

The Pivot to Asia

South Korea as a Strategic Partner for U.S. Foreign Policy in Asia

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Abstract

The relationship between the United States and the Republic of South Korea requires reexamination due to the recent U.S. foreign policy shift from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region. The nature of the relationship has altered considerably over the past 70 years. South Korea is a leading country in East Asia, and a strengthened partnership could have many benefits for the United States. South Korea tends to be overlooked in foreign policy discussions because of the security concerns posed by North Korea; but South Korea possesses many qualities which could be utilized to the advantage of U.S. foreign policy. The South Korean economy continues to grow in both the Asian and international markets. In the scientific and educational arenas, South Korea is producing top scientists, technological innovations and educated professionals. Geographically, the Korean peninsula is a strategic location unparalleled by other U.S. partners in the region. Politically, the United States was instrumental in helping South Korea develop into the modern democratic republic it is today. This positively impacts the current U.S.-South Korean relationship and makes South Korea a venue for exporting democratic ideas to other Asian nations. Culturally, South Korea is a major influencer in East Asia with a Christian tradition that is shared in many ways with the United States. Both militaries have a history of working together and U.S. troops have held bases in South Korea for over half a century. Finally, the longstanding alliance of South Korea and the United States impacts all negotiations with North Korea, and the security of the Korean peninsula. After consideration of these major factors, through subject matter experts, state documents and geo-political forecasts, the final analysis suggests that South Korea will be the United States' most important strategic partner for the foreseeable future.

The Pivot to Asia:

South Korea as a Strategic Partner for U.S. Foreign Policy in Asia

Introduction

U.S foreign policy is in a state of transition. With conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan coming to the end of its current chapter, there is another foreign policy focus on the horizon: Asia-Pacific.¹ The current administration has announced its intentions to engage and invest in the Asia-Pacific region.² The countries mentioned as part of the Asia-Pacific region range from India to Japan, and from Mongolia to New Zealand.³ In order to accomplish these goals, strengthening regional partnerships will be critical. Each U.S. regional partner holds a strategic role in the overall success of U.S. foreign policy. The Republic of Korea (ROK), commonly known as South Korea, stands out as the most important strategic partner in the region. Following the aftermath of WWII and the Korean War, South Korea had a relationship with the United States that was characterized by dependency.⁴ In the 21st century, South Korea has become an economic powerhouse and global innovator which has dramatically altered the relationship it shares with the United States.⁵ The historic, economic, and political interests held by both nations are advantageous to a mutually beneficially relationship. Regional partners will be indispensable to the promotion and success of this updated U.S. foreign policy for the

1. Hilary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, October 11, 2011, accessed January 27, 2014, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Gregg Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, 2009), 13-14.

5. Myung Oak Kim, and Sam Jaffe, *The New Korea: An Inside Look at South Korea's Economic Rise* (New York: AMACOM, 2010), 79-85.

Asia-Pacific region. South Korea's strategic location and partnership could provide the framework for the United States' pursuit of a more secure region. For the foreseeable future, South Korea will be the most important strategic partner to the United States for the effective implementation of its foreign policy goals in the region.

The Shift in U.S. Foreign Policy

The Pivot to Asia-Pacific

The concept of a pivot to the Asia-Pacific was popularized by former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.⁶ In her October 2011 *Foreign Policy* editorial, she stressed the importance of U.S. investment in the “diplomatic, economic, strategic” arenas in addition to security within the region.⁷ In his November 2011 speech to the Australian parliament, U.S. President Obama announced U.S. intentions to “advance security, prosperity and human dignity across the Asia Pacific.”⁸ This pivot seeks to strategically shift the focus of U.S. attention from the Middle East and Europe to the Asia-Pacific region.⁹ In practice this encompasses a range of activities including: strengthening transnational partnerships, increasing U.S. military presence in the region, and cultivating economic investment.¹⁰ In March 2013, the U.S. Department of Defense published an article reiterating the benefits of a pivot to the Asia-Pacific to the United States and outlining U.S. efforts to promote and implement its new foreign policy

6. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century.”

7. Ibid.

8. The White House. Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament, Office of the Press Secretary, November 17, 2011, accessed January 31, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>.

9. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century.”

10. Ibid.

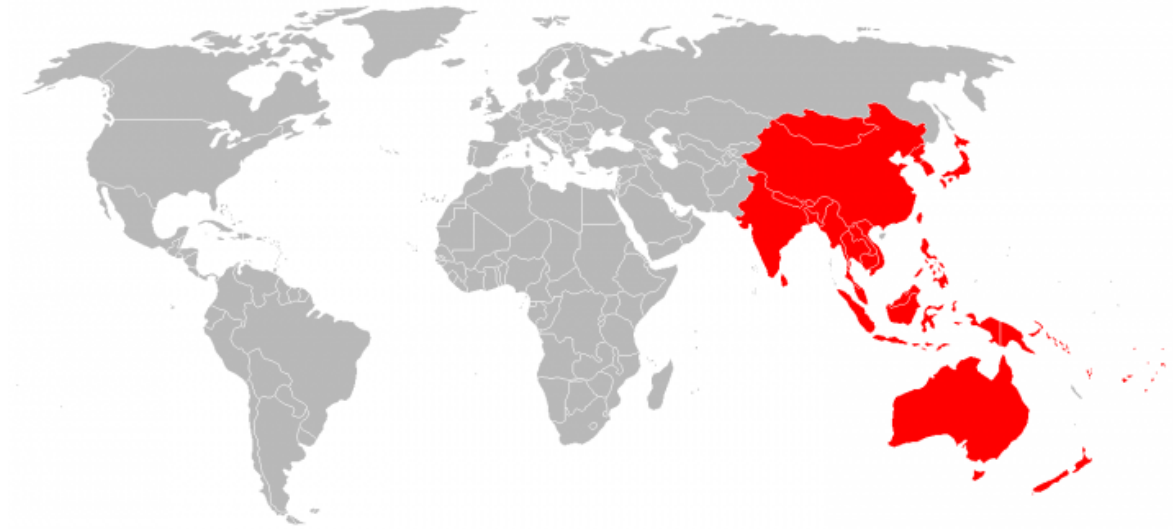


Figure I: Map of the Asia-Pacific Region¹¹

goals.¹² Current U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry reaffirmed President Obama's commitment to this foreign policy in October 2013, and added that "the relationship between the United States and the Asia Pacific has really never been stronger."¹³

President Obama called South Korea "one of America's closest allies and greatest friends" in April 2009.¹⁴ In January 2014, *The Korea Times* reported that South Korea has "emerged as the US pivot to Asia."¹⁵ Anthony Cordesman and Ashely Hess of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) outlined the meaning and impact of the updated U.S. foreign policy as it relates to the Korean peninsula in their June 2013

11. Generated by Traveltip.org.

12. Amaani Lyle, "National Security Advisor Explains Asia-Pacific Pivot," *American Forces Press Service*, March 12, 2013, accessed January 27, 2014, <http://www.defense.gov/News/newsarticle.aspx?ID=119505>.

13. U.S. Department of State, Remarks at a Press Availability with United States Trade Representative Ambassador Froman, October 5, 2013, accessed January 30, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/10/215148.htm>.

14. Gerry J. Gilmore, "Obama Praises U.S.-South Korea Alliance at London Summit," *American Forces Press Service*, April 2, 2009, accessed January 30, 2014 <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=53745>.

15. Seung-woo Kang, "S. Korea Emerges as US Pivot to Asia," *Korea Times*, January 13, 2014, accessed January 27, 2014, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2014/01/116_149728.html.

report.¹⁶ They determined five “strategic pillars” to the policy: “strengthening alliances, forging deeper partnerships with emerging powers, building a constructive relationship with China, strengthening regional institutions and building an economic architecture to increase the benefits of trade and growth.”¹⁷ These objectives serve to mutually benefit the Asia-Pacific region and the United States under the assertion that “Asia is critical to America's future” and “an engaged America is vital to Asia's future.”¹⁸ Allies of the United States in this region include: Australia, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines.¹⁹ South Korea and Japan are identified as the foundational components specifically for the policies relating to security and the economy.²⁰ India and China are listed among other countries with which the U.S. plans to engage in order to build “new partnerships.”²¹ The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), also known as North Korea, is singled out as a security and human rights concern.²² In addition to security and economic goals, human rights and the promotion of democracy is a major objective.²³ This foreign policy shift is a first for U.S. foreign policy makers and its goals

16. Anthony H. Cordesman, and Ashley Hess, *The Evolving Military Balance in the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia*, Vol. 1, *Resources, Military Spending and Modernization*, xiii, accessed January 12, 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/130513_KMB_volume1.pdf, vii-ix.

17. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century.”

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

are lofty. Regional partners will be central to the success of this policy on all fronts: security, trade, diplomacy, and U.S. interests.

U.S.-South Korean Relations

The United States is in a unique position to be effective in South Korea. According to Park Sun-won, former South Korean national security official, the United States “is the only foreign power that came to Korea in arms and never tried to steal territory.”²⁴ This is a very significant statement in light of the ongoing struggle the Korean people have had with invaders. South Korea is a largely homogenous country and was formerly known as the “Hermit Kingdom”.²⁵ This title carried with it the implication of a mistrust of foreigners, near and abroad.²⁶ Following Japanese occupation and the Korean War, South Korea could not maintain this status.²⁷ After the Korean War, the United States helped instill democratic values that remain in place today.²⁸

While the U.S.-ROK relationship has undergone trials, overall it has progressed in a positive direction for both countries. In March 2012, the KORUS FTA (U.S.-Korea Fair Trade Agreement) was finally implemented after lengthy negotiations, and has benefited both countries.²⁹ The economic gap between the United States and South Korea is shrinking, and both countries ranking in the top 10 worldwide for export value and in the

24. Kim and Jaffe, *The New Korea*, 80.

25. Michael J. Seth, *A History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 215-216.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid, 230-233.

28. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, 13-14.

29. James P. Zumwalt, “U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance,” U.S. Department of State, accessed January 13, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2012/06/191869.htm>.

top 15 for GDP.³⁰ In a June 2012 testimony by James Zumwalt, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (U.S. Department of State), he argued that the partnership between the U.S. and South Korea is “a linchpin of security and prosperity in Northeast Asia.”³¹ He cited the shared principles of a “commitment to freedom, democracy, and the rule of law” as important cornerstones in this relationship.³² His testimony ended urging reaffirmation of the alliance and the importance of continued investment.³³ The core values he presented in his testimony help underscore the favorable conditions for a strengthened partnership. CSIS reports that polls indicate around 80% of South Koreans support “alliances with the US.”³⁴ In October 2013, ROK President Park Geun-hye said that she has been able to see the ROK-U.S. relationship “evolve further into a comprehensive strategic alliance.”³⁵ There are not many countries in the Asia-Pacific region that have had such a close relationship with the United States. Since South Korea is no longer in need of U.S. assistance as a developing country, the opportunity for South Korea to be a the most important strategic asset to U.S. foreign policy has arrived.

China

China comes into major focus in the new U.S. foreign policy shift. CSIS reports that one of the strategic objectives for the United States is to build “a constructive

30. “The World Factbook 2013-14,” Central Intelligence Agency, 2013, accessed January 1, 2014, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>.

31. Zumwalt, “U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance.”

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, xiii.

35. U.S. Department of State, Remarks with Republic of Korea President Park Geun-hye at Their Meeting, October 10, 2013, accessed January 30, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/10/215265.htm>.

relationship with China.”³⁶ Currently, China has the largest GDP in Asia and the third largest in the world.³⁷ The United States is China’s largest export partner, and China is the U.S.’s third major export partner.³⁸ Despite this economic interdependence, competition and differing fundamental foreign policy goals hinder a comprehensive partnership.³⁹ The U.S. has been pressuring China to “assume responsibilities commensurate with its economic clout and national capabilities.”⁴⁰ The U.S. pivot to the Asia-Pacific has garnered some negative attention from China.⁴¹ Chinese newspapers have reported that the U.S. seeks to “sow discord” between China and other Asian nations, wants to dominate the Asia-Pacific region, and has plans to form a “united front aimed at China.”⁴² Calls for action against this foreign policy goal ranged from expanding Chinese military presence in the region to preparing for war.⁴³ Former Secretary Clinton addressed some of these concerns and emphasized that the U.S. and China have “much more to gain from cooperation than from conflict.”⁴⁴

Throughout history, China has been an ever present character among the Korean people. China was the premier overseas destination for many Korean scholars going back

36. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, xiii.

37. “The World Factbook 2013-14.”

38. Ibid.

39. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 42-51.

40. Ibid, 27.

41. Ibid, 33.

42. Ibid, 33-34.

43. Ibid.

44. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century.”

to 1000AD.⁴⁵ It was the conduit through which Koreans began to interact with Christianity in the 18th century through the Chinese Bible, and the country in which the first Korean convert was baptized in 1794.⁴⁶ China has also been a conqueror of the strategic peninsula.⁴⁷ China was arguably the most powerful nation when looking through its long history in Asia.⁴⁸ By the 19th century, China had been maintaining a “big brother-little brother” attitude towards Korea.⁴⁹ China provided security and left Korea mostly autonomous in exchange for “tribute and loyalty.”⁵⁰ Chinese security was vested in ensuring the Korean peninsula remained clear of potential invaders.⁵¹ This policy proved effective until the decline in Chinese power in the 1880s, which was followed by the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905).⁵² Don Oberdorfer and Robert Carlin maintain that China “had by far the greatest influence” stating that the influence was comparatively “most acceptable to Koreans.”⁵³ Following WWII, China notably supported North Korea with its military during the Korean War and

45. Andrei Lankov. *The Dawn of Modern Korea*, (Seoul: EunHaeng NaMu, 2007), 24-27.

46. Ibid, 17-21.

47. Don Oberdorfer, and Robert Carlin, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*, 3rd ed (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 3.

48. Uk Heo, and Terence Roehrig, *South Korea Since 1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 7-9.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Peter H. Lee, *Sources of Korean Tradition*, Vol. 1, *From Early Times Through the 16th Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 266-267.

52. Heo and Roehrig, *South Korea Since 1980*, 8-9.

53. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 3.

signed the Korea Armistice Agreement.⁵⁴ This historic relationship has a bearing on modern times since the Asian approach to foreign policy tends to keep the long-term picture in mind.⁵⁵

While China continues to be “a key benefactor” to North Korea, South Korea and China also have a “strategic cooperative partnership.”⁵⁶ China is South Korea’s primary import and export partner, and South Korea is one of China’s major import and export partners.⁵⁷ China is involved in the six-party talks (Japan, U.S., ROK, D.P.R.K, and Russia comprise the other members), a multilateral attempt to address nuclear security concerns with North Korea, and hosted the first talk in Beijing in August 2003.⁵⁸ The relationship between China and South Korea has been strained recently due to China’s silence regarding the two North Korean attacks on South Korea,⁵⁹ the sinking of the South Korean naval ship Cheonan which resulted in the death of 46 sailors, and the bombardment of Yeonpyeong island which claimed the lives of four South Koreans.⁶⁰ China is a primary focus in the new U.S. foreign policy initiative. The disparity in U.S. and Chinese policy goals for the Asia-Pacific region means that the U.S. will need a partner who shares its interests and goals. South Korea does has a working relationship with China and will be a key partner for addressing U.S. policy goals relating to China.

54. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 23, 42-51.

55. Kim and Jaffe, *The New Korea*, 28-29.

56. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 8-16.

57. “The World Factbook 2013-14.”

58. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 396-397.

59. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, 42-51.

60. Seung-woo Kang, “Koreas Close to War in 2010,” *Korea Times*, January 15, 2014, accessed February 2, 2014, https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2014/01/116_149824.html.

North Korea

South Korea's tumultuous relationship with North Korea began before the two nations were at war. Regionalism has had a major impact on the Korean people throughout their long history.⁶¹ Modernization and the Japanese occupation enhanced some of these already deep-seated regional differences as the northern half of the peninsula became modernized and the southern half remained rooted in agricultural tradition.⁶² The Korean peninsula was liberated from Japan on August 15, 1945 after a 35 year occupation.⁶³ It was quickly drawn into the developing Cold War conflict; the USSR and the U.S. divided the nation along the 38th parallel with the USSR controlling the northern half and the U.S. managing the southern half.⁶⁴ Both foreign governments had influence in their respective regions.⁶⁵ When compounded with preexisting regionalism, the relatively new ideologies presented by the USSR and U.S. gained followers in both regions.⁶⁶ One factor that drove a wedge in cultural unity was telephone communication which was cut off between the north and the south in 1946.⁶⁷ The final illusions of unity were dispersed when the southern half of the peninsula declared Syngman Rhee their president, and the Republic of Korea was formed on August 15,

61. Kim and Jaffe, *The New Korea*, 13-16.

62. Ibid.

63. "The World Factbook 2013-14."

64. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 4-9.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.

67. Lankov, *The Dawn of Modern Korea*, 31.

1948.⁶⁸ The northern section of the peninsula proclaimed Kim Il Sung their premier of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on September 9, 1948.⁶⁹ Each government claimed legitimacy over the entire Korean peninsula and people, with minor military clashes occurring on the 48th parallel.⁷⁰ All the elements were in place for a civil war to occur.

War broke out on the Korean peninsula on June 24, 1950.⁷¹ Tensions had been building for over a year, and had finally transpired in what became known as "The Forgotten War" in western circles.⁷² China and the USSR supported North Korea by providing military equipment, financial support, and eventually Chinese troops.⁷³ The United States and a UN coalition supported South Korea by providing military leadership, troops, military equipment, and financial support.⁷⁴ By the time the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed on July 27, 1953, over 4 million lives had been lost; at least half of which were civilians.⁷⁵ The Armistice was signed by China, the U.S. and North Korea but South Korea refused to sign it.⁷⁶ The military losses for the North

68. Peter H. Lee, *Sources of Korean Tradition*, Vol. 2, *From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 369.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

71. Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War: A History*, Reprint (New York: Modern Library, 2011), 5.

72. Ibid, 5-16, 62-63.

73. Ibid, 23-31, 142-143.

74. Sheila Miyoshi Jager, *Brothers at War: The Unending Conflict in Korea* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2013), 98-112.

75. Cumings, *The Korean War*, 34-35.

76. Ibid.

Koreans and Chinese were higher than the South Koreans and their supporters.⁷⁷ China sustained the highest military loss with an estimated death of 900,000 soldiers.⁷⁸ A projected 520,000 North Korean soldiers were killed.⁷⁹ South Korea lost 415,004 soldiers, the U.S. suffered a loss of 33,665 soldiers killed in action, and U.N. allies had a combined total of 3,094 soldiers killed.⁸⁰ Both South Korea and North Korea sustained major losses and the war, which has not ended, is at the forefront for their current relationship. A concise timeline of their relationship in the post-Korean War era is available in Appendix A.

Following the Korean War, various efforts have been made by both South Korea and North Korea to discuss reunification.⁸¹ Direct and indirect talks have been ongoing and at different points both sides have held the upper hand, however no real progress has been made since 2008.⁸² North Korea's refusal to stop developing its nuclear weapons program and demands for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea are two of the primary non-negotiable items for South Korea.⁸³ Likewise, South Korea's continued partnership with the U.S. and its democratic system are incompatible with North Korea's

77. Cumings, *The Korean War*, 34-35.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Michael Haas, *Korean Reunification: Alternative Pathways*, 2nd ed (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012), 8-18.

82. Ibid, 23.

83. Jacques L. Fuqua Jr., *Korean Unification: Inevitable Challenges* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2011), 60-70, 130-147.

goals for reunification.⁸⁴ Both nations have built up their military in preparation for a potential attack from each other.⁸⁵

The eighth South Korean President, Kim Dae-Jung, instituted the “Sunshine Policy” towards North Korea in 1998⁸⁶ (and it was carried on by his successors until 2008).⁸⁷ This foreign policy had three defining principles: a zero toleration policy of “any armed provocation from the North,” a promise that South Korea would not try to harm or absorb North Korea, and that the Koreans “should cooperate and become reconciled.”⁸⁸ Important outcomes of this policy included: the first face-to-face meeting of the respective leaders of the ROK and the D.P.R.K. since 1948, joint business operations, and “temporary reunions of separated families.”⁸⁹ The impact on both South and North Korean media was also distinctive.⁹⁰ The agencies of the respective countries often publish reports about the same events but from a different perspective of their own set of facts.⁹¹ When the leaders of North and South Korea met, first in 2000 and then in 2007, media from both countries produced positive accounts of the meetings.⁹² Despite the

84. Fuqua, *Korean Unification*, 60-70, 130-147.

85. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 108-139.

86. Key-Young Son, *South Korean Engagement Policies and North Korea: Identities, Norms and the Sunshine Policy* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2006), 193-194.

87. Valérie Gelézeau, Koen De Ceuster, and Alain Delissen, eds, *De-Bordering Korea: Tangible and Intangible Legacies of the Sunshine Policy* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2013), 1.

88. Son, *South Korean Engagement Policies*, 194.

89. Ibid, 89

90. Gelézeau, De Ceuster, and Delissen, *Sunshine Policy*, 141-148.

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid.

benefits of the Sunshine Policy, it had drawbacks that eventually led to its end in 2008.⁹³ The outlook for ROK-D.P.R.K. relations is difficult to forecast with the recent change of leadership in both countries, however if historical precedence has any bearing, it is unlikely the two nations will find much common ground in the near future.

The United States experiences a different set of challenges in its relationship with North Korea. The major challenges are cultural barriers, lack of reliable intelligence, and an unclear U.S. objective. Culturally, there are many factors driving the reunification effort. Most South Koreans still view themselves as a separated Korean people, rather than two separate groups.⁹⁴ Familial ties are critical in both homogenous nations. Sheila Jager captures this idea by depicting the North Korea-South Korea conflict as “an unending war between two ‘brothers’ with ramifications for the rest of the world.”⁹⁵ South Korea built a *The Statue of the Brothers* in 1994 depicting the two brothers, North and South Korea.⁹⁶ The physically larger brother is South Korea and the smaller brother is North Korea.⁹⁷ The emotion depicted in this embrace is a visual reflection of the South’s desire to reunify.⁹⁸ History factors into this viewpoint. Although regionalism separates people, through invasions and occupations, Koreans have maintained their cultural heritage.⁹⁹ The division of the Korean people into two nations have brought into

93. Gelézeau, De Ceuster, and Delissen, *Sunshine Policy*, 37.

94. Jager, *Brothers at War*, 4-8.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid, 446-449.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid.

99. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 2-6.

question which side was going to win what Jager terms the “legitimacy war,” for the Korean nation.¹⁰⁰ Many Koreans find their Korean identity through “a unique, homogeneous bloodline” which can be traced back five millennia.¹⁰¹

Robert Gates, former CIA director, said that North Korea was “without parallel the toughest intelligence target in the world.”¹⁰² The former CIA station chief and later ambassador to South Korea, Donald Gregg, echoed these sentiments “North Korea is the longest-running intelligence failure in the world.”¹⁰³ Intelligence is pivotal to informing decision makers and guiding U.S. foreign policy in the region. North Korea has issued many threats against the United States and the lack of reliable intelligence makes it difficult to properly assess those threats. With the recent North Korean regime change, past dealings with North Korean rulers do not necessarily provide enough guidance for anticipating North Korean actions.¹⁰⁴ Whether North Korea is on the verge of complete collapse or ready to restart the Korean conflict, the more intelligence available, the better both South Korea and the United States can prepare. Another aspect to the intelligence component is knowing which countries support North Korea and if any would aid North Korea in an armed conflict. During the Korean War, Russia and China began assisting North Korea for a potential conflict before the Korean War even began.¹⁰⁵ Russian and

100. Jager, *Brothers at War*, 3-8.

101. Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, Rev. ed (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 11.

102. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 48.

103. Ibid, 60.

104. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 11-14, 22-24.

105. Cumings, *The Korean War*, 25-35.

Chinese support escalated the conflict from a civil war to a proxy limited war.¹⁰⁶ Russian intervention was an issue of special concern because it posed the threat of a nuclear total war on the horizon if the Korean conflict continued.¹⁰⁷ A ceasefire agreement in the form of the Korean Armistice Agreement provided an avenue to assuage the threat of nuclear war, and delayed the pressure of determining which Korean political group would control the strategic peninsula.¹⁰⁸

There is ambiguity regarding the United States' policy goals in regards to the future of the Korean people.¹⁰⁹ Security in the region is the most pressing goal.¹¹⁰ The United States wishes to continue its partnership with South Korea economically, politically, and strategically.¹¹¹ The real question is will the U.S. be willing to support the Korean unification objective if it threatens U.S. interests in the region. In 2009 the U.S. White House issued a "joint vision for the alliance of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea" that included a picture of reunification "on the principles of free democracy and a market economy."¹¹² However, a unified Korea under those conditions would not be favorable to China.¹¹³ Improving relations with China is one of the major

106. Cumings, *The Korean War*, 25-35.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.

109. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, xii.

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid.

112. The White House, Joint Vision for the Alliance of the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, Office of the Press Secretary, June 16, 2009, accessed February 6, 2014, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Joint-vision-for-the-alliance-of-the-United-States-of-America-and-the-Republic-of-Korea.

113. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 34-35.

goals in the pivot to Asia and the U.S may not be willing to provide full support to the Korea reunification movement if it would jeopardize U.S.-Chinese relations.¹¹⁴ Although South Korea did not sign the Armistice Agreement, they are one of the most important players in regards to security on the Korean peninsula. South Korea has the most to lose if conflict breaks out. South Korea's relationship with North Korea makes it an ideal candidate for advancing U.S. security goals in the region. South Korea has consistently cooperated with the United States to reduce tensions with North Korea and has not faltered in maintaining a positive partnership with the United States even when South Korea was vulnerable to North Korea. Since addressing the security threats posed by North Korea is a goal for U.S. foreign policy, South Korea will be the most important strategic partner to the U.S. in the region for this issue.

Geographic Significance of South Korea

Historical Importance

South Korea is located on the southern half of the Korean peninsula in East Asia. This peninsula has been claimed or invaded throughout history most notably by the Chinese, Mongols and Japanese.¹¹⁵ In fact, Korea has been invaded 900 times in the past 2000 years.¹¹⁶ According to Don Oberdorfer, and Robert Carlin, "geography dealt Korea a particularly difficult role" as its strategic position is situated "between the greater powers of China, Japan, and Russia."¹¹⁷ Bruce Cumings notes that Korea has a "long past

114. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 26-28.

115. Kim and Jaffe, *The New Korea*, 18.

116. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 3.

117. Ibid.

of continuous existence on one territory”¹¹⁸ This peninsula is mountainous with northern natural borders in the form of the Yalu and Tumen rivers.¹¹⁹ As a whole, the peninsula has limited natural resources.¹²⁰ The northern half of the peninsula is “favored with substantial deposits of coal, iron, copper, zinc, and other ingredients needed for heavy industry” in addition to its rivers which are ideal for hydroelectric plants.¹²¹ Approximately a sixth of the northern peninsula is arable.¹²² In the southern portion, minerals exist in smaller quantities, creating a dependency on imports for South Korea.¹²³ Although only 20% of the southern land is arable, advances in agriculture and a more favorable climate enables South Korea to adequately provide for its citizens.¹²⁴ During the Japanese occupation, deforestation impacted nearly the whole peninsula, but both nations have made efforts to afforest.¹²⁵ Historically, the northern half of the peninsula was more industrialized than the southern half, but now South Korea outranks North Korea in that area.¹²⁶ On the following pages, geographic and historic maps are represented in Figures II, III, and IV. Land utilization, and economic activity maps are in Appendix C.

118. Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 11.

119. Barbara A. Weightman, *Dragons and Tigers: A Geography of South, East and Southeast Asia* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 360-362.

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid.

124. Ibid.

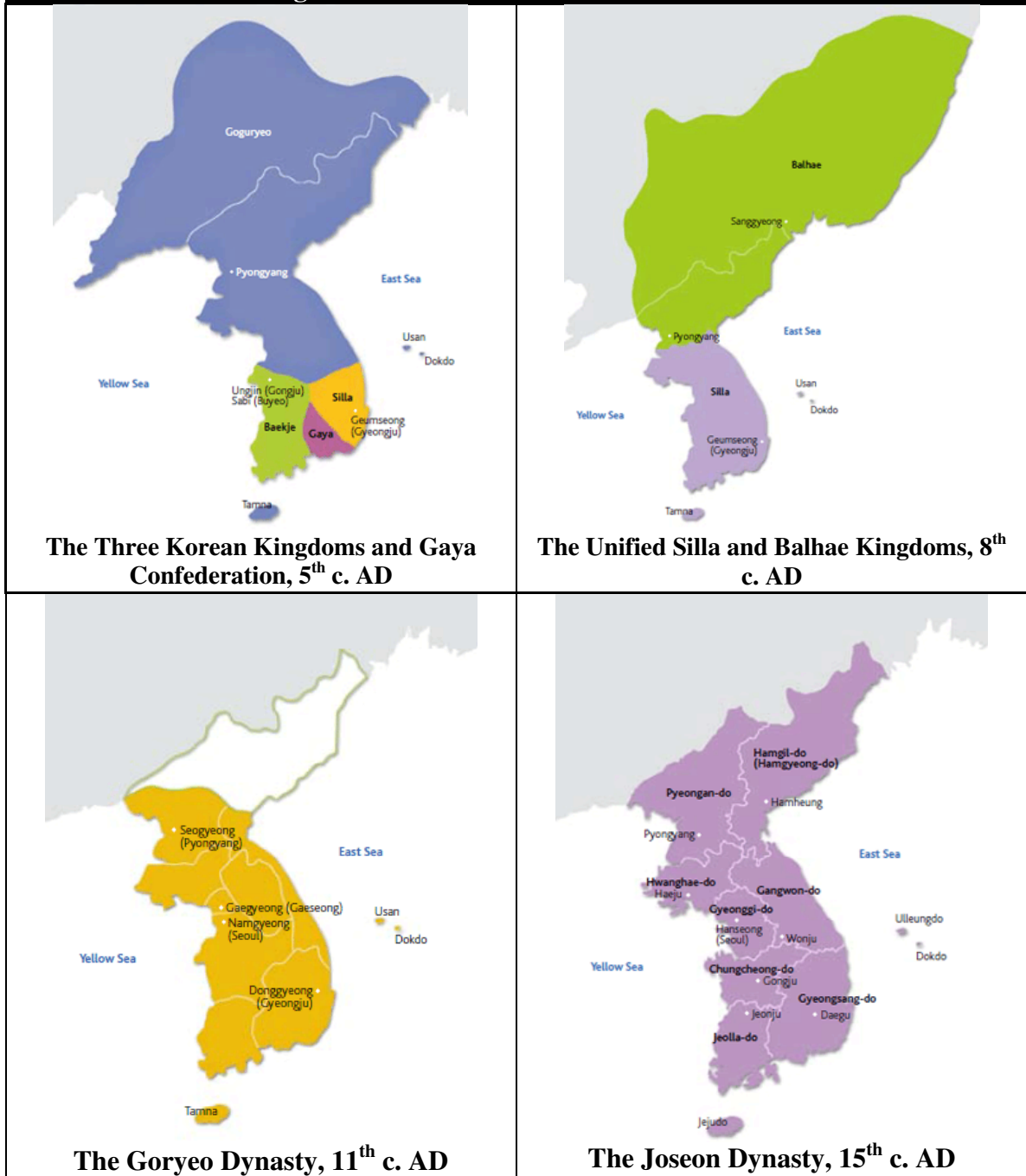
125. Eugene J. Palka, and Francis A. Galgano, *North Korea: Geographic Perspectives* (Guilford, CT: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 30-32.

126. Weightman, *Dragons and Tigers*, 360-362.



Figure III: Geography of South Korea¹²⁸

128. CIA, "South Korea" (map), *MapCruzin*, accessed March 3, 2014, http://www.mapcruzin.com/free-maps-korea/s_korea_rel_95.jpg.

Figure IV: The Evolution of the Koreas¹²⁹

129. "History" (maps), *Korea.net*, accessed March 3, 2014, <http://www.korea.net/AboutKorea/Korea-at-a-Glance/History>. Used with Permission.

Comparative Standing



Since the Korean War, South Korea's borders have remained unaltered.¹³¹ It is separated by the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to the north which is shared with North Korea.¹³² To the west, the Yellow Sea separates the peninsula from China.¹³³ The Sea of Japan (known as the East Sea in South Korea), sits between South Korea and Japan.¹³⁴

130. CIA, "Korean Peninsula (Shaded Relief) 2011" (map), *University of Texas*, accessed March 3, 2014, https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/korean_peninsula_rel_2011.jpg.

131. "The World Factbook 2013-14."

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. Ibid.

North Korea is situated in the northern half of the peninsula with the majority of their northern border dominated by China and a small portion connected to Russia.¹³⁵ When compared to other U.S. partners, its regional position is significant in many ways.¹³⁶

South Korea is the only modern U.S. partner in East Asia connected to the Asian continent. Its peninsula offers sheltered ports from some of the harsh typhoons faced by the Philippines and Japan.¹³⁷ North Korea essentially acts as a buffer state between South Korea and the rest of the Asian continent.¹³⁸ With the volatility of North Korea and the threat it poses to the United States and South Korea, a U.S. military presence in South Korea allows for swift combat effectiveness if there is a conflict.¹³⁹ This advantage is heightened by a successful working relationship between the U.S. and South Korean militaries.¹⁴⁰ South Korea's unparalleled geographic location makes it the geographically strategic U.S. partner in the region.

The Modernization of South Korea

U.S.-South Korean Military Relationship

The modern U.S.-ROK military relationship began after the Japanese occupation.¹⁴¹ During the Korean War, the U.S. found that the South Korean forces were

135. "The World Factbook 2013-14."

136. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 31.

137. "The World Factbook 2013-14."

138. Fuqua, *Korean Unification*, 132-133.

139. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 2, 9-11, 139-181.

140. Ibid, 139-181.

141. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, 1-31.

poorly organized, trained, and lacking in supplies.¹⁴² U.S. forces helped train, organize and supply the South Korean military. U.S. General Douglas MacArthur led the United Nations Command (UNC) and Lieutenant General Walton Walker was in charge of the ground forces in Korea as well as the South Korean Army, per the South Korean President's request.¹⁴³ U.S. General Matthew Ridgway assumed command after Walton Walker died, and was also led the UNC after Gen. MacArthur was dismissed.¹⁴⁴ He was succeeded by General James Van Fleet, then Gen. Mark Clark.¹⁴⁵ Since the war, the U.S. military has been tied closely with the ROK military. The U.S. has maintained wartime Operation Control (OPCON) with bases in South Korea while the ROK military has control of the "day to day defense of the ROK."¹⁴⁶ The military relationship between the U.S. and the ROK is one of mutual partnership that has developed from reliance.¹⁴⁷

Transformation of South Korean Defensive Capabilities

The defense capabilities of South Korea have changed dramatically in the past 60 years. The initial North Korean attacks in 1950 caught the South Korean military off guard.¹⁴⁸ Now, the South Korean military patrols and is prepared to defend its border.¹⁴⁹ There have been multiple discussions of the U.S. handing wartime OPCON to the ROK

142. Cumings, *The Korean War*, 5-21.

143. Ibid.

144. Jager, *Brothers at War*, 155-156, 177.

145. Ibid, 181-192, 257-277.

146. Gen. (ret.) Walter Sharpe, "OPCON Transition in Korea," CSIS Office of the Korea Chair, accessed January 13, 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/131216_OPCON_Transition_in_Korea.pdf.

147. Ibid.

148. Cumings, *The Korean War*, 5-21.

149. Sharpe, "OPCON Transition in Korea."

military.¹⁵⁰ The current deadline for that decision is 2015.¹⁵¹ General (Ret.) Sharpe is of the opinion that South Korean military is capable with its “outstanding military” to “command the defense of its own country.”¹⁵² Furthermore, the command of the Combined Forces Command (CFC) of the Republic of Korea should be continued with a top Korean military official in charge.¹⁵³ The OPCON should be transferred to the ROK, with the current minimum of 28,500 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea sustained.¹⁵⁴ The confidence that was expressed by Gen. Sharpe is a testament to the transformation of South Korean defensive capabilities. As one of the only U.S. regional partners with a modern military and a positive working military relationship, South Korea is a strategic partner for U.S. foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region.

Expanding Infrastructure

The South Korean infrastructure is in a seemingly constant state of improvement and expansion. This is evidenced in several ways. The most prominent is probably their massive Internet and mobile networks.¹⁵⁵ Their companies like LG and Samsung are leaders in the mobile phone industry,¹⁵⁶ and their Internet speeds are the fastest

150. Sharpe, “OPCON Transition in Korea.”

151. Ibid.

152. Ibid.

153. Ibid.

154. Ibid.

155. Lankov, *The Dawn of Modern Korea*, 339-341.

156. Seth, *A History of Korea*, 3, 491-493.

worldwide.¹⁵⁷ In the cities, it is difficult to find an area where a mobile cannot connect to the Internet or a 4G network.¹⁵⁸ The rapid pace with which the technology has been embraced and, in several cases, refined, is a testament to South Korea's push to be a global leader in technology.¹⁵⁹ This push is not limited to the mobile industry, South Korea has an extensive public transportation system and their version of the "bullet train" called the Korail Korean Railroad (KTX).¹⁶⁰ It is also home to multiple research centers, as well as the "world's highest-ranking fusion research device."¹⁶¹ The ease of travel, communication, and the push for continued excellence makes South Korea a modern and desirable partner for the United States.

Politics in South Korea

Development of a Democratic Republic

South Korea "had not democratic heritage or institutions on which to draw,"¹⁶² for the formation of their democratic republic, and their modern political system was greatly cultivated by Christian missionaries and post-colonial U.S. involvement.¹⁶³ Dr. Robert Woodberry published research in the *American Political Science Review* in May 2012

157. Felix Richter, "South Korea and Japan Top Internet Speed Ranking," Statista, last modified October, 18, 2013, accessed April 1, 2014, <http://www.statista.com/topics/1145/internet-usage-worldwide/chart/1065/south-korea-and-japan-top-internet-speed-ranking/>.

158. Michelle Star, "South Korea building 5G network 1000x faster than 4G," CNET, last modified January 23, 2014, accessed April 1, 2014, <http://www.cnet.com.au/south-korea-building-5g-network-1000x-faster-than-4g-339346488.htm>.

159. Lankov, *The Dawn of Modern Korea*, 339-341.

160. "Introduction of KORAIL," KORAIL Korean Railroad, accessed February 7, 2014, http://info.korail.com/2007/eng/ekr/ekr01000/w_ekr01100.jsp.

161. Myeun Kwon, "About NFRI," National Fusion Research Institute, accessed February 7, 2014, <https://www.nfri.re.kr/english/about/greeting.php>.

162. Heo and Roehrig, *South Korea Since 1980*, 5.

163. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, 41-50.

that “demonstrates historically and statistically that conversionary Protestants heavily influence the rise and spread of stable democracy around the world” because these missionaries “were a crucial catalyst initiating the development and spread of religious liberty, mass education, mass printing, newspapers, voluntary organizations, and colonial reforms, thereby creating conditions that made stable democracy more likely.”¹⁶⁴ He points out that although Koreans and other Asians had “movable font metal type” before Europeans, “printing never supplanted handwritten manuscripts, newspapers did not develop, and literacy remained primarily the prerogative of elite men” until the onset of Protestant missionaries in the 19th century.¹⁶⁵ In Korea specifically, the first Korean newspapers to be printed privately were published by Korean Christians.¹⁶⁶ Dr. Andrei Lankov differentiates Catholicism from Protestantism in the Korea peninsula, “Protestants placed special emphasis on the poor and underprivileged.”¹⁶⁷ The message of Christianity promoted by Protestant missionaries was the first time the idea of “human rights and democracy” had been shared in Korea.¹⁶⁸ The Korean Institute of Policy Studies reported that “Christian churches were the only place in all of Korea where men, women, the young and old, common people and rich people, and people who were not related could sit together without any restrictions or protocol.”¹⁶⁹ Protestant missionaries

164. Robert D. Woodberry, “The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy,” *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (May 2012): 244-274, accessed January 29, 2014, <http://www.hillcountryinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/MissionaryRootsOfLiberalDemocracy.pdf>.

165. Ibid.

166. Ibid.

167. Lankov, *The Dawn of Modern Korea*, 19-21.

168. Boye Lafayette De Mente, *The Korean Mind: Understanding Contemporary Korean Culture*, Reprint (Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing, 2012), 290.

169. Ibid, 181.

were especially effective in promoting gender equality and “became the primary catalyst for bringing about change in the age-old custom of sexual segregation in Korea.”¹⁷⁰

Protestant missionaries began coming to the peninsula in the 1880s.¹⁷¹ These missionaries left important legacies, including the establishment of both the “first modern hospital” and the “first regular school for girls.”¹⁷² Ninety-five percent of the foreign missionaries operating in Korea by 1910 were Protestant missionaries. Education was a top priority for these missionaries, and by 1910 their 800 schools boasted twice the attendance of government-run schools with 40,000 students.¹⁷³ Their schooling system was the only comprehensive education program that went up to college, and many of the top students had scholarships available to them for studying in the United States.¹⁷⁴ As a result, “an overwhelming majority of the first Korean scientists, skilled technicians, and medical doctors were graduates of the missionary schools and often Protestants as well.”¹⁷⁵ In the early 20th century, Christianity was considered “both modern and national” by many Koreans.¹⁷⁶ During the Japanese occupation, churches provided a place of refuge for nonconformists and “resisted Japanese colonialism.”¹⁷⁷ After the Korean War, Protestant and Catholic aid groups supported the rebuilding of South Korea.

170. De Mente, *The Korean Mind*, 292.

171. Lankov, *The Dawn of Modern Korea*, 19.

172. Ibid, 19-21.

173. Ibid.

174. Ibid.

175. Ibid.

176. Ibid.

177. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, 204.

Missionary-founded universities, such as Ewha Women's University and Yonsei University, received financial aid and these top universities continue to provide excellent education today.¹⁷⁸

Before the Korean War, there were approximately 300,000 Christians throughout the Korean peninsula.¹⁷⁹ In 1974, the Christian population of South Korea was estimated to be 4.3 million.¹⁸⁰ With the exception of the high rate of Catholicism in the Philippines, South Korea has the highest rate of Christianity in the region.¹⁸¹ Currently, Christianity is the most populous religion with 31.6% of the population, 75% of those Christians subscribing to Protestantism.¹⁸² In the United States, Protestantism is claimed by 51.3% of the population. South Korea and the U.S. are both impacted by the Protestants in their respective countries. With the highest proportion of Protestants in the Asia region, South Korea is set apart among U.S. regional partners in Asia.

The first "Western-style constitution" was passed in July 1948.¹⁸³ It determined that Korea should be a "democratic republic" with power dispersed between "three coequal branches on the American model."¹⁸⁴ The U.S. government began to actively cultivate democratic values in the southern portion of Korea after Korea's liberation from Japan. Education was a major concern following the Japanese occupation because there

178. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, 41-50.

179. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 41.

180. Ibid.

181. Ibid.

182. "The World Factbook 2013-14."

183. Lee, *Sources of Korean Tradition*, Vol. 2, 382.

184. Ibid.

“was no conception of modern education.”¹⁸⁵ The U.S. Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) worked with the Korean Committee on Education to reform schools.¹⁸⁶ Following the Korean War, the education initiative was given government and private aid which enabled it to flourish. The role of women in society began to change as well, building off of the foundation the Protestant missionaries.¹⁸⁷ After the occupation, laws were passed for the first time in Korea’s history to give “women most of the rights traditionally enjoyed by men.”¹⁸⁸

Democratic success was not instantaneous however. After a long history of dynastic monarchs, and the Japanese occupation (which lasted 35 years), South Korea underwent a twenty-five year period of military leadership before “it finally transitioned to democracy in 1987.”¹⁸⁹ From its politically unstable beginnings, South Korea has blossomed into “a democracy that was perhaps the most vibrant in Asia.”¹⁹⁰ The United States, especially during those years of instability, was crucial to helping the South Korean people develop into the democracy it is today.¹⁹¹ South Korea is a modern example of successful nation-building for the United States. Its shared democratic values helps foster a strategic partnership with the U.S, and its prosperity as a democratic republic makes it one of the most important partners in the region.

185. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, 42.

186. Ibid, 41-50.

187. De Mente, *The Korean Mind*, 320.

188. Ibid.

189. Heo and Roehrig, *South Korea Since 1980*, 5.

190. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*, 250.

191. Ibid, 250-260.

The Delicacies of Reunification

The reunification of the Korean peninsula plays an important role in evaluating South Korea's value as a strategic U.S. partner. Reunification sentiments are still strong 60 years after the Armistice Agreement was signed on July 27, 1953.¹⁹² Both national and international experts offer reasons for this sentiment from the South Korean people. The South Koreans feel a sense of unity with their North Korean counterparts because they were traditionally one people with one language, and one culture.¹⁹³ There are several major issues that hinder reunification efforts: North Korea's nuclear program, cultural differences, and U.S. involvement.¹⁹⁴

The North Korean nuclear program presents a large security risk to South Korea, the United States, and other countries in the region.¹⁹⁵ It is a primary factor in the U.S. pivot to Asia,¹⁹⁶ and the redistribution of U.S. forces.¹⁹⁷ North Korea continues to develop its nuclear weapons capabilities despite condemnation from South Korea, the U.S., and the international community.¹⁹⁸ Missile tests and repeated threats by the North Korean regime only intensifies the situation.¹⁹⁹ The two negotiating sides continue to

192. Haas, *Korean Reunification*, 1.

193. Jager, *Brothers at War*, 5-6, 446-449, 477-480.

194. Fuqua, *Korean Unification*, 4, 48-50, 127-130.

195. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 392-411.

196. Clinton, "America's Pacific Century."

197. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 139-147.

198. Ibid, xii.

199. Ibid, 1-5.

profoundly disagree on the nuclear weapons situation and how to best diffuse the tensions.²⁰⁰

Culturally, there is still one Korean people and one Korean language that survives separated in two nations.²⁰¹ Despite a long history of shared cultural heritage, there are great differences in the Korean people who reside in those nations.²⁰² South Korea has embraced a modern democratic political system while North Korea has transformed from a communist-influenced political system to a unique dictatorship that incorporates a quasi-religious factor called “juche.”²⁰³ These political differences have been influencing the culture for 60 years now.²⁰⁴ Furthermore, the fundamentally different perspectives on culture is a major hindrance in reunification negotiations.²⁰⁵

The United States signed the Armistice Agreement on behalf of South Korea, which makes South Korea an observer during meetings of the Military Armistice Commission (MAC).²⁰⁶ The MAC was set up to handle “complaints about violations of the armistice” across the DMZ in the short term, with the overall objective to convert the Armistice Agreement to a “peace accord.”²⁰⁷ Because no South Korean president has ever signed the Armistice Agreement, this adds another layer of complication to peace

200. Fuqua, *Korean Unification*, 48-50, 63-67.

201. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 2-6.

202. Ibid, 457-459.

203. Ibid, 15-18.

204. Fuqua, *Korean Unification*, 4.

205. Ibid.

206. Haas, *Korean Reunification*, 9.

207. Ibid.

negotiations.²⁰⁸ North Korea strongly objects to the United States, its influence on South Korea, and the presence of U.S. troops.²⁰⁹ South Korea maintains a close relationship with the United States, and opposes the removal of all U.S. troops citing concerns over security.²¹⁰ The United States values its partnership with South Korea and also finds the requirements of North Korea to be unacceptable.²¹¹ The U.S. has a stake in the future of the Korean peninsula and has consistently supported South Korea over North Korea. Sustained partnership will aid reunification efforts to the benefit of U.S. and South Korean interests.

Recent Developments

There have been a number of developments in the DPRK-ROK relationship in the past five years. These developments, and a history of the DPRK-ROK relationship, are detailed in Appendix A. However, there are two major recent developments which deserve special attention. The first was the death of Kim Jong-Il on December 19 2011, and the subsequent rise to power of his third son, Kim Jong-Un.²¹² The second was the election of South Korean president Park Geun-Hye in December 2012.²¹³ Kim Jong-Un could potentially be the leader of North Korea for over 40 years, whereas Park Geun-Hye

208. Haas, *Korean Reunification*, 9.

209. Fuqua, *Korean Unification*, 8-24.

210. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, xii, 18.

211. Ibid, 26.

212. Ibid, 1-14.

213. "Profile: South Korean President Park Geun-hye," *BBC*, November 1, 2013, accessed January 30, 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-20787271>.

will have one 5-year term.²¹⁴ With every leader there is a different dynamic, and to have both countries changing leaders around the same time is very impactful.

Kim Jong-Un is the third and current leader of North Korea.²¹⁵ He had some education in the West, and was the third son of Kim Jong-Il.²¹⁶ Due to his education background, some speculated that he would have a more open economic policy and interact with the international community.²¹⁷ However, while some positive policy changes have occurred, the hopes for a more involved North Korea “have been fading quickly.”²¹⁸ Shortly after his father’s death, he “established his control over the party, military, and state, consolidating of his authority.”²¹⁹ Under Kim’s rule, North Korea has conducted missile tests and issued threats to South Korea and the United States.²²⁰ There are speculations that Kim may be bolder than his father, to the detriment of ROK-DPRK and US-DPRK relations.²²¹ CSIS reports that “the underlying forces behind all these events since the Korean War ceasefire have been the efforts of three different DPRK leaders from the same family... to use outside threats to maintain power, as well as the steady militarization of the DPRK.”²²² The recent major change in leadership greatly

214. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 457-459.

215. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 1-14.

216. Ibid.

217. Ibid.

218. Ibid.

219. Ibid.

220. Ibid.

221. Ibid.

222. Ibid.

influences everything related to North Korea. This is why a change in leadership brings a big element of surprise. There is little way to anticipate how Kim Jung-Un will behave, and this unknown is a source of trepidation.

South Korean president Park Geun-Hye is unique in several notable ways. She is the first female president in South Korea, and has been involved politically from a young age.²²³ Her father was former Korean president Park Chung-Hee who gained his position through a military coup in 1961 and ruled until his assassination in 1979.²²⁴ His wife was killed in 1974, during a failed assassination attempt to murder him, which thrust Park Geun-Hye into the role of first lady at age 22.²²⁵ President Park has indicated that she is open to “building a relationship with North Korea based on trust” but emphasized that she will “not tolerate North Korean threats to her nation.”²²⁶ It is difficult to postulate what her approach will mean for the DPRK-ROK relationship at the time of this writing. Already, she is impacting South Korea by her very election. She was “the first of [South] Korea’s democratically elected presidents” to win “with a majority rather than just a plurality” which is especially important because South Korea has traditionally been a society dominated by men.²²⁷ At a meeting in October 2013, President Park expressed her desire to strengthen the US-ROK partnership and foster a “comprehensive strategic

223. “South Korean President.”

224. Ibid.

225. Ibid.

226. Victor Cha, Ellen Kim, and Marie Dumond, “Inauguration of South Korea’s New President Park Geun-hye,” *CSIS*, February 26, 2013, accessed March 1, 2014, <https://csis.org/publication/inauguration-south-koreas-new-president-park-geun-hye>.

227. Oberdorfer and Carlin, *The Two Koreas*, 457.

alliance” to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.²²⁸ Secretary Kerry echoed her sentiments and said that the US-ROK alliance was both “strong” and “extremely important” to the United States.²²⁹ Although President Park has only been in office for a little over a year at the time of this writing, she has been very committed to fostering a strong US-ROK alliance. These two leaders will have an enormous effect on the future of the Korean peninsula. A strong alliance with President Park will be essential to U.S. foreign policy and the Asia-Pacific.

Cultural Considerations

Korean Culture

Korean culture as a whole is very unique. Its lengthy history has several achievements that contribute to its rich culture. Throughout its different kingdom eras, the Chosŏn dynasty stands out. This dynasty lasted from the end of the 14th century to the end of the 19th century, and its territorial boundaries are the closest to the current boundaries of both North and South Korea.²³⁰ A “respect for education and scholarship was a hallmark” of the Chosŏn dynasty, which perhaps was best embodied by the creation of the Korean alphabet in 1443.²³¹ The alphabet is considered the “crowning achievement” of this era, and it enabled the Korean people to stop using the “Chinese graphs for transcription.”²³² This also allowed Korean writers to produce historical

228. “Remarks with Republic of Korea President.”

229. Ibid.

230. Lee, *Sources of Korean Tradition*, Vol. 1, 261-262.

231. Ibid, 293-294.

232. Ibid.

records with their own writing system for the first time.²³³ Another important legacy of this dynasty was the development of “movable metallic type” which helped promote education as well as share ideas regarding government.²³⁴ Other inventions included sundials, rain gauges, the warship known as the “Turtle Ship,” and the automatic clepsydra.²³⁵ Buddhism and Confucianism were very impactful on the government and society during this dynasty in particular.²³⁶ This period remains a source of pride for Koreans today.²³⁷

As a whole, the traditional Korean nation is one of the few nations in which the citizens do not have a “significant ethnic, racial, or linguistic difference” making it “one of the most homogenous nations on earth, where ethnicity and nationality coincide.”²³⁸ This homogeneity makes the Korean War seem nearly impossible because the Korean people who had been unified since the seventh century “became two radically different societies.”²³⁹ During the Japanese colonial period, when the “primary objective” was “to bring about the complete submission of Koreans to the new ruler,” there was a “renewed awareness of Korea’s own national heritage and identity.”²⁴⁰ Despite the rich cultural history of the Korean people, aside from the Korean War, the Korean culture historically

233. Lee, *Sources of Korean Tradition*, Vol. 1, 293-294.

234. Ibid, 261-262.

235. Ibid, 262-269.

236. Lee, *Sources of Korean Tradition*, Vol. 2, 320, 434-436.

237. Ibid, 3-5.

238. Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, 24.

239. Seth, *A History of Korea*, 339.

240. Lee, *Sources of Korean Tradition*, Vol. 2, 334.

has not captured the world's attention, partially because Japan and China have long "overshadowed" it.²⁴¹

Cultural Standing Internationally

Three monikers embody the historical role the Koreans have held in the world stage. "Land of the Morning Calm,"²⁴² "The Hermit Kingdom,"²⁴³ and "Asian Tiger" all carry separate connotations about Koreans throughout history.²⁴⁴ "Land of the Morning Calm" insinuated a nation and people where time and progress stood still.²⁴⁵ "The Hermit Kingdom" communicated a desire to minimize contact with the rest of the world.²⁴⁶ As one of the "Asian Tigers," South Korea represented great economic progress and an expanding role in East Asia.²⁴⁷ Now, South Korea is starting a new era of cultural impact, called the "Korean Wave".²⁴⁸ This cultural phenomenon began in the 1990s when K-pop (Korean pop music) and K-dramas (Korean T.V. dramas) became popular in China, Japan and other East Asian countries.²⁴⁹ Now K-pop and K-dramas have a growing

241. Seth, *A History of Korea*, 3.

242. Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 130.

243. Seth, *A History of Korea*, 215-216.

244. Weightman, *Dragons and Tigers*, 3, 360.

245. Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun*, 130.

246. Seth, *A History of Korea*, 215-216.

247. Weightman, *Dragons and Tigers*, 3, 360.

248. Korean Culture and Information Service, *The Korean Wave: A New Pop Culture Phenomenon*, 2011, accessed January 30, 2014, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/64040042/The-Korean-Wave-A-New-Pop-Culture-Phenomenon>.

249. Ibid.

worldwide fan base, and have paved the way for South Korea to be the “Hollywood of the East.”²⁵⁰

The Korean Wave is an unprecedented “major global exportation of Korean popular culture” that defies any other period in Korean history.²⁵¹ Tourism has increased greatly partly as a result of the cultural draw.²⁵² In 1990 South Korea had approximately 3 million visitors; in 2013, it had 12.1 million visitors.²⁵³ In the past five years, Seoul has been voted as the top tourist destination for Asian tourists,²⁵⁴ the best city for business travel,²⁵⁵ and the best destination for international meetings.²⁵⁶ The Korean Culture and Information Service (KCIS) reported widespread growth in participation of Korean language exams worldwide.²⁵⁷ Korean culture is a powerful venue for spreading ideas internationally, and especially in East Asia. See graph in Appendix B for worldwide spread of Korean culture. KCIS cited reports that “Asian audiences identify more with

250. Korean Culture and Information Service, *The Korean Wave*.

251. Ibid.

252. Ibid.

253. “Visitor Arrivals, Korean Departures, Int’l Tourism Receipts & Expenditures,” Korea Tourism Organization, accessed April 1, 2014, <http://kto.visitkorea.or.kr/eng/tourismStatics/keyFacts/visitorArrivals.kto>.

254. “Seoul Voted Asians’ Top Travel Destination Again,” *The Chosun Ilbo*, February 3, 2014, accessed February 1, 2014, http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2011/03/10/2011031000705.html.

255. Hao Li, “Seoul Voted Best Business Travel City of 2011,” *International Business Times*, October 6, 2011, accessed February 1, 2014, <http://www.ibtimes.com/seoul-voted-best-business-travel-city-2011-321748>.

256. “Seoul Voted ‘Best International Meetings Destination for 2012,” *Tourism-Insider*, December 13, 2012, accessed February 1, 2014, <http://tourism-insider.com/en/2012/12/english-seoul-voted-%E2%80%9Cbest-international-meetings-destination%E2%80%9D-for-2012/>.

257. Korean Culture and Information Service, *The Korean Wave*.

Korean culture than with Western culture, or even Japanese culture.”²⁵⁸ South Korea is becoming a trend setter for other nations particularly in East Asia; thus, a stronger U.S.-ROK alliance would open up a cultural avenue to promote U.S. foreign policy in East Asia.

South Korean Economy

Historical Growth

Before the Korean War, the southern half of Korea was largely comprised of an agrarian populace with many of the educational and employment opportunities being significantly higher in the industrialized northern half.²⁵⁹ In the 1960s, South Korea was a third world country with a weak economy.²⁶⁰ South Korea subsequently went through a period of rapid growth until the IMF (International Monetary Fund) crisis, also known as the Asian Financial Crisis, in 1998.²⁶¹ The GDP shrunk 6.7% that year, the value of the Won plummeted, and prominent Korean businesses failed.²⁶² South Korea was able to recover with revised economic policies designed to sustain growth and immediately placed the economy on the road to recovery.²⁶³ These policies were so effective that in 2000 “nearly all signs of the crisis had been sandblasted away” after which “South Korea entered a new age of prosperity.”²⁶⁴

258. Korean Culture and Information Service, *The Korean Wave*.

259. Kim and Jaffe, *The New Korea*, 42.

260. “The World Factbook 2013-14.”

261. Kim and Jaffe, *The New Korea*, 46-47.

262. Ibid, 56-57.

263. Ibid, 46-47.

264. Ibid.

Current Status

South Korea has the 13th largest GDP in the world, and the 5th largest in Asia.²⁶⁵ It is the 7th largest exporter worldwide, and 3rd largest in Asia.²⁶⁶ Its key Asia export and import partners are China and Japan.²⁶⁷ The South Korean economy was impacted by the 2008 recession like most other industrialized nations and is still recovering.²⁶⁸ Even during 2008, unemployment never went above 5%.²⁶⁹ At the time of this writing, the unemployment rate stands at 3.2%, which is lower than China (6.5%), Japan (4.4%), Australia (5.2%), and the United States (8.1%).²⁷⁰ Michael Haas notes that one of South Korea's main competitors, Japan, has "had a decreasing world market share due to increasing competition from South Korea" which has caused some companies in Japan to go "bankrupt as a result."²⁷¹ Haas maintains that at the "current trajectory, South Korea will soon become the number one economy in Asia"²⁷² A strong economy is important for U.S. regional partners. South Korea has one of the strongest in the region and may soon have the top economy in Asia. South Korea is in the position to be a top partner for U.S. foreign policy.

265. "The World Factbook 2013-14."

266. Ibid.

267. Ibid.

268. Kim and Jaffe, *The New Korea*, 47.

269. Ibid.

270. "The World Factbook 2013-14."

271. Haas, *Korean Reunification*, 5.

272. Ibid.

U.S. Regional Partners

Japan

Japan is an archipelago nation and is the nearest U.S. partner to South Korea.²⁷³

At its northernmost point, the Sea of Japan separates it from Russia, while the southernmost island puts its length into the vicinity of China and Taiwan in the East China Sea.²⁷⁴ Its eastern seaboard is limited to only the Pacific Ocean.²⁷⁵ Often dubbed the “Land of the Rising Sun,” Japan has arguably been the center of attention of the U.S. partners in the region.²⁷⁶ Like South Korea, Japan was not only a recipient of U.S. aid, but an example of a successful democratic nation. It has the fifth largest GDP in the world.²⁷⁷

Its history with South Korea stretches beyond modern times. Japan was recognized as a “modern great power” following their success in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905).²⁷⁸ They became the dominant regional force, and this was a major catalyst for their annexation of Korea.²⁷⁹ Japan occupied the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945.²⁸⁰ This was not the only invasion of the Korean people by Japan, but it is most recent in the minds of both Japanese and

273. “The World Factbook 2013-14.”

274. Ibid.

275. Ibid.

276. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century.”

277. “The World Factbook 2013-14.”

278. Heo and Roehrig, *South Korea Since 1980*, 7-9.

279. Ibid.

280. Republic of Korea, “Inter-Korean Relations,” Korea.net, accessed January 13, 2014, <http://www.korea.net/AboutKorea/Korea-at-a-Glance/Inter-Korean-Relations>. Used with Permission.

Koreans.²⁸¹ Koreans were required to “take Japanese names, revere the Shinto religion and the Japanese emperor, and use the Japanese language in schools and within government.”²⁸² During WWII, Japan relocated Koreans to work in Japanese factories and mines, drafted them into the Japanese army, and forced Korean women into prostitution as “comfort women” for the Japanese military.²⁸³ The occupation “left deep fissures and conflicts that have gnawed at the Korean soul ever since.”²⁸⁴ A partnership between Japan and South Korea exists, but it is not as strong as the U.S.’s relationship with the respective countries.²⁸⁵

The United States began cultivating the modern Japanese partnership after WWII.²⁸⁶ A “reverse course policy” was developed to strengthen democratic values and economic partnership with Japan to make it impervious to communism.²⁸⁷ While these efforts were beneficial to the formation of the modern Japanese nation, it did cause problems with the recently liberated South Koreans.²⁸⁸ Japan has continued to maintain a minimized force since the aftermath of WWII; their constitution specifically permits them “to possess the minimum necessary level of self-defense capability.”²⁸⁹ The United

281. Heo and Roehrig, *South Korea Since 1980*, 191-199.

282. Ibid, 9.

283. Ibid, 10.

284. Cumings, *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, 148.

285. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 17-18.

286. Jager, *Brothers at War*, 59-60, 537-538.

287. Ibid.

288. Ibid.

289. Anthony H. Cordesman, and Ashley Hess, *The Evolving Military Balance in the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia*, Vol. 3, *Resources, Military Spending and Modernization*, accessed January 12, 2014, http://csis.org/files/publication/130513_KMB_volume3.pdf, 159.

States currently keeps military bases in Japan from each service branch with an upward estimate of 36,000 forces.²⁹⁰ The Japanese government has donated more than \$5 billion to maintain U.S. troops in their country.²⁹¹ Additionally, the U.S. and Japan are developing a ballistic missile defense system together.²⁹² In light of any Korean conflict, “Japan provides the US with critical basing and staging facilities.”²⁹³ Japan is an important strategic partner for the U.S., but geographically, culturally, and politically, it is not as strategic as South Korea.

Australia

The nation of Australia is distanced from South Korea by the Pacific Ocean and Southeast Asia. Of U.S. partners, it is furthest from Asia. Despite its distance, it has arguably the most positively consistent relationship with the United States of any partners in the Asia-Pacific region.²⁹⁴ Australia has the nineteenth largest GDP and is one of the most influential nations in the Pacific region.²⁹⁵ Its many natural resources enable it to have a robust trading relationship with China, Japan and South Korea, its top import and export partners.²⁹⁶ Australia’s long-standing national and economic stability contributes to its established status as a U.S. partner.²⁹⁷

290. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 2, 181-186.

291. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century.”

292. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 3, 159-161.

293. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 2, 182.

294. Thomas Crump, *Asia-Pacific* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007), 315-319.

295. “The World Factbook 2013-14.”

296. Ibid.

297. Ibid.

Australia's impact on U.S. foreign policy goals in East Asia must consider culture as a factor. Culturally, Australians are very different from their Asian counterparts. They have a strong Anglo-Saxon heritage with their culture defined by European immigrants, predominately British and Celtic.²⁹⁸ They are considered a western nation in spite of their geographic position, and this impacts their ability to influence the region as an insider.²⁹⁹ However, history is also a critical factor. Australia, the U.S. and New Zealand signed the ANZUS agreement in 1951 creating a trilateral defense alliance for Asia-Pacific matters which, over time, was expanded to other regional conflicts.³⁰⁰ Additionally, the U.S. has rotational deployments in Australia, and plans to increase the number of U.S. military personnel, with the ultimate goal of having "up to a 2,500-member Marine Air-Ground Task Force" sometime between 2016 and 2017.³⁰¹ Australia's role is critical to U.S. foreign policy but it is not the most strategic ally in the region. Culturally and politically, Australia is closer to the United States than other partners in the region, but it does not have the cultural influence or geographic advantage in the Asia Pacific like South Korea.

India

India is perhaps the most recently modernized U.S. partner in the region.³⁰² It is separated from South Korea by its northeastern neighbors of Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh,

298. James Jupp, *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, its People and their Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 78-85.

299. Ibid, 796-811.

300. Crump, *Asia-Pacific*, 315-319.

301. Donna Miles, "Rotational Force in Australia Paves Way for Big Growth in 2014," American Forces Press Service, September 24, 2013, accessed February 6, 2014, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=120844>.

302. Clinton, "America's Pacific Century."

and, predominately, China.³⁰³ It has the fourth largest GDP in the world with the second largest population.³⁰⁴ Its plethora of natural resources and extensive coastline, provides an ample opportunity for commerce and a critical geographic location.³⁰⁵ President Obama has suggested that the U.S.-India relationship “will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century.”³⁰⁶ India is an emerging Asian power and has made great progress in recent years.³⁰⁷ Its internal political, cultural, religious, and security conflicts have hindered further development and foreign relations. Additionally, external conflicts with Pakistan³⁰⁸ and China add another element of insecurity.³⁰⁹ While India remains a key partner for the United States, the relationship is not as developed as the other regional partners.³¹⁰ There is definitely potential for India to become a primary focus in the future as it strengthens its economy and military, and reinforces its commitment to democratic values.³¹¹

Conclusion

Bruce Cumings offered an acute observation about what is now South Korea, “No Westerner imagined a modern Korea in 1900, none predicted it in 1945, and experts still did not envision it just a generation ago.” Perhaps this is why the U.S. government has

303. “The World Factbook 2013-14.”

304. Ibid.

305. Weightman, *Dragons and Tigers*, 237-241.

306. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century.”

307. Ibid.

308. Weightman, *Dragons and Tigers*, 188-194.

309. Cordesman and Hess, *Military Balance*, Vol. 1, 42-47.

310. Clinton, “America’s Pacific Century”.

311. Ibid.

not necessarily considered South Korea a primary partner. In less than a century, South Korea has overcome extreme poverty, a terrible war, and has seen a major cultural transition. Its progress is astounding and is on a positive trajectory. The United States has several capable partners who will be assets to U.S. foreign policy in the Asia-Pacific region. South Korea is distinctive because of its geographic location, influence in East Asia, and strong relationship with the United States. All of the regional partners have crucial roles in the success of the U.S. foreign policy shift, and South Korea will be the most important strategic partner for the foreseeable future.

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Appendix A: Historical Timeline

Timeline of Important DPRK-ROK Events³¹²

- **July 27, 1953:** The Korean War ended in a truce signed by a representative of the US-backed UN forces and a representative of DPRK and allied Chinese forces. The ROK was not a signatory. There is no formal peace treaty, meaning the two countries are technically still at war. The Korean War cost 2 million lives.
- **January 1968:** North Korean commandos launched a failed assassination attempt on then-president of the ROK, Park Chung-hee.
- **August 15, 1974:** Another assassination attempted on Park Chung-hee by a DPRK agent. Park survives, but his wife is killed.
- **October 9, 1983:** DPRK agents struck at the area of a visit by South Korean president Chun Doo-hwan to Burma, killing more than 20 people, including four ROK cabinet ministers. The president escaped.
- **November 29, 1987:** DPRK blew up a South Korean civilian airliner, killing 115 people. The US decided to include the North on its list of countries that support terrorism.
- **September 17, 1991:** North and South Korea became UN members.
- **December 31, 1991:** North and South Korea announced that they have initialed an agreement banning nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula, but did not agree on measures to ensure compliance.
- **January 30, 1992:** After years of promises and false starts, the DPRK signed an agreement to permit inspections of its seven sites at Yongbyon, its heavily guarded nuclear complex 60 miles north of Pyongyang.
- **March 12, 1993:** In a defiant move against international pressure to inspect its suspected nuclear weapons development program, North Korea announced it was withdrawing from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which it ratified in 1985, but then reconsidered the withdrawal. The North also began stockpiling plutonium.
- **May 29, 1993:** North Korea conducted what appeared to be the first successful test of the country's homegrown midrange missile, raising Japanese fears that missiles could reach some of Japan's most populous cities.

312. Cordesman, and Hess, *Military Balance in the Korean Peninsula*, Vol. 1.

- **December 1993:** The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) told President Bill Clinton that the DPRK may have one or two nuclear bombs, though the intelligence was murky. When the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) analyzed samples of North Korea's plutonium in 1992, it had concluded that scientists had engaged in more extensive reprocessing had been acknowledged.
- **February 1994:** The DPRK averted a possible trade embargo by allowing one full inspection of seven atomic sites by the IAEA. But when inspectors arrived in March, the North refused to let them take radioactive samples from critical parts of its nuclear reprocessing center at Yongbyon.
- **May 1994:** IAEA inspectors returned to North Korea to finish their inspection, concluding that the country was within days of obliterating evidence of how much, if any, nuclear fuel had been diverted to its weapons program. The Pentagon said the spent fuel could provide enough material for four or five nuclear bombs.
- **May 31, 1994:** The DPRK tested a cruise missile designed to sink ships; American officials said the cruise missile was part of North Korea's broad effort to upgrade its conventional forces.
- **June 1994:** The DPRK announced its withdrawal from the IAEA and said the agency's inspectors would no longer be allowed in the country. It also threatened to turn its stockpile of nuclear fuel into bombs. The Clinton administration reinforced the American military presence in South Korea, while former President Jimmy Carter, acting on his own, traveled to the North, meeting with Kim Il-sung and striking a deal that averted confrontation.
- **July 9, 1994:** Kim Il-sung died suddenly. His son, Kim Jong-il became the DPRK's leader.
- **October 21, 1994:** Negotiations following the Carter visit resulted in a deal: the DPRK agreed to freeze and then dismantle the complex in Yongbyon and open up two secret military sites to inspection by international experts. In exchange, an international consortium would replace the North's current graphite nuclear reactors with new light-water reactors, which produce little weapons-grade plutonium. The US and its allies also agreed to provide fuel oil to the North.
- **September 1996:** A DPRK submarine landed commandos on the South Korean coast.
- **August 31, 1998:** The North fired a two-stage Taepodong-1 missile over Japan and into the Pacific Ocean. The firing suggested that North Korea had greatly increased the range of its missiles.
- **June 2000:** DPRK leader Kim Jong-il and ROK President Kim Dae-jung met in Pyongyang.
- **January 2002:** Then US President George W. Bush made his "axis of evil" speech, including North Korea and linking it to Iran and Iraq.

- **October 2002:** Confronted by Bush administration officials with evidence that it had cheated on the 1994 agreement, North Korea admitted that it has been conducting a major clandestine nuclear program using enriched uranium. It declared it had "nullified" its agreement to freeze all nuclear weapons development activity.
- **February 2003:** As the US prepared to invade Iraq, the North decided to begin harvesting plutonium from its five-megawatt reactor at the Yongbyon complex.
- **August 9 2003:** The US, China, Russia, South Korea and Japan hold the first of several rounds of Six Party Talks with the DPRK in Beijing.
- **May 11, 2005:** The DPRK said it had removed 8,000 spent fuel rods from a reactor at its main nuclear complex at Yongbyon as one of several "necessary measures" to bolster its nuclear arsenal.
- **February 2005:** The DPRK claimed to have built nuclear weapons.
- **September 19, 2005:** The DPRK agreed to end its nuclear weapons program in return for security, economic, and energy benefits.
- **July 5, 2006:** The DPRK test-fired seven medium- and long-range missiles.
- **October 8, 2006:** The DPRK said it had set off its first nuclear test, becoming the eighth country in history to proclaim that it has joined the club of nuclear weapons states. The test was something of a fizzle – a subkiloton explosion – but it was enough to win unanimous passage of a resolution that imposed new economic sanctions.
- **October 31, 2006:** The DPRK agreed to resume the Six Party nuclear disarmament talks.
- **February 13, 2007:** The US and four other nations reached a tentative agreement to provide North Korea with roughly \$400 million in fuel oil and aid in return for the DPRK's starting to disable its nuclear facilities and allowing nuclear inspectors back into the country.
- **November 2007:** The prime ministers of the two Koreas met for the first time in 15 years.
- **March–May 2008:** North Korea test-fired short-range missiles.
- **June 27, 2008:** The DPRK demolished the cooling tower at its Yongbyon nuclear reactor site.
- **July 2008:** A DPRK soldier shot and killed a South Korean tourist at the Mount Kumgang resort.

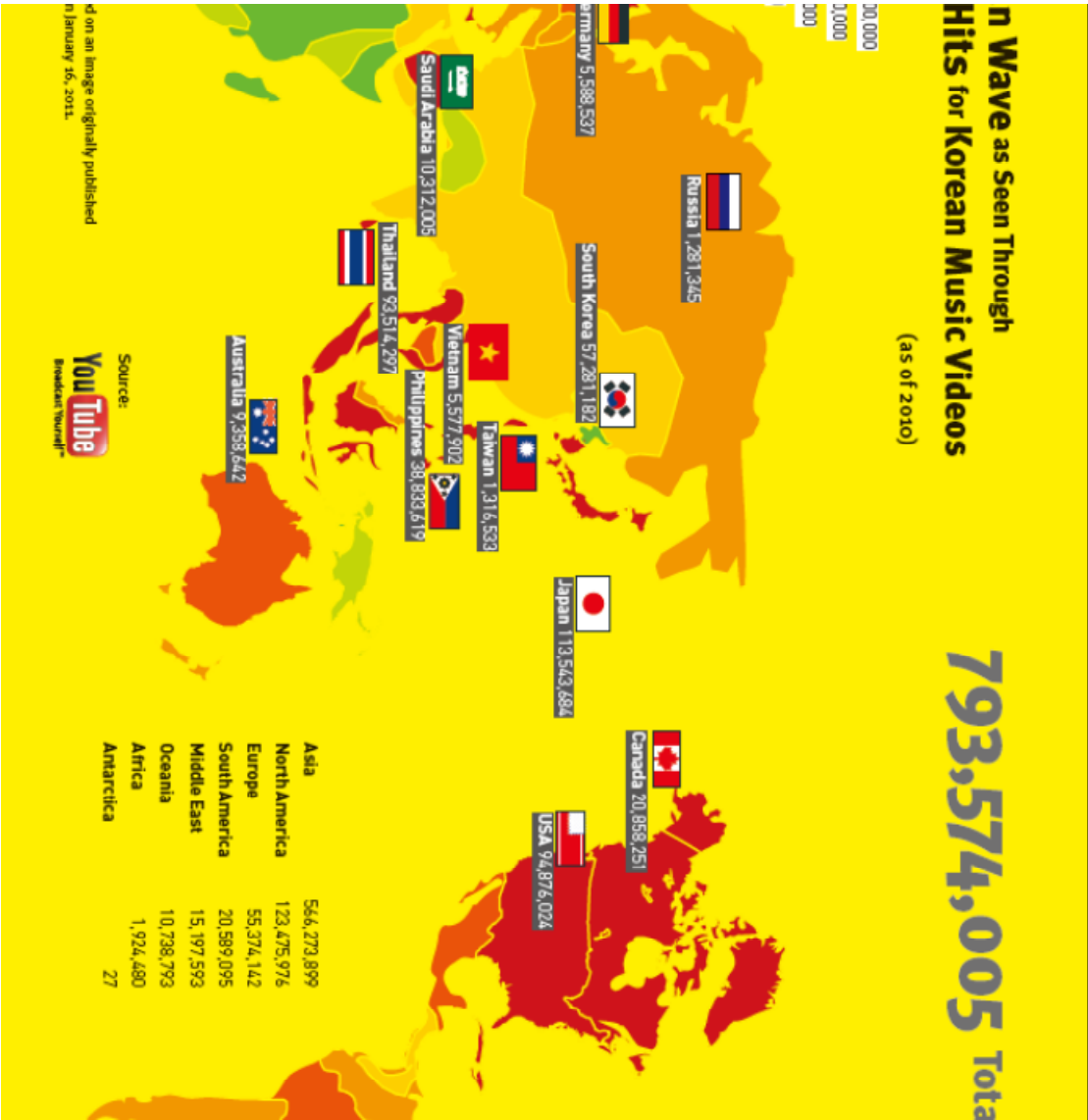
- **September 2008:** Complaining that the Bush administration had not yet fulfilled a promise to remove North Korea from a list of state sponsors of terrorism, the DPRK moved to resume plutonium reprocessing.
- **October 11, 2008:** The US removed the DPRK from its list of states sponsoring terrorism after North Korea agreed to resume disabling its nuclear plant and to allow inspectors access to its declared nuclear sites.
- **December 2008:** Six Party Talks failed to reach an agreement on inspecting the DPRK's nuclear sites. The North subsequently said there would be no more talks and vowed to increase its nuclear efforts – including uranium enrichment.
- **April 5, 2009:** The DPRK launched a long-range rocket capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. Criticism from the UN Security Council prompted Kim Jong-il to walk out of talks aimed at ending the North's nuclear program.
- **May 25, 2009:** The DPRK announced it had successfully conducted a second nuclear test, sparking an emergency UN Security Council meeting. It also withdrew from the 1953 Korean War armistice.
- **May 26, 2009:** The DPRK fired three missiles into the sea near Japan and said it "fully ready for battle" against the US.
- **June 12, 2009:** The UN Security Council voted unanimously on an enhanced package of sanctions that, among other things, called upon UN members to inspect cargo vessels and airplanes suspected of carrying military material in or out of the DPRK.
- **November 2009:** Shots were exchanged near the Yellow Sea border for the first time in seven years.
- **January 2010:** North Korea fired artillery near its disputed maritime border with the South. The ROK returned fire, but no one was injured.
- **March 27, 2010:** ROK corvette Cheonan sank after an unexplained explosion; 46 sailors died. A later investigation found that the boat was sunk by a torpedo launched from a North Korean submarine.
- **September 2010:** Kim Jong-un, Kim Jong-il's youngest son, gained high-powered military and political posts, resulting in increased speculation that he would be his father's successor.
- **October 2010:** North and South Korea exchanged shots across the border.
- **November 2010:** The DPRK gave a US scientist a tour of a uranium plant, creating alarm at the sophistication of its nuclear technology.

- **November 23, 2010:** The DPRK fired artillery rounds onto an inhabited South Korean border island. The ROK scrambled its fighter jets and returned fire; two ROK marines and two civilians were killed.
- **December 19, 2011:** Kim Jong-il died of a heart attack, and Kim Jong-un was declared “supreme leader” two weeks later.
- **February 29, 2012:** In the so-called Leap Day Agreement, the DPRK agreed to suspend nuclear weapons testing and uranium enrichment and to allow international inspectors to monitor and verify activities at its main reactor as part of a deal that included a US pledge to provide food aid.
- **April 12, 2012:** The DPRK launched a rocket that the US and its allies called a provocative pretext for developing an intercontinental ballistic missile that might carry a nuclear warhead in the future. The failed launch drew swift international condemnation, including the suspension of food aid by the US.
- **December 12, 2012:** North Korea successfully launched a long-range rocket into orbit.
- **January 2013:** In response to the UN Security Council’s unanimous decision to tighten sanctions, the DPRK bluntly threatened the US, saying that it had no interest in talks on denuclearization and that it would forge ahead with its missile and weapons development with the goal of developing the capability to hit US territory.
- **February 12, 2013:** The DPRK confirmed that it had conducted a third nuclear test.
- **March 7, 2013:** The UN Security Council ordered new economic sanctions against the DPRK for its third nuclear test, unanimously approving a resolution that the US negotiated with China.
- **March 11, 2013:** North Korea declared that it would no longer abide by the 1953 armistice amid joint US-ROK military drills.
- **March 15, 2013:** The US said it would deploy additional ballistic-missile interceptors along the Pacific Coast by 2017. The new deployment would increase the number of ground-based interceptors to 44 from the 30 already in California and Alaska.
- **March 27, 2013:** The DPRK cut off the last remaining military hot lines with the South, accusing President Park Geun-hye of pursuing her predecessor’s hardline policy.
- **March 28, 2013:** The US military carried out a rare long-range mission over the Korean Peninsula, sending two nuclear-capable B-2 stealth bombers on a practice sortie over the ROK, underscoring Washington’s commitment to defend its ally amid rising tensions with the North. In response, the DPRK ordered missile units to be ready to strike the ROK and US.

- **April 2, 2013:** The DPRK threatened to restart its plutonium reactor.
- **April 3, 2013:** The United States announced that it was deploying an advanced missile defense system to Guam two years ahead of schedule, in what the Pentagon said was a “precautionary move” to protect American naval and air forces from the threat of a North Korean missile attack.
- **April 4, 2013:** The ROK’s defense chief said that the DPRK had moved a missile with “considerable” range to its east coast, but that it was not capable of reaching the US, while the North’s military warned that it was ready to strike US military forces with “cutting-edge smaller, lighter and diversified nuclear strike means.”
- **April 5, 2013:** The DPRK’s government advised Russia, Britain, and other countries to consider evacuating their embassies in Pyongyang. Analysts in Russia and the ROK suggested that the announcement was part of rhetorical escalation of threats.
- **April 8, 2013:** North Korea said it would withdraw all of its 53,000 workers and “temporarily suspend the operations” at Kaesong, an industrial park jointly run with the ROK, casting doubt on the future of the last remaining symbol of inter-Korean reconciliation.
- **April 9, 2013:** The DPRK warned foreigners that they might want to leave the ROK because the Peninsula was on the brink of a nuclear war.
- **April 11, 2013:** The Defense Intelligence Agency said with “moderate confidence” that the DPRK had learned how to make a nuclear weapon small enough to be delivered by a ballistic missile.

Appendix B: The Korean Wave Map

The Global Reach of the Korean Wave³¹³



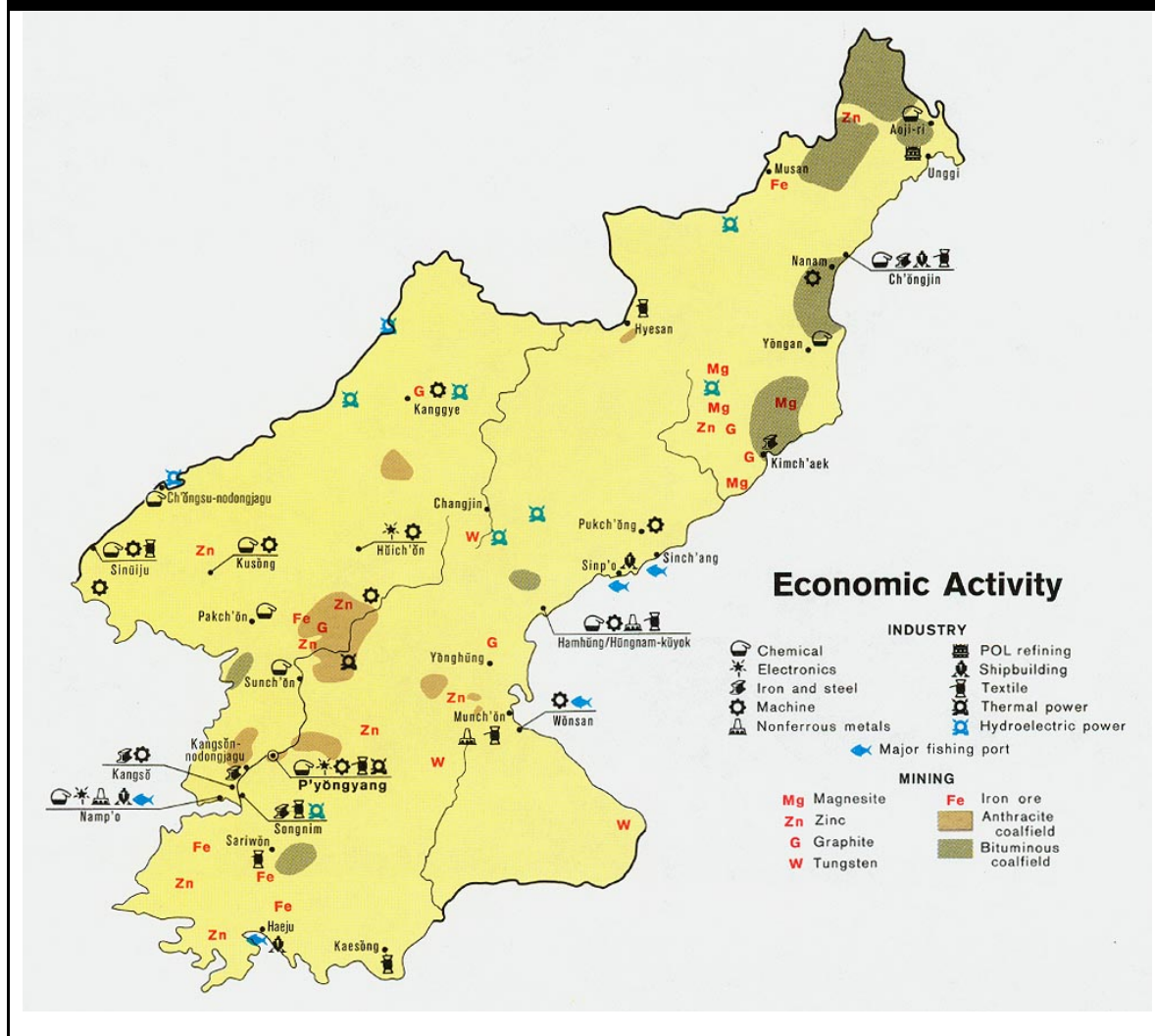
Appendix C: Additional Maps

Figure VI: Economic Activity in South Korea with Resources, 1973³¹⁴

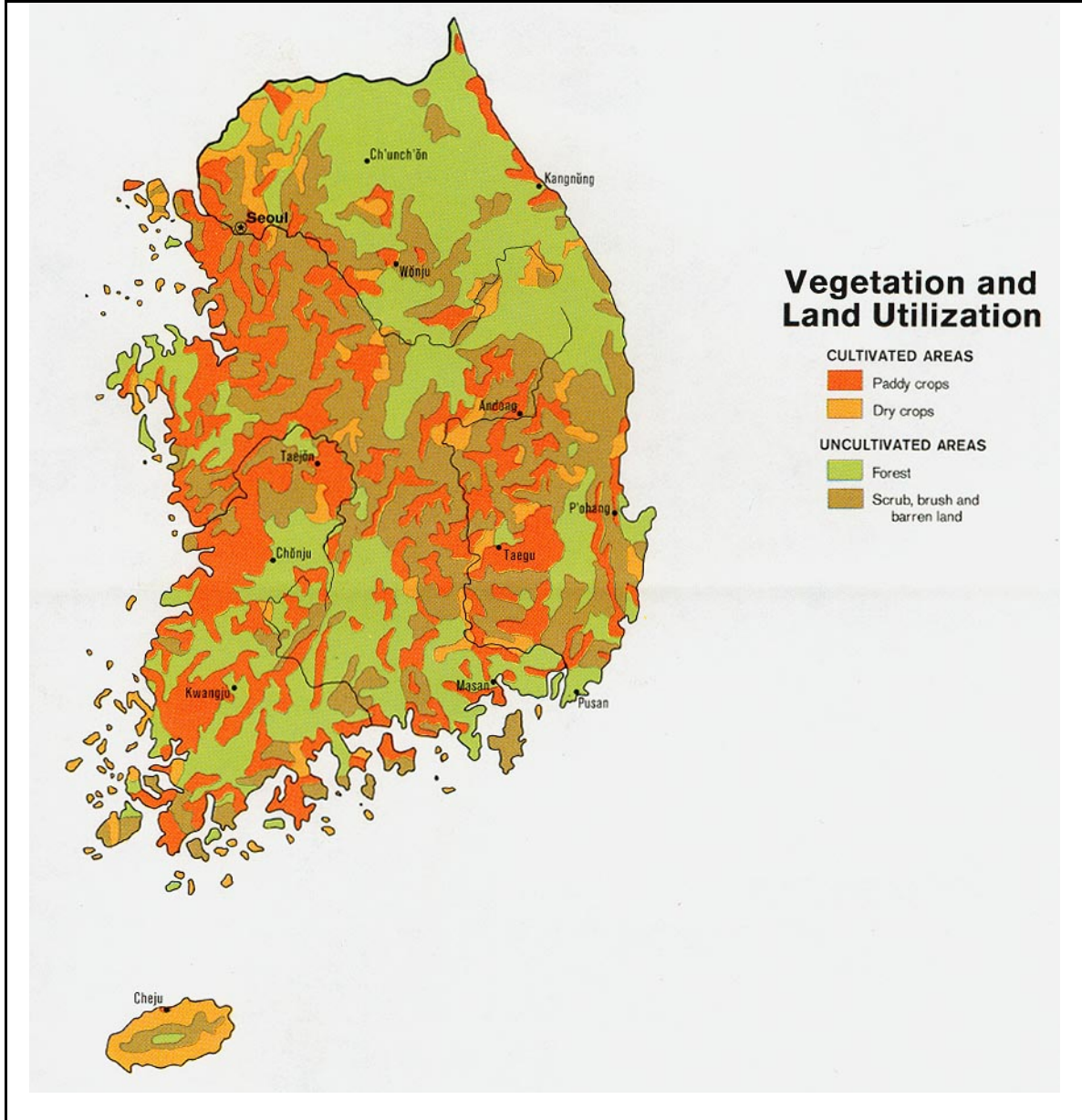
313. Korean Culture and Information Service, *The Korean Wave*. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/64040042/The-Korean-Wave-A-New-Pop-Culture-Phenomenon>. Used with permission.

314. CIA, "Map No. 501879 1973" (map), *University of Texas*, accessed March 3, 2014, https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/south_korea_econ_1973.jpg.

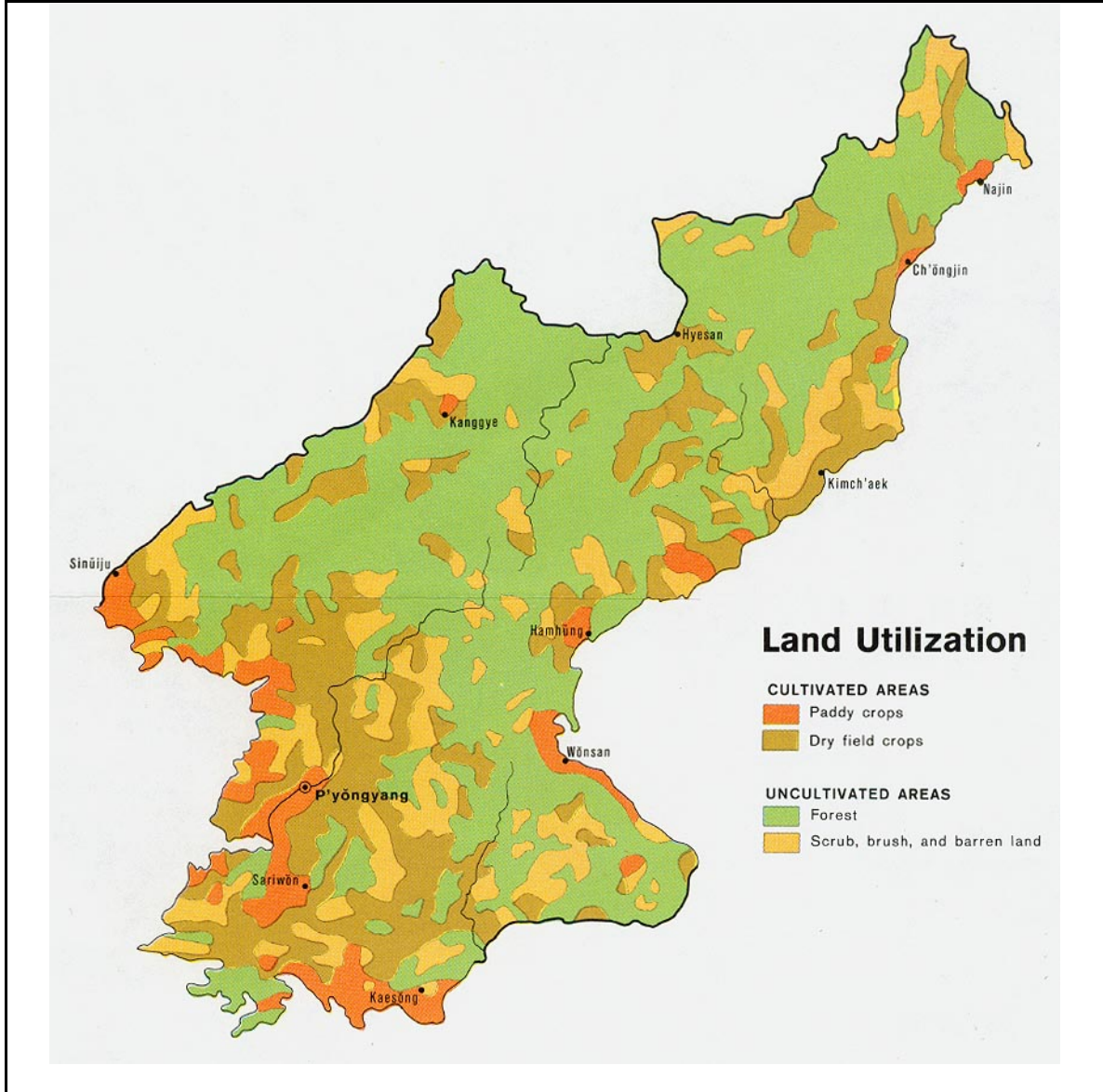


Figure VII: Economic Activity in North Korea with Resources, 1972³¹⁵

315. CIA, "Map No. 500773 1972" (map), *University of Texas*, accessed March 3, 2014, https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/north_korea_econ_1972.jpg.

Figure VIII: Vegetation and Land Utilization in South Korea, 1973³¹⁶

316. CIA, "Map No. 501879 1973" (map), *University of Texas*, accessed March 3, 2014, https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/south_korea_veg_1973.jpg.

Figure IX: Land Utilization in North Korea, 1972³¹⁷

317. CIA, "Map No. 500773 1972" (map), *University of Texas*, accessed March 3, 2014, https://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/north_korea_land_1972.jpg.