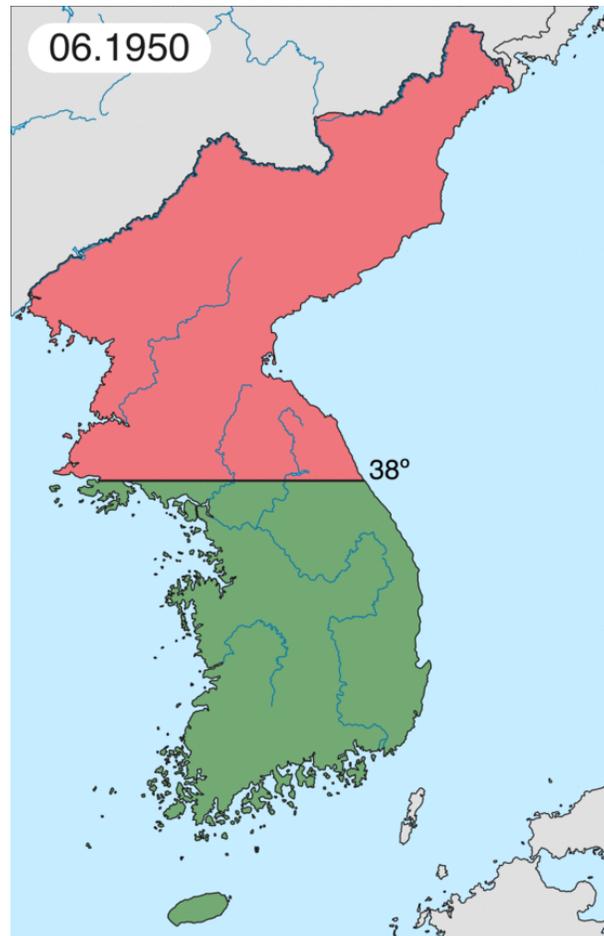
Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Soviet_liberators_marching_through_the_Korean_county_road._October_1945.jpg>

*Soviet Occupation Troops Left North Korea in 1948 –
But 400 Soviet Military Advisors Were Active in 1950*

North Korea was better prepared for war than the ROK. It had a larger army with trained and hardened veterans, a strong industrial base capable of manufacturing armaments, Soviet weaponry and 400

experienced Soviet military advisors, and Chinese military support.

South Korea had only a small, inexperienced, and untrained military.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korean_war_1950-1953.gif>*

Division of Korea at the Outbreak of the Korean War, June 1950

On June 25, 1950, 70,000 North Korean soldiers with Soviet tanks crossed the 38th parallel. The Korean People's Army (KPA) captured Seoul on June 29 and reached southern parts of the peninsula by August. American forces, commanded by General Douglas MacArthur under a

United Nations flag, successfully carried out a risky surprise-landing at Inchon on September 15, and two weeks later the UN forces (140,000 troops, including 83,000 Americans) drove the KPA back across the 38th parallel. Within weeks, the UN forces and the rapidly re-built ROK army approached the Yalu River.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:IncheonLandingMacArthur.jpg>>*

*General Douglas MacArthur and Staff –
Viewing the Shelling Of Inchon, September 15, 1950*

In early October, about 200,000 Chinese troops joined the KPA and repelled the southern advance, re-taking Seoul by the end of December. Mao Zedong entered the war to defend his Asian communist

ally of North Korea, secure China's borders at the Yalu River, and assert Chinese primacy in the region over that of the Soviet Union. China also expected Soviet air cover, which Joseph Stalin later refused to give. By the end of 1950, ten nations had joined the US and the ROK and furnished 20,000 troops to the UN coalition. The back-and-forth movement continued as the UN forces pressed the KPA and Chinese soldiers back to the Han River by the end of December.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mao_Zedong_sitting.jpg>

*Mao Zedong's Motives in Entering the Korean War in October 1950 –
Aid Communist Ally, Defend Yalu Border, and Preempt USSR*

The UN Allies won the decisive battle of Wonju in February, and retook Seoul in March 1951. The DPRK and Chinese armies suffered horrendous losses in the spring 1951 offensive and retreated back to the 38th parallel. By the summer of 1951, the UN fighting force had grown to nearly one million troops – 590,000 South Koreans, 300,000 Americans, and 39,000 soldiers from other nations (mostly in the British Commonwealth).



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:HA-SC-98-06983-Crew_of_M24_along_Naktong_River_front-Korean_war-17_Aug_1950.JPG>*

American Crew of an M-24 Tank, Nakong River Front, August 1950

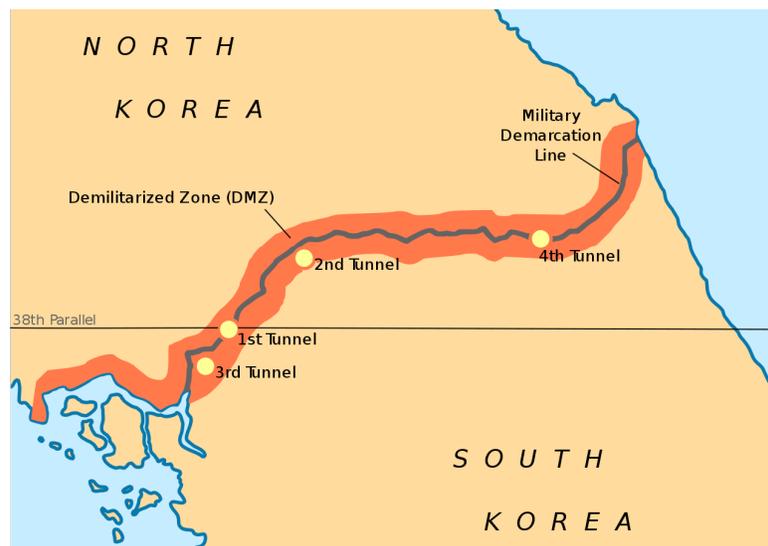
The Korean War – Stalemate, Armistice, and Effects (1951-1953). The conflict then reached a stalemate along the 38th parallel. The UN allies had a stronger military position and might have attempted the military unification of Korea. But they were unsure how China and the USSR would react to another allied invasion of the north. Because the UN coalition had air superiority, China and the DPRK resorted to digging trenches, bunkers, and tunnels to provide the backbone of their defense. By the end of the war, China had built an incredible 780 miles of tunnels, some forming underground cities.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons available at*
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:195201_1952%E5%B9%B4%E6%9C%9D%E9%B2%9C%E6%88%98%E4%BA%89%E4%B8%AD%E7%9A%84%E4%B8%AD%E6%96%B9%E9%98%B5%E5%9C%B0%E4%B8%B4%E6%97%B6%E9%A3%9F%E5%A0%82.png>

*Korean War Stalemate (1951-1953) –
Chinese Troops Dug 780 Miles of Tunnels in the North*

Armistice talks began in the summer of 1951. However, the talks repeatedly stalled, principally over the issue of POW treatment and repatriation. The UN allies insisted that their North Korean and Chinese POWs be permitted to defect if they chose to do so. Agreement was not reached until two years later. Following the death of Joseph Stalin in March 1953, the Soviets proposed the armistice. American president Harry Truman agreed to it after the POW issue was resolved as the Allies desired. The armistice finally was signed on July 27, 1953. The negotiators created a 2.5-mile-wide “demilitarized zone” (DMZ) at the line of cease-fire, near (though not exactly along) the 38th parallel.

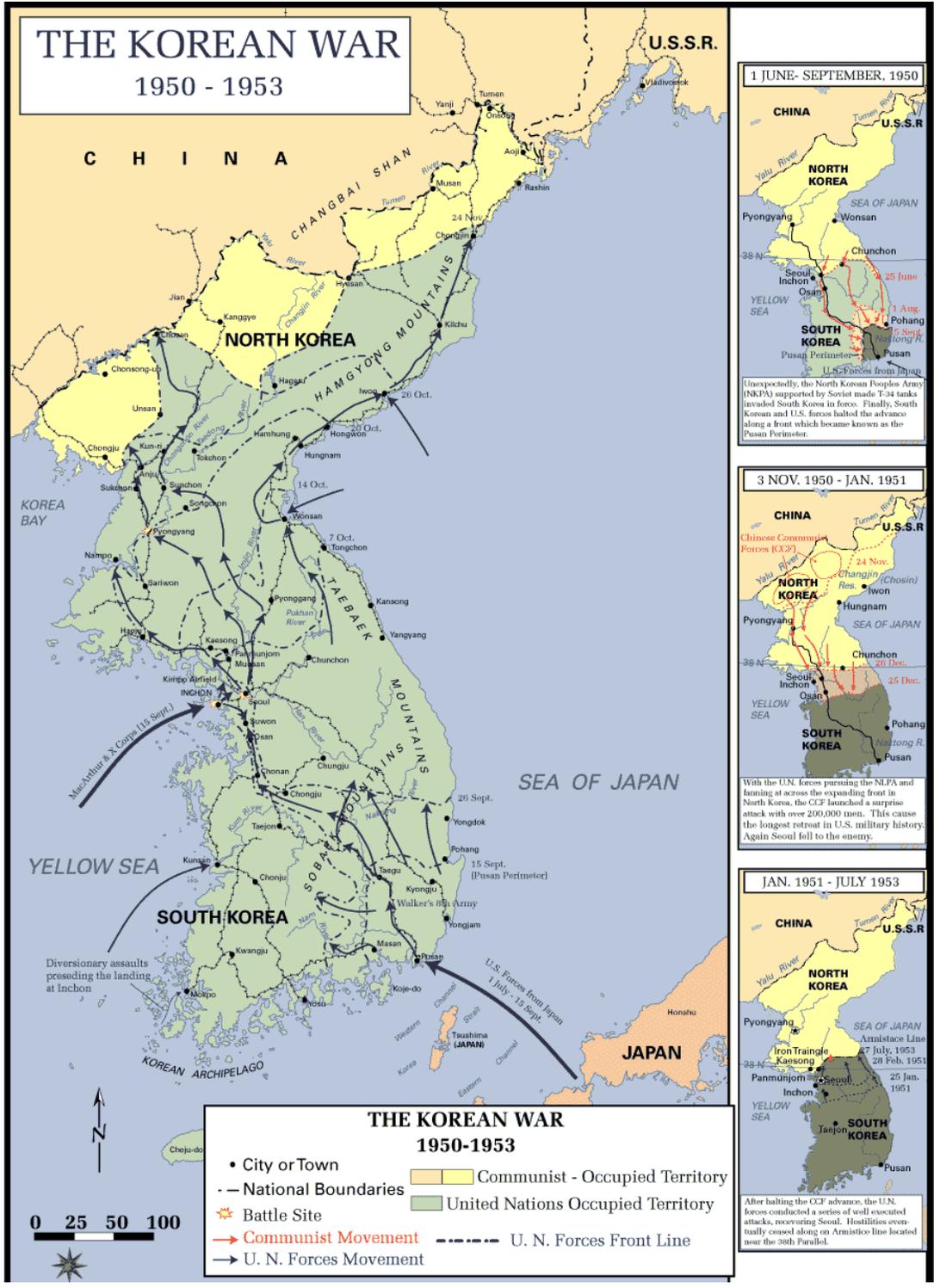


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korea_DMZ.svg>

The Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), Separating South and North Korea

The war had claimed 4 million Korean lives. Over half of those casualties were civilians, and about three-quarters were North Korean. The US lost 55,000 lives and other contributors to the UN force lost about 4,000 men. North Korea viewed the armistice as an American surrender and proclaimed a glorious victory over US imperialism. In South Korea, the outcome of the war ensured continued US support for Syngman Rhee, despite American discomfort with his regime.

The Korean War gave the United States its first experience with an unpopular war that lacked support from both the American public and the military. Moreover, the inability to secure an unambiguous victory against a communist threat fueled American paranoia and insecurity, creating a political climate that led to McCarthyism as well as American military action in Vietnam. The Korean War reinforced China's role in East Asia, both as an opponent of the West and as the leading communist power in East Asia. Japan might have been the greatest beneficiary, because the Korean War confirmed Japan as the most important ally of the West in Asia and hastened its transition from occupation to self-government.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korea-overview.gif>

Shifts in the Korean War, 1950-1953

South Korea's Industrial Transformation (1953-present)

Syngman Rhee and Slow Growth (1953-1961). The partition of Korea in 1948 left South Korea at an extreme economic disadvantage, because most of the peninsula's industrial base, natural resources, and power facilities were located in the North. South Korea's population was uprooted, traumatized, and uneducated. Two million Koreans had migrated from the North into the South during and after the Korean War. Compulsory education in the 1950s and 1960s eventually transformed the population into an industrial labor base, and a centuries-old tradition of strong central governance by a technocratic bureaucracy provided the precedent for state-led development.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korean_Peninsula.jpg>

*Partition of Korea, 1948 –
Industry and Power in North, 2 Million Migrants Moved South*

Syngman Rhee served as the autocratic president of South Korea from 1948 until 1960 with less than enthusiastic support from the United States. Rhee blatantly rigged an election in 1960, and in the April 1960 Revolution 100,000 students and workers demanded that he leave office.

The octogenarian Rhee went into exile, and Chang Moon was elected president in a brief democratic interlude.

Under Rhee's direction, economic development in South Korea was painfully slow in the 1950s. By 1961, the level of per capita income in the South was only \$80 whereas it was \$160 in the North. Rhee's economic policy focused on substituting for imports rather than on promoting exports. South Korea maintained an overvalued exchange rate and protected its industry by banning imports from Japan.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rhee_Syng-man_1956.jpg>

*Syngman Rhee (1875-1965), Pictured in 1956 –
First President of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), 1948-1960*

Development in South Korea initially relied on massive assistance from the United States, beginning immediately after World War II. Between 1945 and 1965, US assistance totaled \$12 billion. In 1957, for example, total domestic tax revenue in South Korea amounted to \$456 million, while US economic assistance contributed \$383 million, US military assistance a further \$400 million, and US military expenditures another \$300 million. During that time, the US supplied more military aid to South Korea than it did to all of Europe and four times the amount of US military assistance to all of Latin America. South Korea also benefited later from its relations with the US during the Vietnam conflict by receiving many supply and construction contracts.

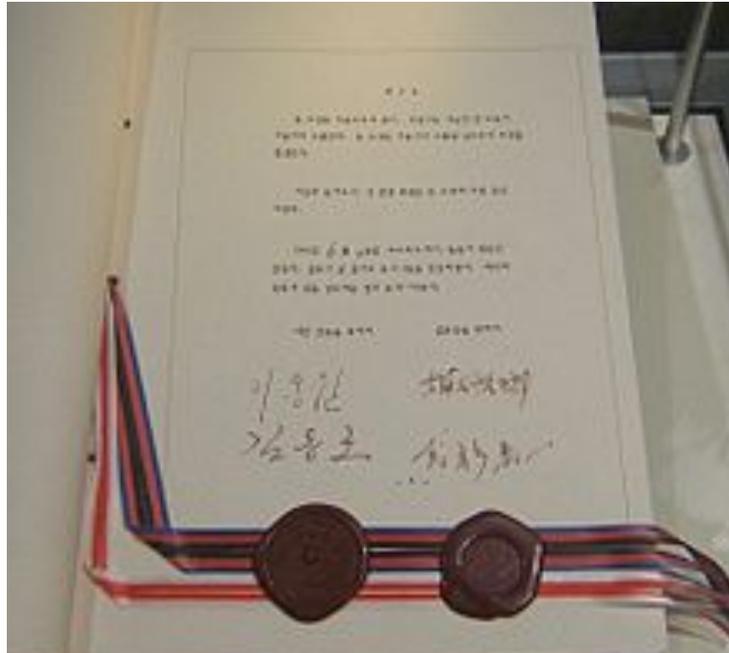


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Dr._Syngman_Rhee_at_Han_River_Bridge_in_Seoul.jpg>

*South Korea Stagnated Despite US Aid –
President Syngman Rhee and US Army Engineers, 1950*

In the mid-1960s, the US scaled down its economic assistance to South Korea, and the country's relations with Japan, the regional economic powerhouse, became crucial. Under the 1965 Korea-Japan Basic Treaty, Japan promised economic assistance in return for which South Korea dropped war reparations claims. Immediately thereafter, Japan supplied a \$300 million grant and \$200 million in loans, and the Japanese private sector invested another \$300 million. The total value of South Korean exports at that time was only about \$200 million,

indicating the enormous role played by foreign assistance in the South Korean economy until the mid-1960s.



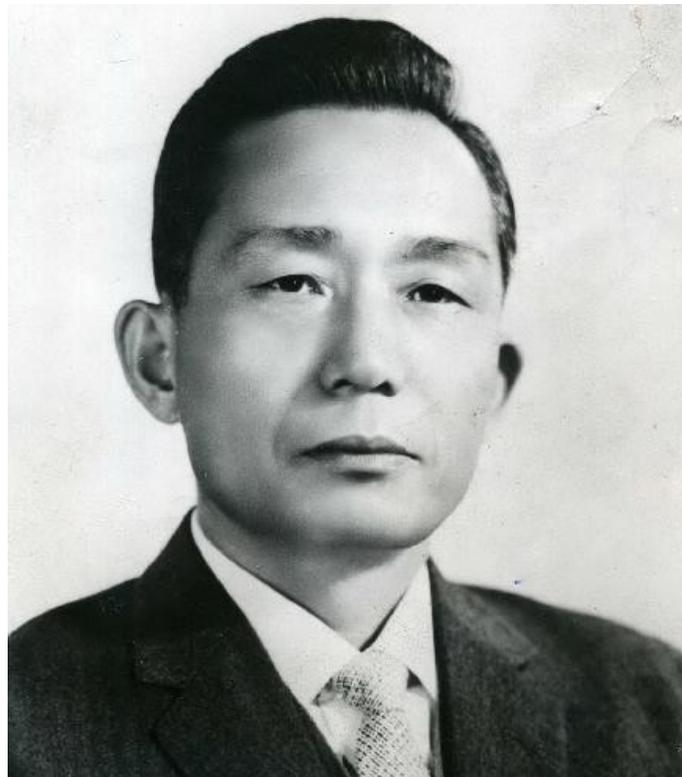
Source: *Wikimedia Commons* available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_copy_of_Treaty_on_Basic_Relations_between_Japan_and_the_Republic_of_Korea.jpg

*The Japan-Korea Treaty on Basic Relations (1965) –
President Park Chung-Hee Signed for South Korea*

Park Chung Hee and Rapid Transformation (1961-1979).

In 1961, Park Chung Hee took autocratic control of South Korea after executing a military coup that ousted President Chang Moon. Park's remarkable accomplishments in the area of economic development were achieved at a high cost with respect to political freedom. He severely restricted civil liberties and relied on the Korean Central Intelligence

Agency (KCIA) to intimidate political opponents. In 1972, Park declared martial law, promulgated a new constitution, became president for life, and introduced his *yusin* policy of restoration. Park was incorruptible and never amassed personal wealth. On October 26, 1979 Park was assassinated by the KCIA director in a personal vendetta.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Park_Chung-hee_1963%27s.png>

*President Park Chung Hee (1961-1979) –
Growth-oriented Military Dictator*

When Park came to power, about 40 percent of GDP derived from agriculture, centered on rice cultivation. Park initiated South Korea's

rapid industrialization, which was based initially on productivity growth in the agricultural sector. Higher agricultural yields relied on increasing domestic production of fertilizer, which in turn required investments in electricity generation, oil refining, and the chemical industry.

Agricultural mechanization spurred the evolution of a domestic machine tool industry, and increased commercialization in agriculture required improvements in transportation and communication infrastructure. By the 1970s, South Korea had the highest rice yields in the world.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rice_fields_in_Namwon.jpg>

*Park Linked Industrial Development to Agriculture –
Chemical Fertilizers and Insecticides in South Korean Rice Production*

Productivity growth in agriculture released labor for urbanized factory work as South Korea entered export markets for labor-intensive, light manufactures such as textiles, apparel, shoes, toys, and low-end electronics. Park promoted manufactured exports by maintaining an undervalued exchange rate, so that South Korea could catch up with and surpass North Korea and attain economic independence from the United States. He also hoped that rapid economic growth would provide him with political legitimacy.

In 1973, Park launched his Heavy and Chemical Industrialization campaign – a massive effort using subsidized loans and government-provided infrastructure to promote the manufacture and export of steel, automobiles, ships, machine tools, chemicals, and electronics. Japanese funds from the 1965 Basic Treaty were used to build the Pohang steel mill, completed in 1973 as the world's most advanced steel mill with an annual capacity of 1 million tons. By 1981, the capacity at the Pohang steel mill had increased to 8.5 million tons. Park's program for rapid industrialization relied on infant industry protection and restrictions on foreign direct investment to shield Korean industry from foreign control.

In exchange for supplying about 50,000 troops to fight with the Americans in Vietnam between 1966 and 1973, South Korea received nearly \$1 billion in American payments.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%ED%8F%AC%EC%8A%A4%EC%BD%94_%ED%8F%AC%ED%95%AD.jpg

POSCO Steel Mill, Pohang, South Korea – Pictured in 2020

During the 1970s, many Korean industrial conglomerates, now known worldwide, came into existence. The government actively cultivated the emergence of *chaebol*, conglomerates that resemble Japan's *keiretsu*. A chaebol comprises a family-owned and managed group of companies with monopoly power in a particular industry. As many as 70 percent of chaebol are still held by the founding family. The combination of chaebol and state-led development proved highly

effective in the catch-up period, during which South Korea exploited economies-of-scale, learning-by-doing, and inter-industry spillovers largely through technology transfers from more advanced economies.

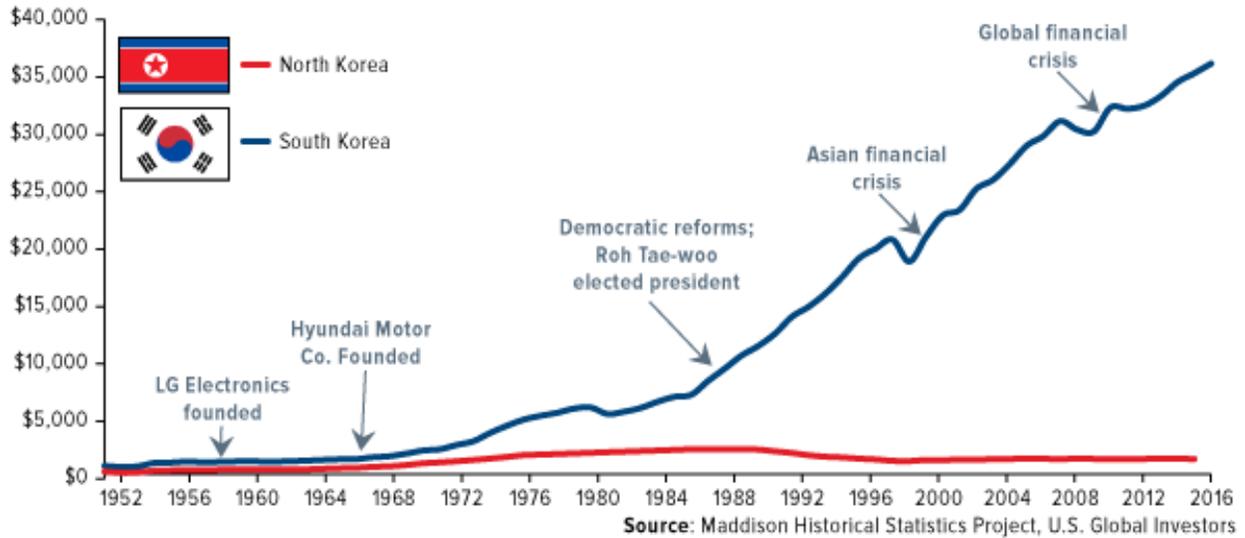


*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seoul_\(South_Korea\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seoul_(South_Korea).jpg)>*

*South Korea's Export-oriented Chaebol Are Headquartered in Seoul-
The Commercial and Financial Center of South Korea, Pictured in 2016*

The defining characteristic of South Korea's development strategy was export-led growth. In 1962, South Korea exports totaled \$42 million in value, of which only \$9 million was earned by manufactures. In 1970, total exports reached \$1 billion, and in 1981, exports worth \$20 billion consisted almost entirely of manufactured goods. Under Park's strong leadership, South Korea's GDP expanded at an annual rate of 9.7

percent between 1963 and 1979 – one of the most rapid economic growth rates in world history.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:GDP_history_Since_1950_~_2016.png

Gross National Income Per Capita, 1950-2016 – South Korea (Blue Line) and North Korea (Red Line)

Political Transition and Continued Growth (1979-1998).

General Chun Doo Hwan governed South Korea as a military dictator from 1980 until 1988. Chun was responsible for South Korea's most infamous episode of repression, when troops killed numerous demonstrating students and other civilians in Kwangju (Cholla Province) on May 27, 1980. Chun's handpicked successor and military colleague, Roh Tae Woo, initiated democratic reforms and held a presidential

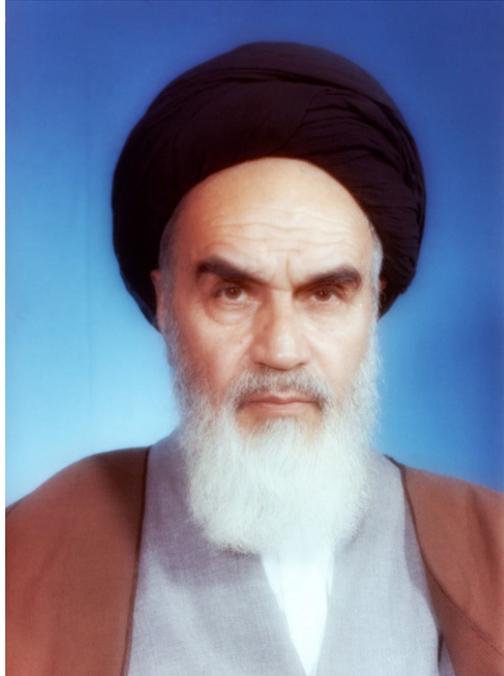
election in 1987, which he won largely due to rivalry between the two main opposition parties. (Both Chun and Roh were 1955 graduates of the Korean Military Academy.) In 1992, Kim Young Sam's election to the presidency was South Korea's first peaceful transfer of power. Kim then became South Korea's first democratically-elected, non-military president since Chang Moon was ousted in 1961. In 1995, Chun and Roh were indicted and imprisoned for corrupt use of political funds.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Samsung_GALAXY_S4_zoom_\(White\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Samsung_GALAXY_S4_zoom_(White).jpg)>

*Growth Continued Despite Uncertain Political Leadership –
Galaxy S4, Made by Samsung Electronics, Large Technology Company*

After South Korea began to catch up with the advanced economies in the late 1970s, heavy state presence in the economy and concentration of economic power proved less successful. In 1979, South Korea experienced its first post-war crisis. National income fell by 5 percent, principally due to the global oil shock and rising labor costs. GDP shrank by 6 percent in 1980, and exports stagnated. The global demand slump transformed the success of rapid industrialization into an onerous burden of overcapacity, as heavy industry operated at 30 percent of capacity. Meanwhile, South Korea's national debt, which had amounted to \$18 billion in 1978, ballooned to \$44 billion by the end of 1983, exceeded in emerging economies only by those of Mexico and Brazil.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_Ruhollah_Khomeini.jpg>

*Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic Revolution in Iran, 1979 –
Caused Oil Price Rise to \$34/Barrel and Global Recession (1979-1981)*

Massive support from Japan and the US helped the South Korean economy rebound. Japan alone provided loans totaling \$4 billion in early 1983. In return for that rescue, South Korea had to open its markets to American and Japanese service industries (banking and insurance) and American agricultural exports (rice, wheat, tobacco, and fruit). Thereafter, South Korea's export-led economy recovered. In a shift of economic policy, Chun's technocratic advisors (Korean economists trained in the US) convinced him to open the South Korean

economy to more liberal trade and foreign investment and to control inflation. Most of the country's expanding exports in the 1980s and 1990s were manufactured goods produced by chaebol in heavy and chemical industries (such as Hyundai automobiles).



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kia_Sephia_1.6_GTX_1994_\(10193740393\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kia_Sephia_1.6_GTX_1994_(10193740393).jpg)>

Kia Sephia 1994 – South Korea's Hyundai-Kia, a Leading Chaebol and the World's Fourth Largest Automobile Manufacturer

The policy shift in the 1980s also focused on promoting the production and export of high-technology products. The Chun government created research institutes, promoted technical education, and provided inducements for technically-trained Korean expatriates to

return home. In the mid-1980s, South Korea became just the third country in the world to manufacture 286-bit silicon chips and began shipping inexpensive home computers to western markets.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KAIST_fountains_view.jpg>

*The Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, Daejeon –
10,500 Undergraduate and Graduate Students, Established in 1971*

President Roh Tae Woo negotiated two South Korean foreign-policy triumphs over North Korea. In 1990, the cash-strapped USSR opened full diplomatic relations with South Korea. Moreover, in return for \$1.4 billion of economic assistance (soft loans) from South Korea, the Soviets agreed to end military assistance and cooperation with North

Korea. Two years later, in 1992, China and South Korea exchanged diplomatic representation for the first time, and China ceased opposing the admission of South Korea to the United Nations. In 1996, during Kim Young Sam's presidency, South Korea reached a pinnacle of economic status when it joined the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD), the "rich-man's club" of industrialized Western countries. In spite of the economic downturn of 1979-1983, South Korea achieved an impressive average annual rate of growth of GDP of 8.4 percent between 1979 and 1997.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KTX-Sancheon.jpg>>

*South Korea's Economy Grew Rapidly (1963-1997) –
KTX Sancheon High-speed Train (220 mph)*

Economic Recovery and Political Change (1998-present).

Since 1987, South Korea has held seven free and fair presidential elections and its presidents have served single five-year terms. After four decades of autocracy and military dictatorships, South Korea has become a working democracy led by powerful presidents. Beginning with the presidency of Kim Dae Jung (1998-2003), South Korea focused its industrial policy increasingly on market forces and less on government direction. Kim Dae Jung presided over an era of economic reform, and he received international acclaim and a Nobel Peace Prize for enacting a conciliatory Sunshine Policy toward North Korea and meeting with Kim Sung Il, the North Korean prime minister.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kim_Daejung_official_portrait.jpg>

*Kim Dae Jung, President of South Korea (1998-2003) –
Nobel Peace Prize Recipient in 2000*

Kim's successor, Roh Moo-hyun (2003-2008), continued an open policy toward the North, but aimed his presidency mainly on democracy initiatives and anti-corruption campaigns. Tragically, Roh committed suicide in 2009, when he was under investigation for corruption. Korean politics then shifted in 2008 under the presidency of Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013), a conservative businessman and former mayor of Seoul. Lee continued a liberal industrial policy, but ended the attempts to

reconcile with North Korea, expecting a collapse of the economy of the North. Lee also initiated a Green Growth program in 2008, aiming 80 percent of his \$38 billion stimulus package at environmentally-sound endeavors. In 2018, Lee began serving 15 years in jail for corruption.

In December 2012, Park Geun-hye (2013-2017), the 60-year-old daughter of Park Chung Hee, was elected president of South Korea with a majority of the votes (all five of her democratically-elected predecessors had received only pluralities). Park initially was a popular centrist who adopted a carrots-and sticks-approach in her dealings with North Korea. She was impeached for corruption and removed from office in 2017 and is now in detention, serving a 32-year sentence for corruption.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Park_Geunhye_official_portrait.png>

*Park Geun-hye, President of South Korea (2013-2017) –
Official Portrait,, 2013*

Moon Jae-in of the Democratic Party was elected President in 2017. Moon is a political liberal who supports peaceful reunification with North Korea and has met with Kim Jung Un, the Northern Korean leader. His government raised the minimum wage by 16 percent and reduced the maximum workweek from 68 to 52 hours. Moon favors greater regulation of the powerful chaebols (industrial conglomerates) and stronger persecution of corruption. In 2020, in an historic election

victory his Democratic Party and its allies won 180 of the 300 seats in the national legislature.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Moon_Jaein_official_portrait.jpg>*

*Moon Jae-in, President of South Korea (2017-present) –
Official Portrait, 2018*

The South Korean economy slumped during the 1997 Asian economic crisis, Per capita income fell 6 percent between 1997 and 1998. But the economy recovered with remarkable speed under the administration of Kim Dae Jung. The source of the collapse lay largely in fixed exchange rates pegged at levels that were not commensurate

with large foreign debt burdens. Nearly all of the chaebol and large banks could not pay their debts and were virtually bankrupt. To its chagrin, in 1998 South Korea became the first OECD country to have to seek assistance from the International Monetary Fund – a \$57 billion bailout. South Korea responded to the crisis by liberalizing the exchange rate and enacting aggressive reform of the financial sector. The government assumed much of the bad debt from the books of the banking sector, severed connections between banks and the chaebol, instituted thorough auditing and credit-rating procedures, and opened the financial sector to foreign investment.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons*, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gangnam_Seoul_January_2009.jpg>

*South Korea Rebounded Quickly after the 1998 Slump –
Up-scale Gangnam District of Seoul*

Those measures instilled discipline and competitiveness in a financial sector previously characterized by cronyism and biases toward conglomerates and exports. The Kim Dae Jung administration also was the first South Korean government to promote foreign direct investment actively. GDP rebounded quickly with 11 percent growth in 1998. Between 1998 and 2019, income per person (measured by the World Bank at Purchasing Power Parity in constant 2017 dollars)) grew at an impressive average annual rate of 3.9 percent.

South Korea reached a price-adjusted per capita income level of \$43,143 in 2019 – 66 percent of the American figure and twenty times that of North Korea. By contrast, in 1970, South Korea and North Korea both had per capita incomes (PPP) of about \$2,000. In 2019, South Korea ranked 31st of 186 countries in the World Bank’s ranking of per capita incomes, 23rd of 189 countries in the United Nation’s Human Development Index, a very impressive 5th of 190 countries in the World Bank’s Ease of Doing Business Index, but just 39th of 198 countries in Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index. Life expectancy in South Korea was 83 years, 4 years longer than that in the

In the future, South Korea will do very well if it can continue to achieve annual growth rates of per capita income approaching 4 percent. It now has a mature industrial economy. The slowdown in growth has happened in all mature industrial economies. South Korea has used up its reservoir of cheap, rural labor, already benefitted from educating a large portion of its labor force (three-fourths of South Koreans now enter tertiary education), and can no longer rely on imported R&D but must innovate itself. The services sector now accounts for 70 percent of total employment. The composition of GDP has changed from one characteristic of developing economies to one typical of advanced economies.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korea-Seoul_0589-06_traditional_dress.JPG>

South Korean Grandfather – Ponders the Past and the Future

South Korea also is experiencing an aging-population problem.

The country's population is aging at the fastest rate of all OECD industrial countries, and the total fertility rate (the average number of children that women bear during their lifetimes) is only 1.0, the lowest among OECD countries. The country's population, 51.7 million, grew at a rate of 0.2 percent in 2019, because of immigration. South Korea's average life expectancy of 83 years is among the highest in the world.

The size of the labor force peaked in 2017 and then began to decline

gradually. Moreover, South Korea does not have a strong social safety net of pensions and assistance to aging people. The aging-population problem thus will provide a major challenge to policy-makers.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Southkoreamap.png>>

Contemporary South Korea

North Korea's Self-reliance (1953-present)

Kim Il Sung (1953-1994). Kim Il Sung ruled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, or North Korea) from its founding in 1948 until his death at age 82 in 1994. Throughout his nearly four decades of rule, Kim adhered to three principal goals – retain power, build socialism, and reunify Korea. To retain his political control, Kim created a cult of personality rarely surpassed in history. North Koreans were required to address him as “The Great Leader.” Kim’s control was tenuous until he carried out a Stalinist purge of his enemies after the Korean War (1953-1959). Thereafter, he was not openly challenged.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at

Kim Il Sung (1912-1994), Supreme Leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), 1948-1994 – North Korean Poster

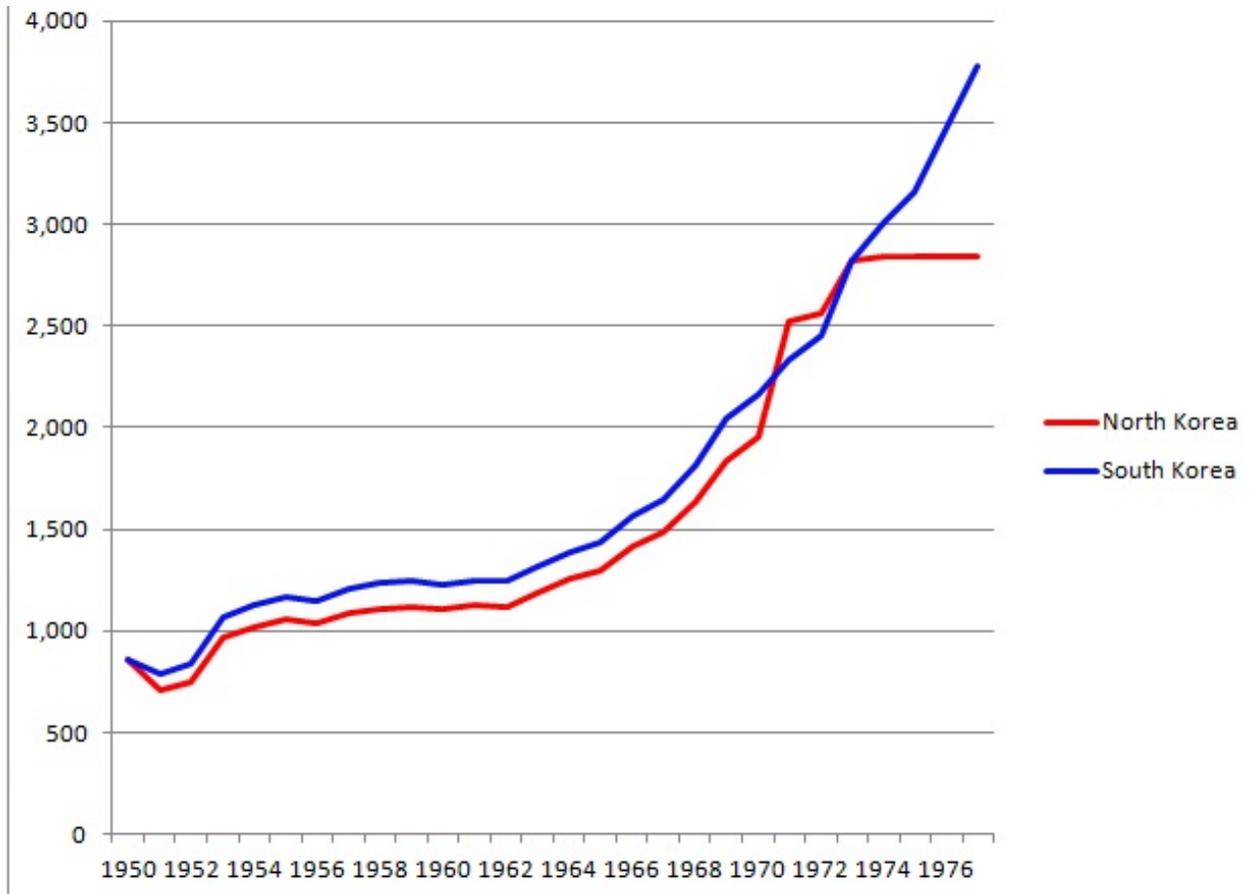
Kim's incredibly brutal methods of repression included dividing North Koreans into classes based on their assumed loyalty to the regime and sending at least 150,000 "hostile elements" to gulag-like prison camps. In an attempt to reunify Korea, Kim started the Korean War (with Soviet and Chinese support) and tried to assassinate Park Chung Hee in 1969, holding an incorrect assumption that numerous socialist revolutionaries in the South would revolt and join the North. Beginning in the early 1960s, Kim promulgated a national philosophy of Juche, embracing national self-reliance and independence in politics, economics, defense, and ideology.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
< [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1730_-_Nordkorea_2015_-_Pj%C3%B6ngjang_-_Juche_Turm_\(22791978320\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1730_-_Nordkorea_2015_-_Pj%C3%B6ngjang_-_Juche_Turm_(22791978320).jpg) >

Juche (Self-reliance) Philosophy – Symbolized By the Torch Atop the Juche Tower, Pyongyang, North Korea

That philosophy led to the establishment of the most autarkic industrial economy in the world, although North Korea did receive substantial economic and technical assistance from both the Soviet Union and China. To retain independence, Kim ensured that North Korea was the only communist country that did not join COMECON, the Russian-led trading bloc. During its first quarter century (1948-1970), the DPRK enjoyed rapid economic growth (except during the Korean War and its aftermath (1950-1956)). Industry benefited from a period of post-war recovery.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Two_koreas_gdp_1950_1977.jpg

*GDP Per Capita, 1950-1977 –
 North Korea (Red Line) Mirrored South Korea (Blue Line) Until 1974*

But North Korea's industrialization never progressed from heavy industries – steel, chemicals, locomotives, and motorcycles – to higher-value products in electronics, computers, semi-conductor chips, and telecommunications. After the Korean War, pre-war land redistribution developed into nationwide collectivization of agriculture. By the late

1950s, North Korea's rural population was organized into 13,300 cooperatives. The government introduced mechanization and chemical fertilizers, initially boosting production. By 1970, the per capita income of North Korea was about \$2,000, approximately the same as that in South Korea. Thereafter, North Korea's economy stagnated for about two decades and then declined rapidly.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:North_Korean_farmers_\(2009\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:North_Korean_farmers_(2009).jpg)>

*Agriculture in North Korea –
Most Farm Work Is Done Manually, Not With Mechanical Equipment*

Between 1972 and 1974, the country went on a binge of importing machinery and equipment in an effort to speed growth and keep pace

with the booming South. But the new industries proved very disappointing in generating export earnings. By 1976, North Korea was forced to default on \$1.8 billion of foreign debt and severely restrict imports. Kim also increased military spending to an estimated 20 percent of national income. Then in 1990, the USSR recognized South Korea and ended its \$1 billion of annual aid to the North. Shortly thereafter, the Soviet Union imploded and economic links among communist countries were severed.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vladimir_Putin_with_Kim_Jong-Il-2.jpg>*

*USSR Ended \$1 Billion Annual Subsidy to North Korea in 1990 –
Kim Jong Il (Left) and Vladimir Putin, Pyongyang, 2000*

The disappearance of Soviet support and trade revealed the total dysfunction of the DPRK's economic system. North Korea's economy lost half its value in the early 1990s. At Kim's death in 1994, the estimated per capita income had fallen to only \$1,000, one-sixteenth of the level in South Korea at that time.

Kim Jong Il (1994-2011). Following the death of Kim Il Sung in 1994, his oldest son, Kim Jong Il, succeeded him as Prime Minister of the DPRK. In spite of the fact that socialist countries are not supposed to follow hereditary succession, the transition from father to son was seamless (as far as the outside world knows). The younger Kim continued the cult of personality begun by his father, but he chose to be called "The Dear Leader," since only his father was entitled to be great. When Kim Jong Il was being primed to take over eventual rule, he was given the important task of interpreting the true essence of the Juche philosophy. In 1982, he was credited with writing two books on the topic, which became official interpretations of the government's philosophy of self-reliance. Although many observers hoped for a change in North Korean policies, they were to be disappointed. Kim

Jong Il is thought to have been in charge of economic policy during the last several years of his father's life, and he showed little inclination to alter course.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kim_Jong_il_Portrait-2.jpg>*

*Kim Jong Il, Supreme Leader of North Korea (1994-2011) –
Official Portrait of “The Dear Leader”*

Shortly after taking power, Kim Jong Il had to deal with a socio-economic crisis. Many North Koreans faced the threat of famine, when the government reduced food rations because of the flood-caused decline in food production and the inability to purchase imported food. Some

farmland was wiped out during flooding because erosion, caused by over-harvesting trees, led to landslides. State-planning failures resulted in chronic starvation, as agricultural production stagnated and exports failed to generate earnings required for food imports.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:North_Korea-Sariwon_Migok_Farm-01.jpg>

*Sariwon Migok Collective Farm in North Korea –
Stagnant Food and Agricultural Production*

For the first time, Kim had to counter the Juche philosophy, swallow his nationalistic pride, and request international food aid. The food aid was delivered through the United Nations World Food Program and bilaterally by individual countries. The United States provided over

\$700 million of cereals. Japan and China were other large donors. Because of the DPRK's secrecy, the severe extent of the food crisis was never clear to donors. Much of the food aid apparently went to feed North Korea's army rather than the starving poor people. The catastrophic famine lasted for four years (1994-1998). The official DPRK estimate of the number of deaths caused by the famine is 220,000, and some outside observers have put the figure as high as 3.5 million. A reasonable estimate for famine-caused deaths is 1 million, or about 5 percent of North Korea's population.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:North_Korean_garden.jpg>*

*Cabbage Production in a Home Garden in North Korea –
Not Sufficient to Avert Famine (1994-1998)*

That tragedy contributed to the country's receptiveness, such as it was, to overtures for reconciliation from South Korea. The state of war between the north and the south has never been officially ended, and the Demilitarized Zone along the 38th parallel remains the most heavily fortified line in the world. In June 2000, Kim Jong Il and Kim Dae Jung, the president of South Korea, shook hands in the Pyongyang airport, the first time in history that the leaders of the two Koreas had met. Later that year, Kim Dae Jung received the Nobel Peace Prize for his "Sunshine Policy" intended to achieve reconciliation.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kim_Jong_Il.JPG>*

*Prime Minister Kim Jong-Il, Sunshine Policy, Pyongyang, June 2000
– Met With South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung,*

Efforts toward peace and eventual reunification repeatedly have stalled, in part because the US named North Korea a member of a so-called “Axis of Evil” in 2002. North Korea maintains that it needs to sign a peace treaty with the United States, not South Korea, as the first step toward reunification. In their meeting, the two Kims agreed to establish the Kaesong Industrial Region in North Korea near the DMZ. Under the supervision of the South Korean chaebol, Hyundai, the industrial zone opened in 2004. At peak production it employed 53,000 North Koreans, mostly women, in labor-intensive industries producing textiles, shoes, and toys. North Korea earned foreign exchange, and South Korea gained international prestige for its good will. The facility closed for five months in 2013, due to a diplomatic dispute between North and South Korea. In 2016, the South Korean government closed Kaesong in response to a rocket launch and missile test carried out by North Korea, and the facility has not operated since then.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kaesong_model_complex.jpg>*

Kaesong Industrial Complex, Kaesong, North Korea

Despite that effort, the North Korean economy continued to stagnate during the period of Kim Jong Il's leadership. The post-Soviet malaise and the famine combined with an unwillingness of the North Koreans to change economic policies or reduce military spending. In the first decade of the 21st century, China began to play a larger role in the North Korean economy. A Chinese report for 2006 notes that China invested \$135 million in North Korea and carried out bilateral trade worth \$1.7 billion in that year. But China was cautious in propping up its poor communist neighbor.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:North_Korea_Div.png>

*Rason Special Economic Zone, Northeastern North Korea –
 Created to Attract Foreign Investment from China*

Controversy over Nuclear Weapons. North Korea’s recorded experience with nuclear materials began in 1984, when the USSR supplied nuclear reactors to generate nuclear power. It is rumored that A. Q. Khan, the Pakistani nuclear scientist and notorious salesman, assisted in expanding North Korea’s capability to develop fissile materials for use in nuclear weaponry. It is not known when North

Korea began to develop materials for a “nuclear deterrent.” In 1991, the two Koreas signed the North-South Nuclear Pact and agreed to ban nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula. The ban extended to the manufacture, testing, and use of nuclear weapons and to the development of nuclear reprocessing and enrichment facilities.



*Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statues_of_Kim_Il-Sung_and_Kim_Jong-Il_on_Mansudae_Hill.jpg>*

*Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il Banned Nuclear Weapons in 1991 –
Mansudae Grand Monument, Pyongyang*

In 1992, North Korea, as a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signed a required nuclear safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which

permitted IAEA inspections. Whether by design or chance, North Korea then began using its nuclear threat as a bargaining chip in its negotiations with the United States, Japan, and South Korea over issues of international security, diplomatic recognition, and foreign assistance. In 1993, Kim Il Sung refused to allow IAEA inspectors to have access to two suspected North Korean nuclear waste sites and threatened to take the DPRK out of the NPT and begin (or resume) its manufacture of fissile materials for nuclear weaponry in Yongbyon.

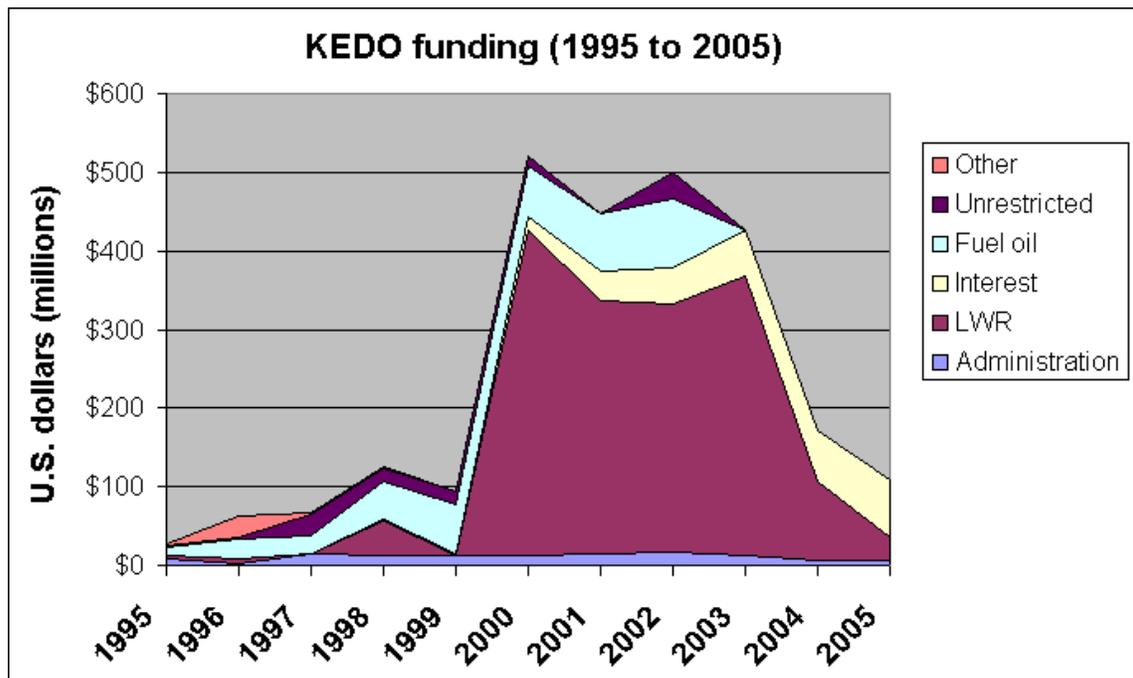


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yongbyon_5MWe_Magnox_reactor.jpg>

Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center, Yongbyon, North Korea

Intense international negotiations followed for 18 months before an agreement was reached. In the Agreed Framework (1994, which was

not called a treaty so that American President Bill Clinton would not have to seek Senate ratification), the North Koreans promised to continue as a member of the NPT, to cease processing fissile material at Yongbyon (or anywhere else), to permit IAEA inspectors full access to nuclear sites, and to avoid developing long-range missiles. In return, the US, Japan, and South Korea agreed to fund and manufacture light-water nuclear power reactors (LWRs, which are less prone to proliferation) to substitute for the North's foregone nuclear power generation.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KEDO_funding.gif

Interest-free Loans to North Korea from the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, 1995-2005 – US, Japan, and South Korea

Japan and South Korea would provide most of the \$4 billion in funding for the LWRs, and the United States would supply North Korea with heavy fuel oil to generate power while the LWRs were under construction. Demonstrating their growing skills in international bargaining, the North Koreans had suggested this face-saving and modernizing compromise. The Agreed Framework worked effectively for eight years (1994-2002) – North Korea stopped developing its nuclear-weapon capability and gained international credibility, whereas the US, Japan, and South Korea cooperated smoothly in their dealings with the DPRK. But under the administration of President George W. Bush, the US decided to end the Agreed Framework and take a harder line with North Korea, including it in its list of “Axis of Evil” countries.

North Korea then opted out of the NPT, expelled the IAEA inspectors, and re-opened its enrichment facilities at Yongbyon. Kim Jong Il saw his plan for international cooperation thwarted and embarked on an ambitious program of nuclear development and testing. North Korea carried out five explosions of nuclear warheads – in 2006, 2009, 2013, 2016, and 2017 – with increasing success. Concurrently,

the DPRK launched long-range (along with medium- and short-range) missiles, ostensibly for a space program, in 2006, 2009, 2012, and every year between 2014 and 2020. The international community reacted each time with increasing concern and UN sanctions, but that did little to contain North Korea's development of nuclear weapons.

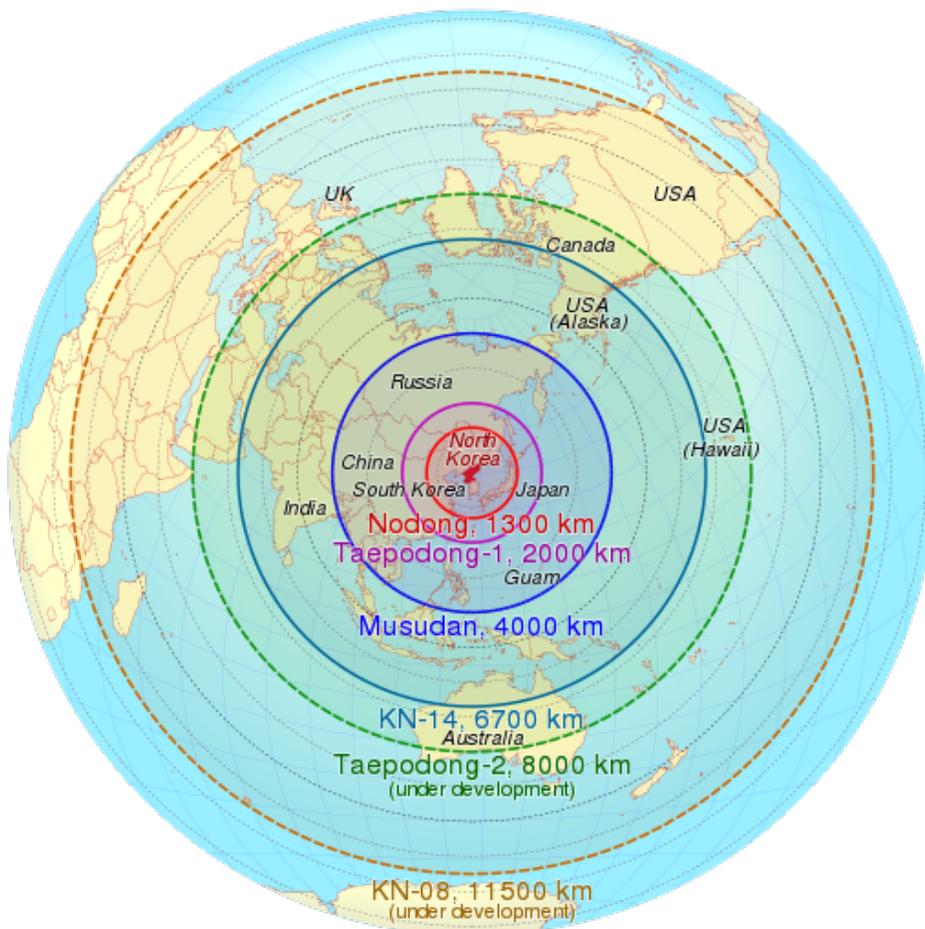


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Unha-9_rocket_model.jpg>

Model of Unha-9 Rocket –Floral Exhibition, Pyongyang, August 2013

Expert watchers of North Korea's nuclear program guess that the country already has the capability to manufacture and deliver nuclear weapons. Of the four essential components of nuclear weaponry, North

Korea appears to have fissile material (probably enough for 30 to 40 bombs), small warheads (already detonated), long-range missiles (successfully tested in late 2012), and launch platforms (on land only, since North Korea lacks the ability to launch nuclear warheads from submarines). It remains to be seen whether North Korea will use its nuclear capability as a bargaining tool or for military purposes.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:North_Korean_missile_range.svg

Estimated Range of North Korean Missiles in 2013

Kim Jong Un (2011-present). Kim Jong Un succeeded his father, Kim Jong Il, as prime minister of the DPRK in 2011 in a smooth succession. At the time of his taking power, Kim Jong Un was only 26 years old (he is thought to have been born in 1985). Observers describe him as venerating his grandfather, Kim Il Sung, and hoping to rule North Korea for at least four decades as The Great Leader had done. Kim Jong Un was largely unknown outside North Korea when he assumed rule of the country. Unlike his father, the third-generation Kim did not serve as an apprentice ruler before taking office. There is no evidence of what his previous role in government might have been.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kim_Jong-un_April_2019_\(cropped\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kim_Jong-un_April_2019_(cropped).jpg)>

*Kim Jong Un (born in 1985, pictured in 2019) –
Enigmatic Supreme Leader of North Korea since December 2011*

Kim Jong Un had earlier been educated in Switzerland under an assumed name. But he had spent several years back home, occasionally accompanying his father on state visits. Young Kim has continued the autocratic and repressive policies of his father and grandfather, but he has ruled less austere, often including his wife on public appearances.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ri_Sol-ju_\(April_27,_2018\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ri_Sol-ju_(April_27,_2018).png)>

Ri Sol Ju, Wife of Kim Jong Un – Pictured in 2018

In his first year in office, Kim Jong Un aggressively went ahead with two key tests – the launching of a three-stage missile and the detonation of nuclear warheads. He also spread reports that he was interested in making economic reforms, especially in agriculture. But little change of substance has been confirmed. Kim Jong Un seems to want to continue the political repression and economic controls of the past. His reckless program of testing nuclear warheads and missile delivery systems has moved North Korea into a position of even greater economic dependence on China, its only ally.

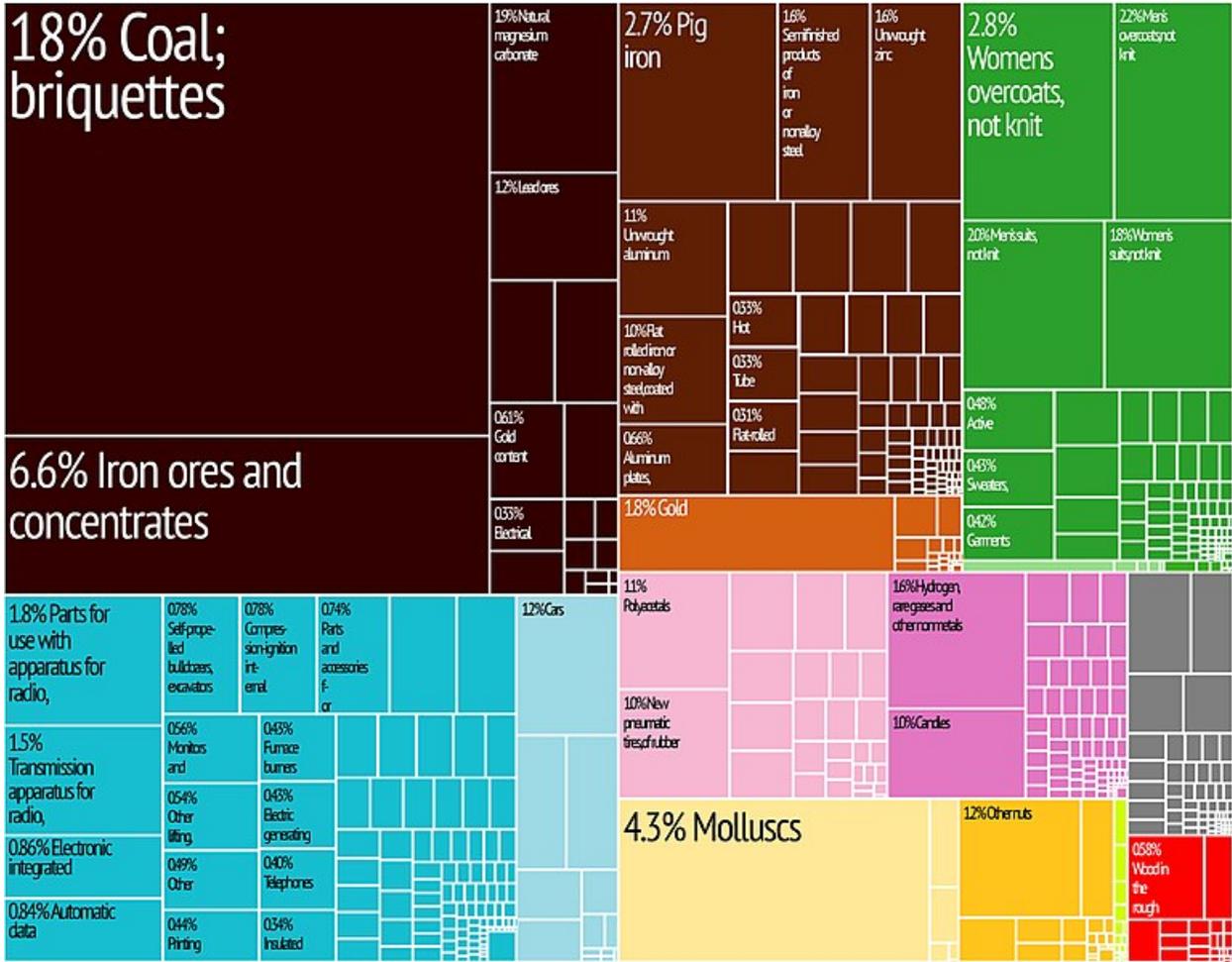


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:F%C3%A1brica_m%C3%A1quinas-herramienta_Huich%C3%B3n_\(5\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:F%C3%A1brica_m%C3%A1quinas-herramienta_Huich%C3%B3n_(5).jpg)>

North Korean Exports to China – Tool-machinery Factory, Huichon

China seems willing to put up with North Korea's independent nuclear development because it fears political instability in the DPRK even more than it worries about the erratic policies of the country's leaders. China and the DPRK have deepened their trade ties in recent years. The value of bilateral trade (moving in both directions) increased from \$1.7 billion in 2006 to a peak of \$6.9 billion in 2014, Kim Jong Un's third full year in power. In addition, China has invested in large iron ore and copper mines in northern North Korea, near the Chinese border. In return for access to North Korean natural resources, the

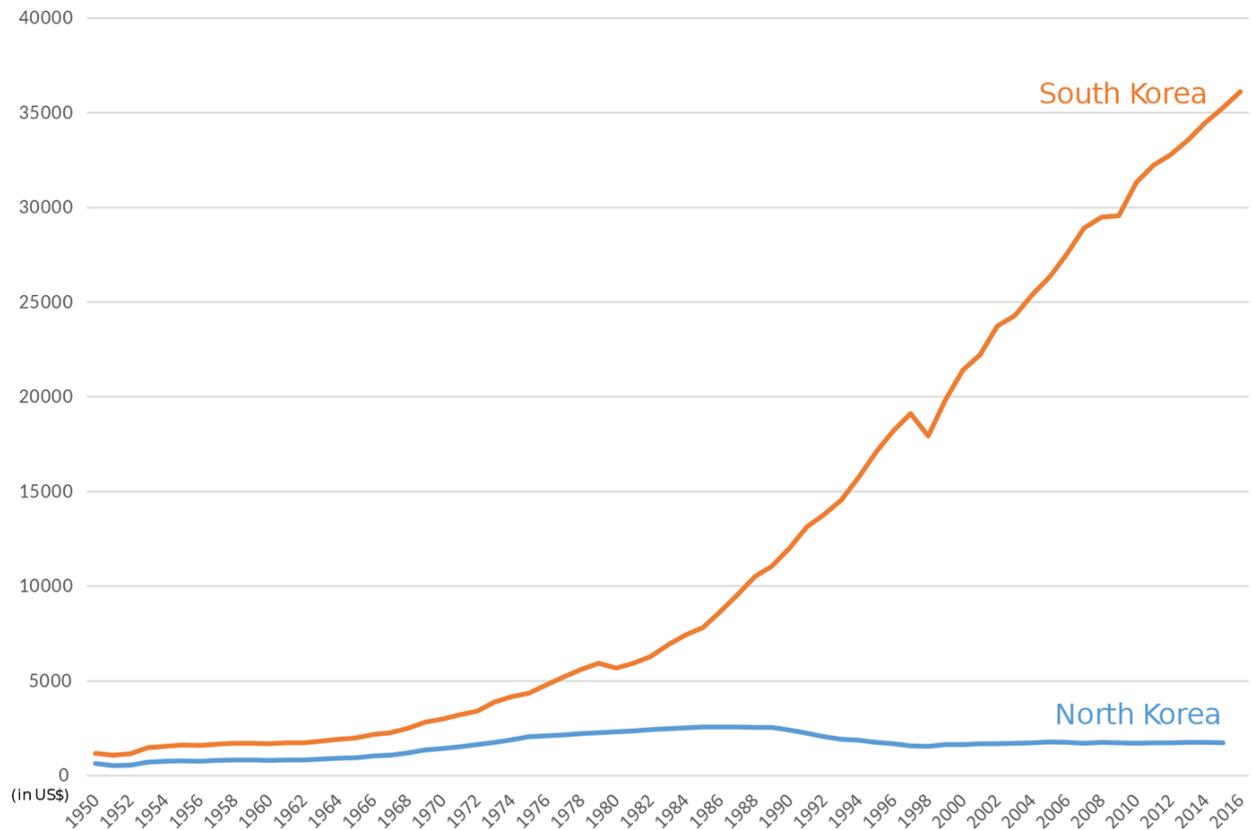
Chinese are building infrastructure projects, especially roads. Kim Jong Un moved ahead in 2012 to broaden Chinese investment in North Korean special economic zones, in which Chinese management and investment are to be accompanied by North Korean labor.



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kore_DR_Export_Treemap.jpg

Proportional Representation of North Korea's Export Earnings in 2012 – Coal, Iron, Garments, and Electronic Parts Provide Three-Quarters

It is informative to contrast socio-economic indicators for North Korea and South Korea in 2019 (the most recent year of estimates for North Korea and full data for South Korea). South Korea has about twice as many people as North Korea (51.7 million versus 25.7 million), and neither country's population is expanding much. But the Gross Domestic Product (GDP, measured in Purchasing Power Parity) of South Korea, which was about equal in size to that of the North in 1960, is now 36 times larger. Income per capita (GDP at PPP) was \$43,143 in the South and only \$1,185 in the North. A half century ago, an average person in the North had double the income of his/her Southern counterpart. Perhaps 40-60 percent of the people in North Korea today live in poverty (with an income less than \$1.90 per day). The comparable figure for South Korea is 14 percent, reflecting the skewed distribution of income in that wealthy country.

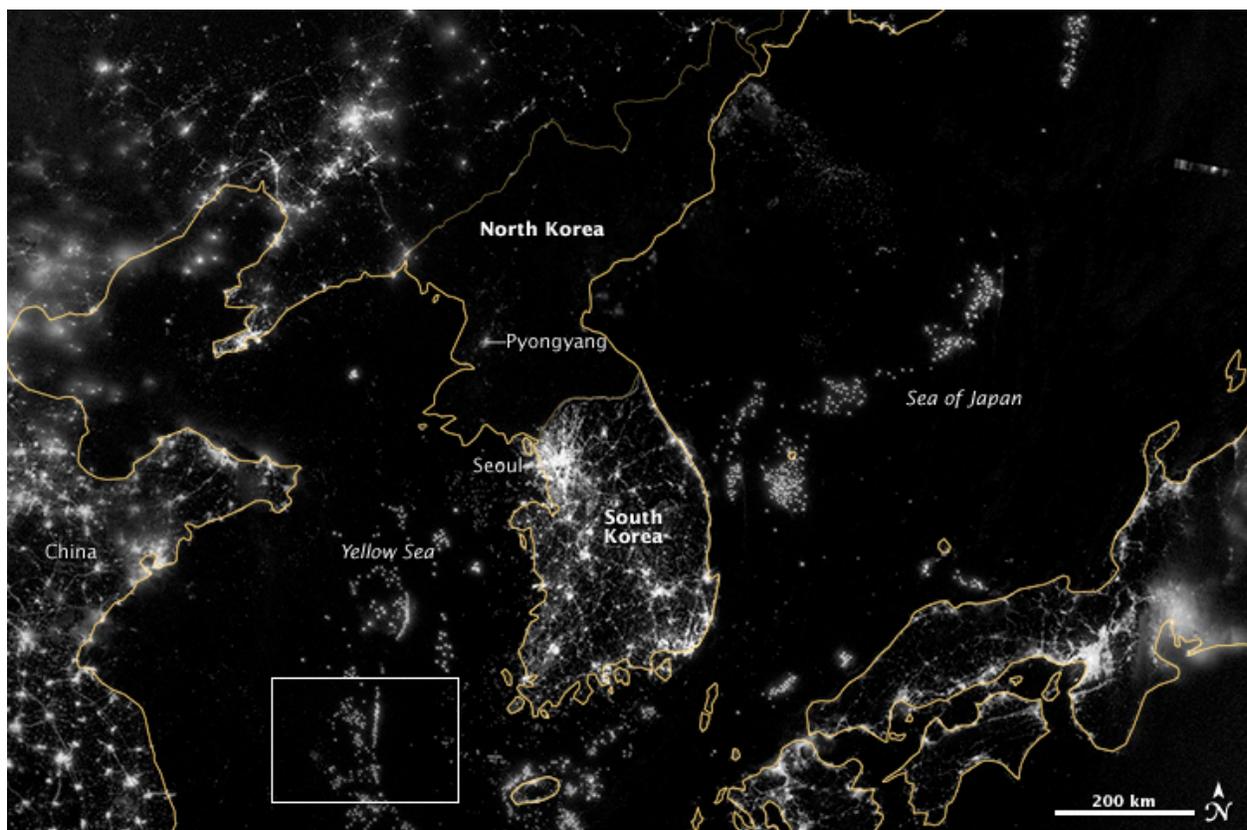


Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:TwoKoreasGDPPerCapita.svg>

GDP Per Capita in North Korea (Blue Line) and South Korea (Red Line), 1950-2016 (measured in 2011 constant US dollars)

North Korea does somewhat less poorly in a comparison of quality-of-life indicators. By its own accounting North Korea has almost 99 percent adult literacy, which is comparable to the level in the South (98 percent). But life expectancy is much higher in the South (83 years) than in the North (72 years). North Korea is one of the most corrupt countries in the world – it ranked 172nd of 198 countries in

Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index in 2019 – whereas South Korea was 39th. In 2019, South Korea benefited from receiving \$10.6 billion of direct foreign investment, whereas North Korea received a miniscule \$25.8 million. These socio-economic indicators provide striking evidence of the success of democratic South Korea in contrast to the disappointment of autocratic North Korea.



Source: *Wikimedia Commons* available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korea_at_night.jpg>

*The Korean Peninsula at Night in 2012 –
NASA Image Indicates Economic Activity*



Source: Wikimedia Commons available at
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:North_Korea_Regions_Map.svg>

Contemporary North Korea

Time Line for Korea

- 4th-1st centuries BCE Old Choson (Gojoseon) Kingdom – northwestern Korea and southern Manchuria – political federation of walled towns
- 3rd-7th centuries CE Korea's Three Kingdoms – Koguryo (central and north), Paekche (southwest), and Silla (southeast) – Chinese statecraft, philosophy, education, written language
- 356-402 reign of King Naemul of Silla – established hereditary rule in a consolidated kingship
- 538 Buddhism introduced into Japan from Korea
- 646-1192 Taika Era in Japan – Yamato clan set up powerful monarchy, unified Japan
- 668-935 Kingdom of Silla ruled Korea – advanced civilization – aristocratic elite – Kyongju, capital, had 1 million residents
- 668 Silla vanquished Koguryo and Paekche – military support from Tang China – unified and governed Korea
- 918-1392 Kingdom of Koryo ruled Korea – elite Confucian bureaucratic scholars dominated land ownership – tenants paid rent in kind – exported gold, silver, ginseng, leather, furs
- 1192-1868 Shogun Era in Japan – shogun headed government – defense of monarchy, control of samurai, collection of taxes

- 1254 Mongol forces conquered Korea – Koryo dynasty forced under Mongol political suzerainty
- 1271-1368 Yuan Dynasty in China – Mongol-led – ruled all of China – effective under Kublai Khan – corrupt, ineffective under successors
- 1274-1281 Kublai Khan tried to conquer Japan – used Korean ships and troops – suffered huge military losses – navies struck by typhoons – lost 70,000 troops at sea
- 1392-1910 Choson Kingdom ruled Korea – satellite state of China – Neo-Confucian bureaucracy – state owned all agricultural land
- 1392 Yi Song-gye, Korean general – gained independence from Mongols -- took Koryo capital at Kaesong – founded the Choson dynasty as King Taewo – capital at Seoul
- 1418-1450 reign of King Sejong the Great – applied research in agriculture and medicine – standardized system of weights and measures – first Korean alphabet, *hangul*
- 1592-1598 Toyotomi Hideyoshi of Japan – invaded Korea – advanced up Korean peninsula – could not maintain supply chains – achieved nothing
- 1603-1868 Tokugawa Era in Japan – 2 million samurai – strong military control – effective civil service – efficient taxation – symbolic royal court

- 1644-1912 Qing Dynasty in China – Manchurian-led – population tripled – conquests expanded China to current size – weak in 19th century
- 1868-1945 Meiji Era in Japan – ministers were Meiji oligarchs – national independence – revision of the unequal treaties with the West – sought stature on par with advanced nations
- 1876 Treaty of Kanghwa – Japan used gunboat diplomacy with Korea – extraterritorial legal rights for Japanese nationals in Korea – privileged Japanese access to Korean ports
- 1882-1886 China compelled Korea to sign extraterritoriality treaties with the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Italy, France – to curb Japanese influence
- 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War – Japan invaded Korea – annihilated Chinese military forces
- 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki – China ceded Taiwan to Japan – acknowledged Korea’s independence from China – permitted Japanese advisers in every Korean ministry
- 1902 Anglo-Japanese Alliance – United Kingdom recognized Japan’s claims to Korea
- 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War – complete victory by the Japanese military over Russia
- 1905 Treaty of Portsmouth – affirmed Japan’s interests in Korea – transferred the Liaodong Peninsula,

- railroad interests in Manchuria, and southern Sakhalin from Russia to Japan
- 1909 assassination of former Japanese Resident General Ito Hirobumi in Manchuria – by an anti-Japanese, Korean patriot
- 1910-1945 Japanese rule of Korea – Korea a source of cheap agricultural imports and a market for Japanese manufactured exports
- 1910 Treaty of Annexation – Japan forced Korea to yield its independence – placed Korea under colonial control – renamed it Chosen – Japanese Governor-General
- 1914-1918 World War One – Japan (and Korea) entered on the side of the Allies (the UK, France, and Russia) – Japan took control of German-held territories in Micronesia
- 1919 Samil Independence Movement – riots followed death of Kojong, former Korean emperor – brutal Japanese suppression – 7,000 Koreans dead, 50,000 imprisoned
- 1922 Japan received a League of Nations mandate to govern Micronesia (Nanyo) – former German colony
- 1932 Japan established puppet state of Manchukuo in Manchuria – turned it into the most industrialized region of continental East Asia

- 1933 South Manchurian Railway Company, Japanese state-owned company, took over Korean railways – doubled rail length in 10 years
- 1937-1945 Japan invaded China – conquered large parts of eastern China – but could not defeat Nationalists in west or Communists in north
- 1941-1945 Japan fought and lost World War II in the Pacific – early successes in Southeast Asia, Melanesia – Allies formed Pacific corridor of air bases to bomb Japan and win the war
- 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor (December) – buy time to establish a defensive perimeter – hoped Nazi Germany would win in Europe and US would not fight a long war in Pacific
- 1945 US President Harry Truman chose to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (August) – caused 200,000 deaths
- 1945 Emperor Hirohito announced Japan’s surrender (August) – Allies’ victory over Japan resulted from superior production capability and better military strategy
- 1945 Americans issued General Order #1, laying out partition of Korea at the 38th parallel – USSR concurred to avoid confrontation with US over Soviet control of Eastern Europe
- 1945 Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence set up chapters in Korea’s 13

provinces – proclaimed the Korean People’s Republic – US refused to recognize KPR

- 1945-1948 General John Hodge, head of the United States Military Government in Korea – antagonized labor unions, alienated peasant associations, provoked widespread rebellion
- 1948 United Nations Temporary Committee on Korea oversaw elections – Soviets barred UNTCOK in north – UN-supervised elections held only in the south
- 1948 Syngman Rhee elected President of Republic of Korea (in the south) – Kim Il Sung elected Prime Minister of Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (in the north)
- 1948-1994 Kim Il Sung – Prime Minister of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) (in the north)
- 1948-1960 Syngman Rhee – President of the Republic of Korea (ROK) (in the south)
- 1949 Communists defeated Nationalists in China – Nationalists had mismanaged economy, carried out brutalities, permitted corruption
- 1950-1953 Korean War – stalemate – DPRK invaded ROK – UN forces (US + 10 other countries) counter-attacked – China joined DPRK – stalemate along 38th parallel after mid-1951

- 1953 armistice ended the Korean War (July) – created a 2.5-mile-wide “demilitarized zone” (DMZ) at the line of cease-fire, near the 38th parallel – 4 million Koreans died
- 1963-1979 Park Chung Hee – President of the Republic of Korea
- 1963-1979 very rapid growth era in South Korea – average annual growth rate of GDP was 9.7 percent
- 1965 Korea-Japan Treaty on Basic Relations – South Korea dropped war reparations claims – Japan gave ROK a \$300 million grant and \$200 million in loans
- 1973 Heavy and Chemical Industrialization Campaign launched – subsidized loans and government-provided infrastructure – promoted export of steel, automobiles, ships, machine tools, chemicals, and electronics
- 1979-1997 rapid growth era in South Korea – average annual growth rate of GDP was 8.4 percent
- 1980-1988 Chun Doo Hwan – President of the Republic of Korea
- 1980 Chun Doo Hwan’s most severe repression – ROK troops killed numerous demonstrating students and other civilians in Kwangju (Cholla Province)
- 1984 USSR supplied DPRK with nuclear reactors to generate nuclear power

- 1988-1993 Roh Tae Woo – President of the Republic of Korea
- 1990 Republic of Korea and USSR opened diplomatic relations – Soviets received \$1.4 billion of economic assistance (soft loans) from South Korea – Soviets ended military assistance and cooperation with North Korea
- 1991 North-South Nuclear Pact – ROK and DPRK agreed to ban nuclear weapons from Korean peninsula – banned manufacture, testing, and use of nuclear weapons
- 1992 Republic of Korea and China opened diplomatic relations
- 1992 DPRK, a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signed a nuclear safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency, permitting IAEA inspections
- 1993-1998 Kim Young-sam – President of the Republic of Korea
- 1994-2011 Kim Jong Il – Prime Minister of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)
- 1994-1998 DPRK suffered severe famine – between 220,000 (official estimate) and 1 million deaths
- 1994-2002 Agreed Framework – DPRK promised to cease processing fissile material, permit IAEA inspection of nuclear sites, and stop developing

- long-range missiles – US, Japan, and South Korea agreed to provide of light-water nuclear power reactors (\$4 billion)
- 1996 Republic of Korea joined the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation (high-income, industrialized Western countries) – pinnacle of economic success
- 1997-1998 Asian Financial Crisis – contagion from Thailand – ROK had a severe depreciation of its currency, a banking crisis of non-performing loans, and a decline of income
- 1998-2019 moderate growth era in South Korea – average annual growth rate of GDP was 3.9 percent
- 1998-2003 Kim Dae Jung – President of the Republic of Korea
- 2000 Sunshine Policy summit meeting in Pyongyang – Kim Dae Jung of ROK and Kim Jung Il of DPRK – Kim Dae Jung awarded the Nobel Peace Prize
- 2002 US named North Korea a member of a so-called “Axis of Evil” – ended US participation in the Agreed Framework
- 2003-2008 Roh Moo-hyun – President of the Republic of Korea
- 2006-2020 DPRK launched long-range (along with medium- and short-range) missiles, ostensibly for a space program

2006-2017	DPRK carried out five explosions of nuclear warheads
2008-2013	Lee Myung-bak – President of the Republic of Korea
2011-present	Kim Jong Un– Prime Minister of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)
2013-2018	Park Geun-hye – President of the Republic of Korea
2018-present	Moon Jae-in – President of the Republic of Korea

Bibliography for Korea

Ian Buruma, *Inventing Japan, 1853-1964*, New York: The Modern Library, 2003.

Adrian Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*, London: Routledge, 2007.

Jonathan Clements, *A Brief History of Khubilai Khan*, London: Constable & Robinson, 2010.

Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005.

Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War, A History*, New York: The Modern Library, 2010.

John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat, Japan in the Wake of World War II*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999.

Peter Duus, *Feudalism in Japan*, New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993.

Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Barry Eichengreen, Dwight H. Perkins, and Kwanho Shin, *From Miracle to Maturity, The Growth of the Korean Economy*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012.

John Fairbank and Merle Goldman, *China, A New History*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.

William Wayne Farris, *Japan to 1600, A Social and Economic History*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009.

Irene M. Franck and David M. Brownstone, *To the Ends of the Earth, The Great Travel and Trade Routes of Human History*, New York: Facts on File Publications, 1984.

Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan, From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Winston Groom, *1942, The Year that Tried Men's Souls*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2005.

Valerie Hansen, *The Open Empire, A History of China to 1600*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000.

Sheila Miyoshi Jager, *Brothers At War, The Unending Conflict in Korea*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013.

Richard Katz, *Japan, The System That Soured*, Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998.

John Lie, *Multiethnic Japan*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001.

James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002.

Barry Naughton, *The Chinese Economy, Transitions and Growth*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2007.

Don Oberdorfer and Robert Carlin, *The Two Koreas, A Contemporary History*, New York: Basic Books, 2014.

Dwight H. Perkins, *East Asian Development, Foundations and Strategies*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Mark Peterson and Phillip Margulies, *A Brief History of Korea*, New York: Facts On file, Inc., 2010.

Anna Reid, *The Shaman's Coat, A Native History of Siberia*, New York: Walker & Company, 2002.

Murray A. Rubinstein (ed.), *Taiwan, A New History*, Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1999.

Jonathan Spence, *Mao Zedong*, New York: Penguin Group, 1999.

Jonathan D. Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013.

John J. Stephan, *The Russian Far East, A History*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994.

Richard Tames, *A Traveller's History of Japan*, Moreton in Marsh, United Kingdom: Chastleton Travel, 2008.

Robert Smith Thompson, *Empires on the Pacific, World War II and the Struggle for the Mastery of Asia*, New York: Basic Books, 2001.

Ezra F. Vogel, *The Four Little Dragons, The Spread of Industrialization in East Asia*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991.

Andrew G. Walder, *China Under Mao, A Revolution Derailed*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015.

Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett (ed.), *Perspectives on the T'ang*, New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1973.

Sites Visited in South Korea

**Japan by Sea, Aboard the *Caledonian Sky*
Stanford Travel/Study Program**

April 10-23, 2015

Ship-based, Aboard the *Caledonian Sky*

Ulsan and Kyongju, South Korea

While the *Caledonian Sky* was docked in Ulsan for a day, most passengers took a full-day trip to Kyongju, the former capital of the Silla kingdom that first unified Korea in the 660s with military support from Tang China. Silla (668-935) had one of the most advanced civilizations in the world. The capital, Kyongju, was home to 1 million residents, and the aristocratic elite had thousands of slaves, large herds of livestock, and fortunes in gold. We visited the fascinating royal tombs at Tumuli Park and an extensive collection of ancient treasures in the National Museum in Kyongju, a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2000. Only six of the 155 funerary tumuli (tombs for Silla royalty) have been excavated. But they have yielded an extraordinary treasure, including six priceless gold crowns. After the Silla kings converted to Buddhism in the 6th century, the royal family reduced the amounts of funerary objects in the tombs. Silla, called the “Kingdom of Gold”, created its enormous wealth from rice agriculture, after introducing plowing with oxen and increasing irrigation in the 6th century. Silla fell in the 10th century to invaders from northern Korea who then created the Kingdom of Koryo (918-1392).

* * * * *

A Voyage in Japan and South Korea Aboard *The World*

The World, Residences At Sea

September 13-October 14, 2014

Ship-based, Aboard *The World*

Busan, South Korea

Busan is South Korea's second largest city (3.6 million people) and the world's fifth largest port (30 million containers per year). Sandra and I drove north to Beomeosa Temple, built in 678, shortly after the Silla Kingdom had unified Korea. The Mahayana Buddhist temple is scenically set at the foot of Mt. Geumjeongsan. At the United Nations Memorial Cemetery, 2300 foreign soldiers, mostly from the United Kingdom, Turkey, Canada, and Australia, who fought in the Korean War (1950-1953) are interred. In central Busan, we visited Jagalchi Market, Korea's biggest fish market, Gukje Market, a covered market that sells anything, the Busan Modern History Museum, which offers a highly critical interpretation of Japan's occupation of Korea, and Yongdusan Park, where we went to the top of an observation tower for a panoramic view of the city and its port.

Jeju Island, South Korea

Jeju Island is home to 600,000 fiercely independent Korean islanders, who trace their heritage back to an ancient Kingdom of Tamna and retain a deep devotion to shamanism rather than Buddhism. Jeju is a scenic volcanic island that has developed as a hub for beach-loving tourists, mostly from China. Sandra and I hired an English-speaking taxi driver and took a circular tour around the eastern half of the island. We visited the Manjanggul Lava Tube (at 7.4 kilometers, the world's longest), the Haenyeo Museum (centered on Jeju's women who free dive 10-20 meters for seafood), Seongsan Sunrise Peak (a coastal tuff cone of 182 meters, which we climbed), the Seongeup Folk Village (where 1000 islanders live in traditional thatched-roof homes), and the Sangamburi Crater (the island's second largest – 350 meters in diameter and 100 meters deep).

Incheon (Seoul), South Korea

Seoul once was the capital of the Choson Kingdom (1392-1910). Today, Seoul is the capital of South Korea and a booming industrial city with 10.5 million residents. About half of South Korea's 50 million people live in or around Seoul. Sandra and I took a ship tour of Seoul and visited the Gyeongbok Palace (originally constructed in 1395 to house the Choson rulers and reconstructed in the 1990s) and its National Folklore Museum, the Insadong center of art and antique shops, and the South Gate Market (Namdaemun) where cheap knock-offs are for sale. En route to the airport, we visited the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), a 2.5 mile-wide strip of land separating South and North Korea, which is the most heavily fortified area in the world. We observed ROK troops on duty, peered into North Korea, and saw a tunnel that the North Koreans dug to invade South Korea.

* * * * *