POLITICS OF DIVIDED KOREA

IR 116, Fall 2007

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide an overview of the major political and economic transformation in modern Korean society. It attempts to understand the transformation of Korean society within a broader context of the world history of the 20th century, and for that purpose, it reviews the following four major historical momentum in modern Korea: (1) colonialism and its impacts on modernization; (2) war and social change; (3) the rise and fall of authoritarianism; (4) economic development and crisis. The course pays special attention to the industrialization South Korea has experienced in recent decades and to the nature of political change appeared during this process. The main question explored by the course is what kind of modern, industrial society South Korea will become as a consequence of all these rapid economic and social changes. North Korea will be studied as well, and the origin of the recent North Korean threats and its development will be covered.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

No pre-requisites, but some background on Korean history recommended

Two critical review papers 40%
Web site postings and class participation 20%
Final examination 40%

Books for purchase:

Course reader
I. INTRODUCTION: COLLAPSE OF TRADITIONAL SYSTEM

** Required readings
* Recommended readings
# Further reference

Week One: Introduction to Traditional Korean System (9/24, 9/26)

a. First lecture: Why Korea? Introduction to the major topics of the course.

b. Pre-modern Korea


Week Two: Colonial Legacy (10/1, 10/3)

a. Korea’s Failure to voluntary Modernization: Why it failed?


#Schmid, Andre “The Universalizing Winds of Civilization” from Korea Between Empires, 1895-1910, pp 23-54

b. Colonialism: Process and Impacts on the Post-colonial Korea


II. DIVISION, THE KOREAN WAR, AND AUTHORITAINISM

Week Three: Division/ The Korean War/ The Cold War (10/8, 10/10)

a. Division of the Peninsula

**Cumings, Bruce (1981)** The Origins of the Korean War vol.1 Grupo ILSHA, chaps. 11 & 12.  

b. The Korean War: Origin and Impacts  

Week Four: “Developmental Dictatorship” in the South (10/15, 10/17)  

a. Origin of Developmental Dictatorship  

b. Characteristics: The Strong State Debate  

Week Five: Consolidation of “Juche” System in the North (10/22, 10/24)

a. Consolidation of Kim Il Sung’s Power

b. Legacy of Kim Ilsungism or Juche Ideology
   #Bradkey K. Martin, Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leaders: North Korea and the Kim Dynasty (Thomas Dunne Books, 2004)

III. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Week Six: Late Industrialization and the Role of the State (10/29, 10/31)

a. Historical Timing: Advantages or Disadvantages?

b. Korean Developmental State?

Week Seven: Korean Chaebols: Origins and Characteristics (11/5, 11/7)

a. Emergence of Chaebol System and its Impacts


b. Comparative context: Big Business & National Wealth


**Week Eight: Democratic Transition and Consolidation? (11/12, 11/14)**

a. Comparative debate on Democratic Transition and Consolidation


b. Debate on the Origins of Civil Society in Korea


IV. PROSPECTS OF THE FUTURE KOREA

Week Nine: Financial Crisis and its Impacts (11/26, 11/28)

a. Origin

b. Crisis Management and Impacts

Week Ten: North Korean Nuclear Threats—Origin and Development (12/3, 12/5)

a. Origin and Development
#KEDO, Agreed Framework Between the U.S. and the DPRK (http://www.nautilus.org/DPRKBriefingBook/agreedFramework/AgreedFrameworkText.pdf)

b. Engagement vs. Regime Change (U.S, Japan, China, and South Korea)
WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

READING MEMOS (each class)
Write a one-paragraph memo (150 words maximum) on the readings for each class and post it to the course web site by 11 p.m. the day before the relevant class. The memos may take a variety of forms: 1) Critique one or more of the readings, 2) Relate the readings to a recent news story or news commentary, 3) Write your own question on the readings and answer it, 4) Propose a topic for discussion that relates to the readings, 5) Answer one of the discussion questions raised by the instructor. You are encouraged to experiment with this assignment.

PRESS REVIEW PAPER (10%)
Write a 1500-word (about 5 pages) essay on media coverage of Korean politics. Focus primarily on the current period from 2007, but you may go back as far as 2002, if you need more examples. You may review one newspaper or news magazine’s coverage of Korea in depth, or review news coverage from a variety of newspapers and magazines on a particular news story (e.g. the North Korean nuclear issue, presidential election, etc). Choose a news story that breaks or develops during the period of the course. For either approach to this assignment, make sure to analyze and critique the coverage. Has it been accurate and insightful? Has it been biased? Do the reporters understand the dynamics of Korean politics? Incorporate course readings and lectures as appropriate.

#Due: by the end of 8th week

POLICY ANALYSIS PAPER (30%) 
Write a 15 page essay on the politics of Korea. Base your paper primarily on course readings plus additional reference materials. Focus on the political dynamics of the issue, not on advocating a particular policy stance. Which interest groups, government agencies, and political parties are involved in setting policy in this area? What are their respective positions on the issue? How do they interact? Link your argument to theories and analytical perspectives introduced in the course.

# Students are required to talk with the instructor before finalizing the paper topic (by the end of 5th week).
# Due: last day of the class.