MODERN KOREAN HISTORY (1876-PRESENT)

Introduction and the Fall of the Chosŏn Dynasty
Why Did You Sign Up For This Series?
What Do We Think of When We Think of Korea?
Complicated/Contradictory Past
Modern Korean Historical Consciousness

- Deeply Rooted Sense of History/Future Oriented.
- “Post-colonial consciousness”.
- Incomplete.
A Brief Visual History of Korea

Mt Baekdu, North Korea
Who are the Koreans?
Tangun
The Two Koreas
DMZ
Militarization
South Korean Military
Social History of National Division
Internal Divisions
State Violence
Syncretic Culture

Religious affiliation (2010)

- Buddhist: 43.3%
- Protestant: 24.0%
- Roman Catholic: 24.2%
- Nonreligious: 0.9%
- Other: 7.6%
Education and Regimentation
“Mudang”
Protest Culture
수숨의길은 대학 생에 있다.
Seoul 1953
Korean Capitalism
Power of Chaebol and State Capitalism

Breakdown of market capitalization of Asia300 companies in South Korea (in percent)

- Samsung: 41%
- Chaebol: 13%
- Hyundai Motor: 9%
- LG: 7%
- SK: 7%
- Others: 7%
- Not chaebol: 23%

As of end of October
Uneven Development

Korea’s Power Paradox

Business in South Korea is concentrated in about 60 large conglomerates, or chaebols, but they employ few people relative to their financial importance.

- 70% of GDP
- 14% of listed companies
- 5% of employment

* Figures are for 2008-2011

Source: WSJ research

The Wall Street Journal
Korean Shanty Town
Ariel Shot of Seoul
Influence of Foreign Powers
SINO-CENTRIC MAP
Japanese Colonial Era
Police Brutality 1980
Korea’s “Soft Power”

Diagram: Korean Content Industry Exports for 2013

- **Games**: 58%
- **Cartoon**: 9%
- **Music**: 5%
- **Broadcasting**: 5%

Units: Percentage of total content exports.
Figure 2. Korean export share of TV programs per country based on dollar amount as of 2011

- Japan: 60.4%
- Taiwan: 12.5%
- China: 10.2%
- Hong Kong: 2.4%
- Malaysia: 1.1%
- Vietnam: 1.7%
- Myanmar: 0.8%
- Thailand: 1.6%
- Singapore: 1.9%
- Others: 4.6%
- Indonesia: 0.7%

Source: Korea Communications Commission
Overseas expansion of the Korean Wave

- Not yet introduced
- Recognized
- Introduced
- Growing phase
- Mature state
A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF PRE-MODERN KOREA.
Recommended Readings

- “Korea: Old and New”.
- Korean History in Maps.
Three Kingdoms (57BCE-668)
Unified Silla and Balhae (668-918)
Goryeo (877-943)
Mongol Invasions (1239)
Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897…or 1905/1910)
Features of the Joseon Dynasty

- Ridged Neo-Confucian Class system (Yangban, peasants, Chungim, slaves/"unfree" people).
- Weak central state, increasing power of provincial gentry.
- Balance of power between court and Confucian literate.
- Tributary to China.
Sino-centric world
IMJIN WARS (1592-1598)
Qing Invasions (1627-1637)
Culture Under Joseon
Emperor Sejong (1446)
Social Criticism
Pansori
THE COLLAPSE OF A DYNASTY
Causes for the Collapse of the Joseon Dynasty in the 19th century

- Problems with succession and straining of the Class System.
- Rising peasant suffering/resentment.
- Arrival of new belief systems and ideas.
- Imperial powers.
Treaty Port System and Gun Boat Diplomacy
Collapse of the Qing Dynasty/Rise of Meiji Japan
Regency of the Taewongun (1864-1873)

- Isolationism: “No treaties, no trade, no Catholics, no West, no Japan”.
- Administrative and military reform. Thwarted.
- Mass persecution of Catholics.
Chosŏn’s Entrance into the International Order

- Sino-centric self-conception.
- 1876 Treaty of Kanghwa.
- 1884, Korean court dominated by Pro-Chinese conservatives, and Pro-Japanese reformers.
Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)

- Pro-Chinese (conservative) and Pro-Japanese (reformist) factions in Korean court lead to “Kaspin coup” in 1884.
- Qing forces restore monarchy. Yuan Shikai’s ten year residency
- Tonghak rebellion.
- Qing handily defeated.
- Final blow to the Sino-centric order.
- Western (white) powers intervene to curtail Japanese gains.
Korean “Reformers”

- Elimination of Yangban system and civil service exams.
- Open to Western technologies and government.
- Educated in Japan, inspired by Meiji.
Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895)

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Tonghak Rebellions (1894-1895)
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- Tonghak Rebellion crushed.
- Western (white) powers intervene to curtail Japanese gains.
Kabo Reforms (1894-1896)

- 1894, Japanese seize Royal Palace.
- “Enlightenment” reformers brought into government.
- Nationalism, egalitarianism, capitalism.
- Constitutional monarchy.
- Modern Police force and military.
- Elimination of formal class distinctions.
- Western calendar, removal of ponytail.
The Independence Club

- 1896, Seo Jae-pil (Philip Jaisohn), 1898: Yun Ch’iho and Yi Sang-jae.
- Democratic radicals (U.S), Confucian Reformers.
- Create independence gate, Independence Hall, and Independence Park.
- “Tongnip Sinmun”.
- Independence, Self-strengthening, Democratic people’s rights movement.
- Turn Privy Council into legislature.
Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905)

- October 1895, Queen Min Assassinated.
- Russian/Japanese conflicts over court in Korea.
- Post-1901 Boxer protocols, leaves 100,000 Russian troops in East Asia.
- Principally a navy battle that is easily won by Japan.
- Japanese dominance in Korea, by 1910 Chosŏn ceases to exist.
Legacy of Queen Min
King Kojong 1852-1919
Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905)

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Russo-Japanese War
Russian-Japanese War (1904-1905)

- Russian/Japanese conflicts over court in Korea
- Post-1901 Boxer protocols, leaves 100,000 Russian troops in East Asia.
- 1904, Japan strikes first. Principally a navy battle that is easily won by Japan.
- Japanese dominance in Korea, by 1910 Chosŏn ceases to exist.
Russo-Japanese War
Logistical Problems
Russian-Japanese War (1904-1905)

- Russian/Japanese conflicts over court in Korea
- Post-Boxer protocols, leaves 100,000 Russian troops in East Asia.
- Principally a navy battle that is easily won by Japan.
- 1905 Korea becomes a protectorate of Japan, by 1910 Chosŏn ceases to exist.
Initial Korean Responses

- King Kojong refuses to abdicate, suicide of close aides.
- 1907 appeal to the Hague conventions.
- King forced to abdicate throne.
- “Righteous armies”. 69,000 troops.
Ahn Chang Ho
Ito Hirobumi (1841-1909)
Why Did the Resistance Fail?

- Inferiority of Arms. Reliance on playing foreign powers off against each other.
- Fissures within Korea. Reformers vs Conservatives.
- Reformers as collaborators?
- Feudal composition of society.
- Tonghak Rebellion compared to peasant response to colonialism.
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