History 292/392
The Two Koreas

Winter 2009 Mon 1:15–3:05pm
Classroom 260–001

Professor: Yumi Moon
Building 200 (Lane/History Corner), Office 228
Phone: (650) 723–2992
Email: vmoon@stanford.edu
Office Hours: Wed 1:00–3:00 pm., and by appointment

Course Description

The history of the two Koreas began in 1945, when the United States and Soviet Union agreed to divide the country along the 38th parallel and to occupy North and South separately. This division had a great impact on Korea’s decolonization process and resulted in the outbreak of the Korean War. The war quickly developed into the first international war after World War II and completed the regime of the Cold War in East Asia. After the war the two Koreas took dramatically different historical paths, and the nation’s division is now comprehensive and internalized among the residents of the two Koreas. This system of the two Koreas survived the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s but is now entering a crucial historical stage toward its fundamental transformation or even its dissolution.

This course will examine major themes and scholarly works to understand the rise of the two Koreas and their subsequent historical developments. Themes will include the historical and ideological origins of the division, the impact of Japanese colonial rule, the Korean War, the ideas of key North and South Korean leaders, and the consolidation of the two different states into North and South after the Korean War.

The structure of this colloquium will be divided into three chronological periods: the colonial origins of the nation’s division (1910–45), the Korean War and the involvements of international powers (1945–53), and the consolidation of the two different states in the aftermath of the war (1953–).

This colloquium will also have one analytical focus: the reconsideration of Bruce Cuming’s seminal work, The Origins of the Korean War. Cumings provided a comprehensive and authoritative account of the origins of the war, its outbreak, and the factors involved in its escalation into the international war. He called the Korean War “a civil war” and criticized the United States foreign policy toward Korea between 1945 and 1950. His thesis is based on the assumption that Korea in 1945 was “revolutionary.” We will revisit Cuming’s major arguments and examine scholarly debate that his work has generated for the past few decades. This will help us to explore a new paradigm and
historical questions in order to understand the rise and consolidation of the two Koreas and the prospect of their reunification.

**Requirements**

**Grading:** Class Participation 50%; Presentation 10%, Two Response Papers 10%, In-Class Discussion 30%
- Final Research Paper 50%; Research Prospectus 5%, Progress Report 15%, Final Paper 30%

**Class Participation:** This is a weekly two-hour seminar centered on discussion and debate. You will be expected to complete all the assigned readings and participate actively in each week’s seminar. For the missing classes due to the national holidays on Jan. 19 (Martin Luther King Day, Jr., Day) and Feb. 16 (Presidents’ Day), you are required to submit two assignments to make up the classes. If you want to discuss the readings for Feb. 16, you can meet me during my office hours or arrange a separate time for the discussion.

1) Each week, one student will present brief comments and her or his questions for discussion on the assigned readings. Your presentations will be made at the beginning of class and should be 5–7 minutes long and no longer. You can select the weeks for your presentations in accordance with your interests or schedule. The number of students in the class will determine how many times each student presents comments and questions throughout the course.

2) You are required to watch the documentary film *A State of Mind* (produced and directed by Daniel Gordon, 94 min, 2005) and to submit a one-page (single spaced) response paper on the film. The response paper is due on Jan. 26 at the beginning of class.

3) You are required to submit a two-page (single spaced) response paper on the readings for Feb. 16. This is due on Feb. 23 at the beginning of class. Details will be provided later in the course.

4) Attendance is mandatory.

**Final Research Paper:** You will write one final research paper (12–13 pages long for undergraduates, and 15–17 for graduate students, both excluding bibliography). You can choose your research topics of your interest, but you should relate them to the course themes and the periods covered in the course.

1) You will have an individual session with the instructor in order to decide your topic for the final paper. The consultation will occur between Week 2 and Week 3 (Jan. 12–Jan. 23). You will submit a brief (1–2 pages single spaced) research
paper prospectus describing the question/issue to be researched, methodology, and sources on Feb. 9 at the beginning of class.

2) You will submit a detailed progress report of your research (7–9 pages double spaced) on Mar. 9 at the beginning of class. The final paper will be due on Mar. 20 (Fri) by 5 p.m. You can email your paper to me.

Required Books: The following is a schedule of our classes, and the assigned readings for each class. The books can be purchased at the Stanford Book Store. Readings marked # are available as Stanford Library e-books. All other readings will be available on reserve at the Green Library and on the coursework website.


Week 1 (Jan 12). Introduction and Orientation

Colonial Origins of the Nation’s Division and the Korean War

Jan 19.* Martin Luther King Day, Jr., Day (holiday, no class)

A State of Mind (produced and directed by Daniel Gordon, 94 min, 2005). RESERVED in Media/Microtext, Green Library Lower Level.

* Individual sessions with the instructor begin this week.

Week 2 (Jan 26).* Class and Nation in Colonial Korea


* The response paper to A State of Mind is due at the beginning of class.

**Week 3 (Feb 2).** Exile Movements and Ideological Divides


**The Outbreak of the Korean War and the International Involvements**

**Week 4 (Feb 9).** * The American Occupation of South Korea

Bruce Cumings, The Origins of the Korean War, 68–262.

* Your research paper prospectus is due at the beginning of class.
**Week 5 (Feb 16).** *Soviets and China in the Korea War*


* Feb 16. Presidents’ Day (holiday, no classes).

**In the Aftermath of the War and Consolidation of the Division**

**Week 6 (Feb 23).** *North Korea: The North Korean Revolution and Regime Consolidation*


* The response paper on the readings for Feb. 16 is due at the beginning of class.

**Week 8 (Mar 2).** *South Korea: Democratization*


* The progress report of your research (7–9 pages double spaced) is due at the beginning of class.

**Week 9 (Mar 9).** *The North Korean Crisis: Famine and the Nuclear Issue*

Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, *Famine in North Korea.*


United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, # “North Korea: an update in six-party talks and matters related to the resolution of the North Korean
nuclear crisis: hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, One Hundred Ninth Congress, first session, June 14, 2005.”