

## **Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History**

**By Bruce Cumings**

**W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 2005**

### **Chapter One - The Virtues Page 19**

25 Koreans are homogenous without a common "bloodline" Pottery goes back to 2000 bc. 4<sup>th</sup> century bc, the Chosen.

27 312 AD, Koguryo going strong in the north; Silla in the middle east, and Paekche south.

33 – 660 ad, Koguryo falls under combined Silla Tang attack.

34 – Silla warrior ethic Hwarang, with Buddhism and Confucianism, preach loyalty to the king, towards one's parents, fidelity in friendship, bravery in battle and chivalry in warfare.

36 – 682 Confucian national academy set up to train officials.

38 – Korea names Japan.

39 – 932 ad, Koryo (high mountains and sparkling waters, shortened from Koguryo) beats shilla and and Paekche.

44 – 1231 Mongols beat Koryo, ming beat Mongols, Koryo beat Ming, under Yi-Song Gye, he founds the Choson, in 1394

47 – His grandson, Sejong creates the alphabet. Feminism flourishes, but there is a push-back creating "Korean culture" in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, to a steep Neo-Confucian orthodoxy. Women subdued.

51 – Pohak is the discipline of family lineage.

53 – In 1462 Choson had 200,000 government slaves. In 1663, 75% of Seoul are slaves.

55 – FOR ARTICLE – Yangban disdain work. They "literally believed the world owed them a living."

58 – FOR ARTICLE - Child rearing does not lead to strong individuals, but extensions of parents. This is conducive to personal mastery and rock-like psychological security. Plus individualism leaves people cold.

What profit is it for a man to gain the world and lose his soul?

### **Chapter Two – The Interests, 1860 – 1904 Page 86**

89 – Korea is "exclusionist" not "isolationist" This was especially true in the 19<sup>th</sup>, but goes back to the Mongol invasion at least. It built a wall to separate itself.

88 – In 1832 Korea turned back the British East India Company because it was illegal to engage in foreign commerce.

92 – From 1609 – 1870 Korea and Japan had trade on one spot near Busan only. The West came when Korea was at its lowest.

95 – The Sino-Korean tributary system was on of inconsequential hierarchy, if not equality.

99 – In 1882 China hooked Korea into the western system.

- 101 – Japan’s first unequal treaty with Korea in 1874.  
Anti – Western statements on pages 99, 102, 185, 186, 224
- 106 – China’s Li negotiates treaty between US and Korea – even choosing the Korean flag. The agreement sent Korean students to the West.
- 107 – Popular uprisings began in 1811 under the name Tonghak (Eastern Learning) in the 1860s, it created a major uprising in 1890s.
- 108 – Taewon gun retrenched into traditional Koreanism, this gets labeled “Hongian” move. They took power in 1864.
- 111 – Missionaries start Ewha.
- 115 – Tonghak slogan, “Drive out the Japanese Dwarfs and the Western barbarians, and praise righteousness.”
- 118 – Kojong fights the Tonghaks, both Japan and China come in to help, Japan doesn’t leave when the rebellion is suppressed.
- 120 – The Taewon Gun powerless, the Jap minister enacted the Kobo reforms in 1894, getting rid of slavery, class distinctions and traditional clothes.
- 121 – The Japs kill the queen.
- 122 – In the rebellion that followed, the Russians saved Kojong, and 1897 made himself emperor.
- 125 – Horace Allen was the first missionary doctor in Korea. He created Severance Hospital. A book by it is God, Mammon, and the Japanese. BUY ME!!!
- 129 – He calls a culturist denigration of Koreans “racist.”
- 137 – The name “hermit kingdom” is not misleading.
- 138 – But it had diplomacy.

### **Chapter Three – Eclipse, 1905 – 1945, Page 139**

- 140 – Neither Japanese nor Koreans want to open colonial archives; so we know too little.
- 141 – Roosevelt’s treaty in 1905 gave Russia rights in Korea.
- 142 – The West supported Japan’s modernizing efforts in Korea. In turn, Korea saw all Japan’s efforts as illegitimate.
- 146 – 147 – Resistance to the Japanese.
- 149 – Taiwan, by contrast, had nostalgia for the Japanese era.  
From a Foucaultian lens, there is no distinction between Japanese colonialism and the modern industrial project itself; hence no difference between Japanese colonialism and American hegemony.
- 151 – Japan stayed out of WW I and benefited.
- 152 – By 1945 Yangban were seen as collaborators with the Japs. It was the first time their reach went into the villages. There is still little local autonomy. Police ran this administration.
- 153 – 40 – 50 % of the police force was Korean.
- 154 – In 1912 only 100 Americans were in Seoul.
- 155 – In 1919, there was the March 1<sup>st</sup> movement uprising; they were not complicit like the Taiwanese.
- 156 – This led to the “cultural policy” bunka seiji, tutoring Koreans towards independence. Korean newspapers could be bought again.

- 157 – Christian opposition to the Japs is both fact and legend. They provided sanctuary during violence. But, Christians like Rhee were collaborators. Outcasts moved to Christianity, due to its egalitarianism.
- 160 – Kim Il Song emerges fighting Japs.
- 163 – Japan uses the state funded enterprise model.
- BUY ME James Gale: History of the Korean People.
- 167 – Japanese built railroads and roads. Growth was more than 10% annually.
- 169 – Industrial production triple the rate for Taiwan.
- 170 – The last 15 years of Japan’s rule especially productive.
- 171 – Rich collaborator established the for runner to Korea University; his statue was removed in the 1980s.
- 172 – Korea hates/d rich colonial collaborators, but other colonies had no such indigenous wealthy.
- 175 – By 1944, fully 11.6 percent of Koreans lived outside of Korea. By contrast very few Taiwanese did.
- 177 – By 1941, 1.4 million Koreans in Japan – including women forced to work bare breasted 12 hours a day.
- 179 – Many comfort women arranged by Korean brokers.  
An Old Lady in Okinawa is a film to see.
- 180 – Horror story of a comfort woman.
- 181 – Japanese pushed Confucianism, the Kokutai or national body or essence, was contrasted with Western individualism.
- 183 – When the war ended in 1945, Koreans went home creating much movement.

#### **Chapter Four – The Passions, 1945 – 1948, Page 185**

- 186 – BC thinks there “was no historical justification for Korea’s division.” And, it is largely America’s fault.
- 188 – FDRs death made us take bad policy. He wanted joint administration with the USSR [that worked out great in Eastern Europe!]
- 189 – We had “high-level fears of Soviet expansion.” Unreasonable??? Was the expansion of the USSR in Europe America’s fault too?
- 199 – His dream alternative reality: Had the Americans and Russia quit Korea, a leftist regime would have taken over quickly, and this nationalist regime would have moderated and joined the world community.
- 205 – We praised the South publicly, but censured it privately. But the South had a police state run by and for landlords.
- 206 – After 1945 there was some dynamic civic political competition. The right had the powerful Korean National Youth (KNY) and other youth groups. The KNY was led by Yi Pom-sok. He fought the Japanese and went to Germany in 1933 to study military affairs; later he worked with German and Italian advisors to the Nationalists in China. The KNY were the Blue Shirts.
- 207 – Minjok is like Hitler’s ideals. He used the term Juche / chuche, meaning being ever subjective about all things Korean and putting Korea first. This was awkward in the recently post-holocaust world.

211 – The United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) watched 1948 elections in the south. Rhee mostly won and the US gave aid and control to ROK. The ROK Army (ROKA) was now created. Right wing youth groups contributed people.

216 – Party geneology: Rhee’s KDP became the ruling party under the name Liberal Party in the 1950s, Democratic Republican Party in the 1960s and 70s, and Democratic Liberal party of the 1990s. The opposition, the Democratic Party.

224 – The ROK was harsh and autocratic and we supported it as it oppressed leftists and communists. What were we to do?

227 – North had little Soviet control; the Chinese had more.

228 – In 1946 Nationalist and Christian leaders were ousted and the Korean People’s Army (KPA), inchoate, dominated.

230 – While only 2 percent, Christians in the North, the US thought, were the strongest opponents of the regime. Thus they were targeted. Sun Myung Moon was imprisoned, police fired on Christians. Christian churches were open until the war, but political activity ruthlessly stamped out.

236 – Stalin once asked how many troops the Pope could deploy.

### **Chapter Five – Collision, 1948 – 1953, Page 237**

238 – The Korean war began, really, in early 1949, not June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1950.

241 – From 1948 to 1950 Korean units that helped China fight the Japs filtered back into North Korea.

243 – Meanwhile, there was peasant guerrilla fighting in the South.

245 – We say the US left Korea in July 1949, but we never left. Our advisers were all over the war zones, fighting rebels.

247 – In 1949, the South wanted war, but the N did not. It waited for its troops to come back from China.

264 – Truman went to the UN, not the US Congress.

266 – Why no USSR veto of the UN war? Perhaps Stalin wanted to suck us into a war? Perhaps he wanted to out the UN as a US tool? The USSR stayed clear from day one.

267 – The Chinese, on the other hand, were ready to aid.

270 – We used our extra wartime pull to push wealth redistribution – we would not fight to restore the aristocracy.

282 - ROK atrocities.

283 – Chinese enter the war.

284 – China’s entry was not defensive; they owed North Korea.

280s – 298 - we pushed them North, they pushed us back. We destroyed the N; devastated them with bombing.

### **Chapter Six – Korean Sun Rising: Industrialization, 1953 – Present Page 299**

300 – Perhaps SK got rich cause it had no landed capitalist class, like South America had.

The Japanese strong state infrastructure is another guess.

“No capitalists, no Protestants, no merchantws, no money, no market, no resources, . . . no discernable history of commerce, foreign trade, or industrial development” but there it is, wealth.

Confucianism translated into a compulsive school system through elementary in the 1950s and 60s.

301- As education was for technocrats, the state technocracy became a major factor in the economy.

The war made the population mobile.

The wealthy refugees congregated in Seoul. But they could no longer control people, mobile people.

302 – Replacing the aristocracy were entrepreneurs who made money during the occupation. Many chaebol groups started now, with little connection to pre-war industry. Hyundai got its money supplying the US war effort.

303 – Men who had been in the war effort were disciplined. The military provided “A school for industrial discipline.”

304 – Korea worked Uncle Sam’s teat.

307 – Korea got, in 1957, more aid than all of Europe, 4 times all of Latin America. That doesn’t include informal gains.

309 – Capitalism, BC says, is not a matter of Protestant Ethic or Confucian virtues, it is an amoral system of exchange. He says if given a lower price Americans will desert their toyotas for Hyundais. What of Korea’s high tarrifs?

310 – In 1965 the US accounted for 75% of SK’s military budget and 50% of the civil budget and 80% of the foreign exchange.

311 – Park Chung Hee was anti-capitalist and desparate for Korea’s national strength – Mercantilist. He wrote a book, in 1961, Our Nation’s Path. BUY ME!!

312 – Park arrested import subsidizing businessmen who fattened under Rhee and paraded them with “I am a corrupt swine” and “I ate the people” placards.

Samsung’s head, Yi Pyong-ch ol, went to Park and said, rather than glom onto Japs, Korea should seek foreign capital. Park decided to fine the businessmen, rather than jail them, and to invest the fines in industries, with shares going to the government.

Park spoke at every export day and cut ribbons like mad. His slogan, under Saemaul, or New Village, was “Treat employees like family.”

313 – This fed on old virtues like obedience, loyalty, family values, and filial piety. Company uniforms and songs followed. US firms moved here due to worker productivity of 25x per dollar.

Park also learned economic planning from the Japanese.

314 – The miracle on the Han was sparked by bureaucrats willing to give out no cost loans.

315 – Negative interest if you’d invest it as Park suggested.

317 – How did Korea’s state allocate money efficiently? 1) National efficiency was the goal, 2) The civil servants are well – trained in Korea, 3) There were rewards for friends.

These organizations had a common interest with the government, via marriage and nationality. HERE He leaves out HOMOGENEITY.

319 – US aid went up after the Park coup

- 320 – In 1994 The Japs paid 20,000 to each comfort woman.
- 321 – 50,000 Korean soldiers served in Vietnam.
- 322 – 328 details of Park’s investments in industries all aimed to make Korea self-sufficient.
- 329 – Roh Tae Woo (president from 1988 – 1993) and many other went ot North Kyongsang Senior High in Teague.
- 330- Mid 1990s the Big 4 Chaebols did 40 percent of Korea’s economy. Ten families controlled 60%.
- 332 – The IMF coincided with Kim Dae Jung; who wanted to increase transparency anyways. He made corps less diverse, and stopped inter company loans, but did not mess with Chaebols. He also allowed layoffs as part of the IMF restructuring.
- 340 – Rather than individualism, the work ethic in Korea is a familial one.
- 341 – In 1992 Koreas GDP was less than that of Japans Pachenko parlors.

## **Chapter Seven – The Virtues, II: The Democratic Movement, 1960 – Present**

### **Page 342**

- 343 – Kwangju is underdeveloped as old Paekche, in the 1980s “Yankee Go Home” became common.
- 345 – In 1960 Rhee was 85 and in power.
- 346 – He even controlled passports and trusted no one.
- 347 – In 1952 he declared martial law. But in 1954 he won re-election and then gave himself a 3<sup>rd</sup> term possibility.
- 348 – A law in 1958 gave five years to those who distort facts or benefit the enemy.
- 349 – In 1960 he won 90 percent of the vote. Street battles killed 115 young people.
- 350 – We aided his departure, which made us popular.
- 354 – From 1961 – 1993 military leaders ran Korea.
- 360 – Park again declared martial law in 1964, we acquiesced when two ROK army troops quelled street demonstrations. 65 – 71 brought stability and growth. The KCIA interrogated, arrested, censored, and infiltrated.
- 363 – Yushin means, ala the Meiji, Korea is one big happy family. The government too, the National assembly, modeled “organic cooperation.”
- 366 – Park narrowly won election in 1971 over Kim Dae Jung, he was nearly executed until Carter and Regan intervned to stay the execution.
- 367 – In 1971 there were huge bankruptcies. The State bailed them out.
- 373 – Labor conditions were brutal under Park, 1973.
- 375 – The military broke up strikes.
- 376 – After someone self-immolated in 1970 DJ Kim got popular, strikes happened and Churches became sanctuaries. A minister led protests against the Yushin system.
- 377 – A female minister formed women’s unions, in 1978 thugs covered naked women in shit and fired them.
- 378 – The YH Wig battle. Protests spread, and in Oct 1979 Park’s KCIA head shot him.
- 381 – In 1980 Chun took over via martial law. Protests broke out
- 382 – Kwangju, to which the US may have had no option but to turn a blind eye.

384 – In 1981 Chun had himself make president and put 37,000 people in “purification camps.”  
Kim Young Sam began a hunger strike.  
385 – DJ Kim kicked out after stay of execution for Kwangju.  
386 – Brought back and put under house arrest.  
389 – Carter did nothing about Kwangju; Reagan made Chun Doo Hwan his first foreign guest.  
392 – The Ruling Party made Roh Tae Woo President Chun’s successor. ROh announced direct presidential elections in 1987. They also removed control on unions.  
Most church growth since 1970 as they were pro-democracy and harbored political protestors.  
393 – Roh won the 1987 elections when Kim Young Sam and Kim Dae Jung split to opposition vote.  
395 – Kim Young Sam won in 1993, ending military rule. He indicted Roh and Chun.  
396 – In 1994 professor’s lecture notes could be used to convict them of subversive activity.  
397 – Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) was illegal till 1998.  
399 – Hyundai workers live Hyundai lives. So DJ Kim could not go against them without going against all employees.  
400 – DJ arrested again.  
401 – 2004 Roh won again.

### **Chapter Eight – Nation of the Sun King: North Korea, 1953 – Present, Page 404**

405 – In 1980 Pyongyang was one of the best run, most efficient cities in Asia.  
409 – A long description of corporatism. A liberal, 19<sup>th</sup> century, romantic anti-capitalist vision, with organic connection, family and hierarchy.  
410 – Fascism is a pathological variant of corporatism. They relied more on charismatic leaders.  
411 – 412 – Family is the basis of Asian corporatism. Mao only briefly went away from it during the Great Leap Forward.  
413 – The basis may also be called the “Juche / Chuch’e” ideal. Kim Il Song spoke of this a lot.  
414 – NK sees itself as the middle kingdom writ small.  
416 – Order and disorder come from the mind of the leader.  
424 – No upward mobility, the NK elite are as Yangban.  
And, “how can there be a political process when the leader is perfect?”  
428 – Sung had Chucho, Kim Il Jong had “Chajusong” or independence / autonomy.  
433 – NK economy grew 25 a year in the decade after the Civil War and 14 % per annum from 1965 – 1978.  
434 – The GDP per capita probably kept pace with SK till 1986. But, their productivity per labor is less and energy is wasted; the South’s economy revived in the mid-1980s and has been ahead ever since.  
435 – It has done okay in hard industries, but less well in the communication revolution, like computers. The life expectancy, vaccinations, and infant mortality, urbanization are about even with SK.

436 – The drop of the USSR hurt NK in the 1990s.

438 – In the 1940s collectivizing was not a disaster in NK. Landlords were not killed, but lost land, while keeping more than others.

440- Floods happened in 1995; this led to the first asking for western aid and Jap aid ever by NK.

443 – 1998 the Kim Ill Sung died, famine kept coming due to bad weather and not the best management.

444 – Factories only at 50 % capacity.

### **Chapter Nine – America’s Koreans Page 448**

449 – Koreans are 10 % of our best university freshman classes and more in California. This is a problem. Relentless multicultural whining begins herein.

451 – Koreans first came to Hawaii. By 1903 50 Koreans were in the US., 7,000 in Hawaii. As late as 1970 only 8,900 were in Los Angeles. 115,000 nationwide.

452 – In 1924 there were perhaps 3,000 Koreans in the US and they were barred from many things.

453 – They made friends with blacks.

454 – People were insensitive during WW II.

455 – 15 states outlawed Korean – Caucasian marriages.

On person associated with a left-leaning newspaper was deported in 1950 to North Korea. A couple of others “were not so lucky,” the FBI returned them to SK and Rhee.

456 – By 1975 there were 13,000 Koreans born in the US. From 1985 – 87, 35,000 emigrated annually, probably due to political oppression.

457 – During this time, 54 % were Christian. By 1975 only 5 % were professionals, 85% working class.

459 – Both positive and negative stereotypes hurt them very much, life in the US is terrible because whites are barbarian reactionaries.

460 – In the 1970s Koreans were busted bribing influential Americans. Nixon lowered troop levels in Korea.

462 – Falling Down with Michael Douglass “offers a perfect example of the divide-and-rule tactics that whites have long used, whether consciously or unconsciously, to assure that they do not face a unified racial opposition from below.” WOW !~!

463 – The LA riots and black / Korean tension.

464 – One Korean that lived with Blacks, “suffered from the diabolical inversions that a racist society conjures up in the mind of the oppressed, often unbeknownst to the white majority: “It created within me a burning, yearning, face-pressed-up-against-the-glass sexual and romantic desire for white women, especially blonde-haired, blue-eyed ones.” WOW !!

465 – 467 He affirms that Koreans can never be Americans because America is a horrible racist society. And, he feels the pain of our tortured victims.

### **Chapter Ten – Korea’s Place in the World Page 470**

472 – From 1945 – 1953 capitalist nations, through the US), solidified via military agreements (with Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and the Philipines) were “deeply penetrated by American military structures. Lateral connection was very limited.

474 – Following Nixon’s lowering of troop levels, Carter said all would gradually go. Kim ill Song liked Carter. The NK papers stoped saying hateful things about us.

475 – Carter changed his mind, then Reagan invited Chun and all got worse.

476 – North Korea tried to assassinate Chun, killing much of his cabinet. And, from 1983 – 7 they tilted towards the USSR .

477 – China reached out to Seoul, and had a bigger trade with it than NK.

478 – The USSR attended the 1988 Olympics.

484 – We mimetically and ignorantly slandered NK, whose nuclear program was peaceful, and justified if not.

486 – In 1992 – 3 NK allowed site inspections.

488 – Clinton said he’d go ahead with military maneuvers called “Team Spirit Games.”

489 – NK then agreed to talks.

491 – We must remember we threatened NK with nukes.

- 494 – a history of our threatening NK is relayed.

497 – SK long supplied weapons to South Africa, Iran and Iraq during their wars. NK was responding to our pressure.

498 – Under Clinton relations thawed, we gave NK light-water reactors. Kim took back his cooling rods and an international crisis ensued, Carter flew to Pyongyang and averted crisis.

500 – Thus the 1994 breakthrough, which was not all one-way US concessions, as BC says is often reported.

501 – Then Kim Dae Jung’s “sunshine policy.”

502 – In 1998 Kim Il Jung shot rockets over Japan, panic ensued, but it was only a fireworks celebration meant to commemorate Kim Sung Ill.

503 – The Supreme Court “stepped in to give the 2000 Presidential election to George W. Bush.” This ruined possible reconciliation.

504 – Kim Dae Jung tried to help, but Bush called Kim Jung Ill a Pygmy and part of the “axis of evil.”

505 – We must realize we are the big players and intransigency is our fault.

506 – Reunification?

507 – BC thinks NK would be willing to have a confederation aligned with the US; it floated the idea.

508 – If united, the Koreas would rival Japan.

509- The Germany analogy is faulty because Germany has such a great welfare state.

512 – The South is going global, but NK is still Hongian (isolationist) but they are both full of great people and BC thinks they’ll unify peacefully eventually.