

North Korea in Perspective

An Orientation Guide



Technology Integration Division
March 2013



DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: GEOGRAPHY.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Geographic Regions and Topographic Features.....	2
Climate.....	3
Rivers.....	4
Major Cities.....	5
Pyongyang.....	5
Hamhung-Hungnam.....	6
Chongjin.....	7
Sinuiju.....	7
Wonsan.....	8
Nampo.....	8
Environmental Concerns.....	9
Deforestation.....	9
Water Quality.....	9
Air Quality.....	10
Soil Quality.....	10
Natural Hazards.....	10
Chapter 1 Assessment.....	12
CHAPTER 2: HISTORY.....	13
Overview.....	13
Origins.....	13
Paekjae, Kaya, and Silla.....	14
Goguryo and the Three Kingdoms.....	14
Impact of the Three Kingdoms Era.....	15
The Unified Silla Dynasty and Parhae.....	15
Period of the Later Three Kingdoms.....	16
Koryo.....	17
Early Chosun.....	18
The Imjin War.....	19
The Manchus.....	20
Isolation.....	20
Foreign Influence.....	21
The Decline of Chosun.....	22
Japanese Colonization.....	22
World War II.....	23
Formation of North Korea.....	23
The War and Its Immediate Aftermath.....	24
Cult of Personality.....	25
Military Buildup, Economic Decline, and Succession.....	26

North Korea Today	27
Transitioning to New Leadership: Kim Jong Un.....	28
Chapter 2 Assessment.....	30
CHAPTER 3: ECONOMY	31
Introduction.....	31
Industry and Manufacturing and Services	32
Agriculture	33
Fishing	34
Forestry.....	34
Banking and Currency	34
Trade	35
Investment.....	37
South Korean Investment	37
Chinese Investment	38
Other Investment	38
Energy and Mineral Resources	39
Energy.....	39
Minerals	40
Standard of Living	41
Tourism.....	42
Transportation.....	43
Business Outlook.....	44
Chapter 3 Assessment.....	46
CHAPTER 4: SOCIETY	47
Introduction.....	47
Ethnic Groups and Language.....	47
Religion.....	48
Cuisine	49
Traditional Dress	50
Arts	52
Literature	52
Visual Arts.....	52
Folk Culture and Folklore	53
Sports and Leisure	54
Chapter 4 Assessment.....	56
CHAPTER 5: SECURITY	57
Introduction.....	57
United States-North Korean Relations	58
Relations with Neighboring Countries	59
Russia	59

China.....	60
South Korea.....	61
Military and Internal Security.....	63
Military.....	63
Police and Internal Security Forces.....	64
Terrorism.....	65
Issues Affecting Security.....	66
Food Supply.....	66
Succession and Political Reform.....	67
Chapter 5 Assessment.....	68
FINAL ASSESSMENT.....	69
FURTHER READING.....	72

CHAPTER 1: GEOGRAPHY

Introduction

After World War II, the Korean Peninsula was divided between the North and the South at the 38th parallel. Since the end of Korean War hostilities in 1953, the boundary has been the military line of demarcation running down the center of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), a buffer of land between the two Koreas that is often described as the world's most militarized national boundary.^{1, 2}



© Dennis Kruyt
DMZ border North - South Korea

To the north of the DMZ lies the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). In an era of global interrelated economies and worldwide communications via the internet, North Korea remains one of the world's most isolated societies. The philosophical underpinning of this insularity is the national creed of *juche*, a politically flexible ideology (sometimes given the shorthand description "self-reliance") first outlined by former North Korean President Kim Il Sung. But to the extent that *juche* translates as "self-reliance," it is strictly at the macro or state level, not at the individual level.³ In the *juche* model of the North Korean state, the supreme leader (*suryong*) is the most important part of the social-political body. The supreme leader, much like a brain guiding a body, directs the masses via the Korean Workers' Party (KWP).⁴

In practice, North Korea's weak economy has forced the Kim regime (Kim Il Sung's grandson, Kim Jong Un, became the nation's ruler in 2012) to become highly dependent on its neighbors, most notably South Korea and China, for aid and limited investment. As the country's command economy has made halting moves toward capitalist enterprises, the *juche* message has been reinterpreted to place greater emphasis on *songun* ("military first"), expanding the economic and political roles of the Korean People's Army (KPA) at the expense of the more ideological KWP.⁵

¹ Daniel Gomez-Ibanez, "2006–2007 Annual Report," International Committee for the Peace Council, 2007, <http://www.peacecouncil.org/annualreport.html>

² Larisa Epatko, "Tour of Korea's Demilitarized Zone," PBS Newshour, 17 January 2011, <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2011/01/tour-of-korean-dmz.html>

³ Danton R. Ford, "Democratic Capitalism and Juche: Common Values and Challenges" (paper, Second Biennial Conference of Korean Studies, Association of Australasia, Monash University, Melbourne, 24–25 September 2001), 354, <http://arts.monash.edu.au/korean/kjaa/conference/32dantonford.pdf>

⁴ Global Security, "Revolutionary View of the Leader," 2009, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/dprk/suryong.htm>

⁵ Alexander V. Vorontsov, "North Korea's Military-First Policy: A Curse or a Blessing?" Brookings, 26 May 2006, http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2006/0526northkorea_vorontsov.aspx

Geographic Regions and Topographic Features

North Korea occupies the northern 55% of the Korean Peninsula. Slightly smaller than Mississippi, North Korea is bordered by China to the north, the Republic of Korea (South Korea) to the south, and Russia on the extreme northeastern tip. The nation's maritime borders are the Sea of Japan (East Sea) to the east and the Yellow Sea (West Sea) to the west.^{6, 7}



© Kok Leng Yeo
Kumgangsan mountain

Roughly 80% of North Korea consists of a complex mosaic of mountains and upland areas, dissected by narrow river valleys.⁸ The tallest peaks lie in the north. In the far northeast are the Hamgyong Mountains, whose highest point is Mount Kwanmo at 2,540 m (8,333 ft). West of Mount Kwanmo, on the Chinese border, lies volcanic Mount Paektu, North Korea's highest point at 2,744 m (9,003 ft).⁹ Chon-ji (Heaven Lake) lies near the top of Mount Paektu, within the central crater. According to official North Korean accounts (contradicted by historical evidence), Kim Jong Il, the second ruler of the Kim dynasty, was born in a log cabin on this famous peak, celebrated as the site of the ancestral origin of the Korean people.^{10, 11}

In central North Korea, the Kangnam Mountains parallel the Amnok (Yalu) River, whose shallow waters form much of the regional boundary with China. East of the Kangnam Range are the Nangnim Mountains, forming a natural divide between the streams of the northeast and those of the northwest.¹² The Taebaek Mountains to the southeast parallel the Sea of Japan coastline and extend across the border into South Korea.¹³ Within the Taebaek Mountains, near the South Korean border, is Mount Kumgang (Diamond Mountain), one of North Korea's few foreign tourist attractions.^{14, 15}

⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, "Korea, North: Geography," in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

⁸ Helen-Louise Hunter, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 61–62, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

⁹ Helen-Louise Hunter, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 61–62, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

¹⁰ Tourism in Korea, "Kim Jong Il's Native Home in the Mt. Paektu Secret Camp," 2012, <http://naenara.com.kp/en/tourism/attraction/attract-view.php?2+0>

¹¹ CNN, "Kim Jong Il: Playing a Poor Hand Skillfully," 21 August 2003, <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/east/06/13/bio.kim.jongil/>

¹² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Nangnim Mountains," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/402579/Nangnim-Mountains>

¹³ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Taebaek Mountains," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/580148/Taebaek-Mountains>

¹⁴ People's Korea, "Introduction of N. Korea's Dazzling 'Diamond Mountain,'" 1998, http://www1.korea-np.co.jp/pk/051th_issue/98071511.htm

¹⁵ Xinhua, "DPRK to Open Mt. Kumgang to Int'l Tourists," China.org.cn, 5 April 2012, http://www.china.org.cn/travel/2012-04/05/content_25064072.htm

The lowest areas in North Korea are in the western part of the country, where many of the larger mountain rivers drain into the Yellow Sea. The most extensive of these areas are the Pyongyang and Chaeryong plains, which lie to the northeast and southwest, respectively, of the mouth of the Taedong River. Coastal plains on North Korea's eastern coast along the Sea of Japan are extremely narrow because of the steep mountain drop-off along the coast.¹⁶

Climate

North Korea's continental climate is characterized by cold dry winters that last from December through March; short, hot, wet summers that are distinctly cooler in the northeast, and transitional spring and fall seasons marked by mild temperatures and moderate rainfall. In North Korea's far northern regions, more than half of the year (200 days) is marked by freezing temperatures. Even during the summer, the temperatures are not high enough to grow rice, the nation's staple grain.¹⁷



© Elizabeth Thomsen
Yalu River, in Sinuiju City

Seasonal wind patterns determine climate during the winter and summer months. During winter, cold dry air sweeps into the Korean Peninsula from Siberia and Manchuria to the north.¹⁸ In summer, moist air from the Pacific Ocean arrives via monsoonal winds coming from the south and southeast. Typhoons, although rare, occur on average at least once per summer.¹⁹ In addition to causing loss of life and producing massive flooding, these storms can be disastrous to North Korean agricultural harvests, thereby producing or intensifying famine conditions in the country.^{20, 21}

The average annual precipitation in North Korea is 100 cm (39.4 in), although significant variations occur among regions.²² For example, the cities of Wonsan and Pyongyang are situated at essentially the same latitude and elevation, but Wonsan receives more average

¹⁶ Helen-Louise Hunter, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 63–64,

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

¹⁷ BBC Weather, "North Korea," 23 March 2011,

http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/hi/country_guides/newsid_9384000/9384201.stm

¹⁸ BBC Weather, "North Korea," 23 March 2011,

http://news.bbc.co.uk/weather/hi/country_guides/newsid_9384000/9384201.stm

¹⁹ Helen-Louise Hunter, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 64,

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

²⁰ NASA Earth Observatory, "Unusually Intense Monsoon Rains," 1–9 August 2010,

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/NaturalHazards/view.php?id=45177>

²¹ Hilary Jones, "Satellite Raises Typhoon Death Toll," *Cosmos*, 1 December 2006,

<http://www.cosmosmagazine.com/news/891/satellite-raises-typhoon-death-toll>

²² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The Land: Climate," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

precipitation per year than Pyongyang.^{23, 24} Both cities receive roughly 60% of their yearly precipitation in the 3-month period from July through September.

Average temperatures in North Korea generally decrease the farther north one goes, although elevation and proximity to the coast are modifying influences to this trend. Higher elevation locations experience greater extremes between daily highs and lows. Because of ocean currents and the mountain ranges that hug North Korea's eastern coast, winter temperatures there tend to be about 3°–4°C (5°–7°F) higher than temperatures on North Korea's western coast.^{25, 26}

Rivers

North Korea's two longest rivers form most of its northern boundary with China and Russia. The longest is the Amnok River (Yalu River), which flows for 800 km (497 mi) from headwaters on Mount Paektu to its mouth in Korea Bay, an arm of the Yellow Sea. Several hydroelectric dams are situated on the river; the largest is located at Supung-nodongjagu, 56 km (35 mi) upstream from Sinuiju, the most populous North Korean city on the river.



© serapio
North Korean ships dredging river

This dam provides a large portion of the electricity for the northern part of North Korea.²⁷

The Tumen River also originates on the slopes of Mount Paektu. It flows east-northeast, then north, before making a turn to the southeast at its northernmost point. At the end of its 521-km (324-mi) journey, it forms the 19-km-long (12-mi-long) border with Russia before emptying into the Sea of Japan.²⁸ Much of the Tumen River flows through mountainous terrain; only 81 km (50 mi) are navigable. Because the Tumen is narrower and shallower than the Amnok, it is the most commonly chosen border crossing for North Koreans trying to illegally enter China.^{29, 30}

²³ World Weather and Climate Information, "Average Rainfall in Wonsan, North Korea," 2009,

<http://www.weather-and-climate.com/average-monthly-precipitation-Rainfall,Wonsan,North-Korea>

²⁴ World Weather and Climate Information, "Average Rainfall in Pyongyang, North Korea," 2009,

<http://www.weather-and-climate.com/average-monthly-precipitation-Rainfall,Pyong-Yang,North-Korea>

²⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The Land: Climate," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

²⁶ World Weather and Climate Information, "Average Weather and Climate in North Korea," 2012,

<http://www.weather-and-climate.com/average-monthly-Rainfall-Temperature-Sunshine-in-North-Korea>

²⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Yalu River," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/651445/Yalu-River>

²⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Tumen River," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/608794/Tumen-River>

²⁹ Tom O'Neill, "Escape From North Korea," *National Geographic*, February 2009,

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/02/north-korea/oneill-text/1>

³⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Tumen River," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/608794/Tumen-River>

North Korea's third-longest river is the Taedong, which flows 397 km (247 mi) on a southwestward path to Korea Bay. Important port facilities at the cities of Nampo and Songnim are located along the river's lower reaches. Upstream from Songnim lies Pyongyang, the nation's capital and largest city.^{31, 32, 33}

Although it is not one of North Korea's most economically important rivers, the Imjin River remains well known as the site of one of the most critical battles of the Korean War.³⁴ The river forms in the Taebaek Mountains and flows southward until shortly after it crosses the DMZ. For the remainder of its route, the Imjin follows a southwestward path through South Korea that broadly parallels the DMZ, until it flows into the Han River near its mouth. This point of confluence marks the western end of the DMZ.³⁵

Major Cities

City ³⁶	Population
Pyongyang	2,581,076
Hamhung-Hungnam	703,610
Chongjin	614,892
Sinuiju	334,041
Wonsan	328,467
Nampo	310,531

Pyongyang

North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, is one of the Korean Peninsula's ancient sites of continuous human habitation. According to historical record, villages or cities have existed on or near the city's present-day site since 108 B.C.E., although legend places Pyongyang's founding as early as 1122 B.C.E. From 427 to 668 C.E., Pyongyang was the capital of the Goguryo Kingdom, the northernmost of the Three Kingdoms that ruled the

³¹ Helen-Louise Hunter, "Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 64, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

³² *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Taedong River," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/580155/Taedong-River>

³³ World Port Source, "Port of Nampo," 2012, http://www.worldportsource.com/ports/PRK_Port_of_Nampo_1922.php

³⁴ National Archives, "British Battles: Korea, 1951: The Battle of Imjin River," n.d., <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/battles/korea/battle.htm>

³⁵ Robert Koehler, *Seoul Magazine*, "Travel Highlights: The DMZ," Korea Tourism Organization, 18 January 2008, http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/SI/SI_EN_3_6.jsp?cid=262156

³⁶ Thomas Brinkhoff, "North Korea," City Population, 13 January 2010, <http://www.citypopulation.de/KoreaNorth.html>

Korean Peninsula during this era. Pyongyang later served as a secondary capital during the Koryo dynasty (918–1392). A low point for Pyongyang came in 1895, when the city suffered a plague after being devastated during the Sino-Japanese War.³⁷

During Japan's occupation of Korea (1910–45), Pyongyang became an industrial center. The city suffered tremendous damage from air raids during the Korean War, when the U.S. Air Force dropped a reported 250,000 bombs.³⁸ Pyongyang was rebuilt with Soviet and Chinese help after the armistice was signed in 1953.³⁹



© Kok Leng Yeo
Tower of Juche Idea, P'yŏngyang

Today, Pyongyang is not only North Korea's governmental center, but it is also the nation's transportation hub. Roads and railways spoke out in all directions toward the nation's other regions and cities. In addition, Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport is the nation's only port of entry for foreign visitors.⁴⁰ The city's underground metro system, which features several ornately decorated stations as well as patriotic murals, transports citizens in aging Chinese and German railcars.^{41, 42}

Pyongyang is also the nation's cultural and educational center. Numerous monuments, statues, and murals throughout the city not only celebrate the lives of North Korea's Great Leader (Kim Il Sung) and Dear Leader (Kim Jong Il), but they also promote the ongoing North Korean Revolution. Among the displays is the 170-m (558-ft) Tower of the Juche Idea, commemorating the national philosophy as originally articulated by Kim Il Sung and later reinterpreted by Kim Jong Il.⁴³

Hamhung-Hungnam

Hamhung, North Korea's second-largest city, lies on the left bank of the Songchon River, just upstream from the Sea of Japan port of Hungnam, which has been a part of Hamhung since 1960. The city is an industrial center, with textiles making up a key component of the economy. Since 1961, a sprawling factory complex along the Songchon River has been producing vinalon, a synthetic fiber that is durable—but also stiff, prone to

³⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "P'yŏngyang," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/484693/Pyongyang>

³⁸ PBS Wide Angle, "A State of Mind: North Korea and the Korean War: 1953–Present: The Aftermath," 11 September 2003, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/a-state-of-mind/north-korea-and-the-korean-war/1953-present-the-aftermath/1369/>

³⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "P'yŏngyang," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/484693/Pyongyang>

⁴⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "P'yŏngyang," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/484693/Pyongyang>

⁴¹ Simon Bone, "The Pyongyang Metro: Photos," PyongyangMetro, 1998, <http://www.pyongyang-metro.com/metrophotos.html>

⁴² Simon Bone, "The Pyongyang Metro: Photos," PyongyangMetro, 1998, <http://www.pyongyang-metro.com/metrophotos.html>

⁴³ Korean Central News Agency, "Tower of Juche Idea," 15 April 2002, <http://www.kcna.co.jp/item/2002/200204/news04/15.htm>

shrinkage, and resistant to dye. It has also been called “juche fiber” because the primary raw materials needed for vinalon production—limestone and anthracite coal—are locally available in North Korea.⁴⁴ Other industries include chemicals, metals, machinery manufacturing, oil refining, and food processing.⁴⁵ Much of Hamhung’s industrial infrastructure was damaged or destroyed during the Korean War; it was rebuilt after the war with East German assistance.⁴⁶



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Central square, Hamhung

During the 1990s, Hamhung suffered tremendously under the famine conditions that gripped all of North Korea.⁴⁷ Conditions became so severe that the leaders of a local army unit plotted a coup against Kim Jong Il; in the end, the unit was disbanded and its officers were purged.⁴⁸

Chongjin

Chongjin, a northern ice-free port on the Sea of Japan, was little more than a small fishing village until its development as a trading port and later, during the Japanese occupation of Korea, as an industrial center. The economy continues to focus on heavy industries, including iron and steel mills, chemical fibers, and coal-machinery manufacturing. But reports suggest that many of these factories are in serious decline or are no longer operating, a situation caused by shortages of fuel and raw materials as well as by the difficulty of repairing outdated factory equipment that no longer works.^{49, 50}

Sinuiju

The industrial city of Sinuiju is the capital of North Pyongan province. Situated directly across from the Chinese city of Dandong, Sinuiju is a major transportation hub and one of only two rail-crossing points from North Korea into China. Unlike most North Korean cities, Sinuiju is less isolated and has relatively more exposure to the outside world.⁵¹

⁴⁴ Jasper Becker, *Rogue Regime: Kim Jong Il and the Looming Threat of North Korea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 106.

⁴⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Hamhŭng,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/253344/Hamhung>

⁴⁶ Graeme Stewart Mount and Mark Gauthier, *895 Days That Changed the World: The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2006), 76.

⁴⁷ Andrew Natsios, “The Politics of Famine in North Korea” (report, United States Institute of Peace, 2 August 1999), 10, <http://www.usip.org/files/resources/sr990802.pdf>

⁴⁸ Elizabeth Economy, “A Regional Environmental Security Complex in East Asia: The Reality and the Potential,” in *The Environmental Dimension of Asian Security: Conflict and Cooperation Over Energy, Resources, and Pollution*, eds. In-Taek Hyun and Miranda A. Schreurs (Washington, DC: Endowment of the U.S. Institute of Peace, 2007), 238–39.

⁴⁹ Barbara Demick, “Glimpses of a Hermit Nation,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3 July 2005, <http://articles.latimes.com/2005/jul/03/world/fg-chongjin3>

⁵⁰ John C. Wu, “Commodity Review: Metals: Iron and Steel” (U.S. Geological Survey, 2006 Minerals Yearbook, September 2007), 18.2, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2006/myb3-2006-kn.pdf>

⁵¹ 38North, “Spotlight on Sinuiju,” U.S. Korea Institute at SAIS (the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies), Johns Hopkins University, 23 July 2010, <http://38north.org/2010/07/sinuiju-2/>

Originally founded as an administrative center early in the 20th century, Sinuiju's main function was to facilitate rail shipments destined for China. After the Korean War, the city was the site of a major uprising against the Korean Communist Party. Today, it is home to several important factories including the Rakwon Machine Complex, which provides most of the industrial equipment for the nation. Several defense and munitions factories are located in Sinuiju, whose importance was underscored by the frequent visits of former leader Kim Jong Il.⁵²



© Btstsf / Wikipedia.org
City center of Kaesong, North Korea

Wonsan

This northeastern port city on the Sea of Japan is the capital of Kangwon province. The city houses a number of important industries, including marine products, textiles, and shipbuilding. During the Japanese occupation (1910–45), the city was a major center for trade between Korea and Japan. Wonsan is also an important rail center, providing the country's only rail link to Russia. Although less than 20% of the land around the city is arable, Wonsan has the only cooperative farm in the nation that can be visited by foreigners. Beautiful beaches make the city a popular tourist center. Kim Jong Il, a frequent visitor, owned a seaside villa in Wonsan.⁵³

Nampo

Nampo, North Korea's largest port on the Yellow Sea, is located in the estuary of the Taedong River. Because Nampo lies only 50 km (31 mi) southwest of Pyongyang, its port receives much of the ocean-borne cargo that arrives on ships too large to proceed farther up the river to the capital. The city's industrial base is centered on gold and copper refining, glass-making, shipbuilding, and electrode manufacturing. Salt-evaporation ponds and nearby apple groves contribute to the area's industry.⁵⁴



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Namp'o, North Korea

One of the largest projects in North Korean history was the construction of the West Sea Barrage ("the longest dam in the world") just west of Nampo, which separates the saltwater Yellow Sea from the freshwater Taedong River. Ships traveling to and from Nampo pass through a lock system. A primary goal of the project was to expand the

⁵² 38North, "Spotlight on Sinuiju," U.S. Korea Institute at SAIS (the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies), Johns Hopkins University, 23 July 2010, <http://38north.org/2010/07/sinuiju-2/>

⁵³ 38North, "Wonsan," U.S. Korea Institute at SAIS (the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies), Johns Hopkins University, 19 January 2011, <http://38north.org/2011/01/wonsan/>

⁵⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Namp'o," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/402343/Nampo>

amount of water available for irrigating existing farmland and reclaimed tideland acreage.^{55, 56}

Environmental Concerns

North Korea has numerous environmental concerns, although the current scope of the problems is difficult to gauge because of a lack of recent data. In a 2003 report prepared by a North Korean environmental council in conjunction with the United Nations Development and Environment Programs, several key problem areas were identified.



Deforestation

Although the report noted that 74% of North Korea remains forested, most of these forests are on remote, steep slopes. More accessible forestlands have suffered significant degradation because of overharvesting for lumber and firewood, conversion to farmland, wildfires, and destruction by insects related to drought conditions.^{57, 58}

Water Quality

Most major rivers in North Korea are significantly polluted, with the Taedong River (which flows through Pyongyang) being perhaps the most seriously affected. The construction of the West Sea Barrage, which effectively turned the mouth of the Taedong into a lake, has had a particularly negative effect on river water quality, causing industrial pollutants from the Nampo area to be transported upstream rather than flushed out into the ocean.^{59, 60}

Current sewage and industrial wastewater treatment facilities are inadequate (in terms of both number and operating quality) to handle the contaminants that are dumped into North Korean rivers. Even the North Korean government, generally disinclined to publicize any of its failings, has acknowledged the scope of the problem. In the 2003 national environmental report, government representatives pledged “to introduce state-of-

⁵⁵ Hy-Sang Lee, *North Korea: A Strange Socialist Fortress* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 133.

⁵⁶ Nicholas D. Kristof, “In North Korea, Dam Reflects ‘Great Leader’s’ State of Mind,” *New York Times*, 5 July 1989,

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=950DE6DC163BF936A35754C0A96F948260&sec=&spo n=&pagewanted=all>

⁵⁷ Alex Kirby, “North Korea’s Environment Crisis,” BBC News, 27 August 2004,

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/3598966.stm>

⁵⁸ Jinsuk Byun, “Environmental Issues of a Unified Korea” (working paper, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 24 January 2011), 14, <http://csis.org/publication/environmental-issues-unified-korea>

⁵⁹ Soon-jick Hong, “Environmental Pollution in North Korea: Another South Korean Burden?” *East Asian Review* 11, no. 2 (Summer 1999), http://www.ieas.or.kr/vol11_2/hongsoonjik.htm#a15

⁶⁰ Ken Piddington, ed., “DPR Korea: State of the Environment 2003” (report, United Nations Environment Programme, 2003), 29–31, http://www.unep.org/PDF/DPRK_SOE_Report.pdf

the-art science and technology in wastewater and sewage treatment plants to improve purification processes.”^{61, 62}

Air Quality

Coal is the primary fuel used in North Korea’s power plants, factories, and households, resulting in high amounts of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide emissions as well as acid rain. Projections show that North Korean coal consumption will expand rapidly over the next decade, which will increase the country’s air pollution problems unless remediating steps are taken.^{63, 64, 65}

Soil Quality

Soil erosion resulting from deforestation-generated flooding is an ongoing problem in North Korea. Also problematic is an increasing level of acidification of soil, produced by overuse of chemical fertilizers. Losses of productive agricultural land continue to undercut the country’s stated goal of reaching self-sufficiency in food production.⁶⁶

Natural Hazards

Volcanic eruptions and earthquakes do not pose major threats in North Korea. The country’s most devastating natural disasters involve extremes in precipitation: North Korea receives too much rain or not enough. During 1997, for example, food shortages reached famine proportions when summer rains materialized too late for most field crops.⁶⁷ The drought conditions that year were preceded by two years of heavy flooding generated by torrential rainfall; floods destroyed hundreds of thousands of



NASA photo
Typhoon Bills

⁶¹ Ken Piddington, ed., “DPR Korea: State of the Environment 2003” (report, United Nations Environment Programme, 2003), 29–31, http://www.unep.org/PDF/DPRK_SOE_Report.pdf

⁶² Jinsuk Byun, “Environmental Issues of a Unified Korea” (working paper, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 24 January 2011), 11–13, <http://csis.org/publication/environmental-issues-unified-korea>

⁶³ Bailey Culp, “Environmental Insecurity in North Korea,” *Korea Times*, 10 November 2010, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2012/04/198_76091.html

⁶⁴ Ken Piddington, ed., “DPR Korea: State of the Environment 2003” (report, United Nations Environment Programme, 2003), 37–40, http://www.unep.org/PDF/DPRK_SOE_Report.pdf

⁶⁵ Jinsuk Byun, “Environmental Issues of a Unified Korea” (working paper, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 24 January 2011), 9–11, <http://csis.org/publication/environmental-issues-unified-korea>

⁶⁶ Ken Piddington, ed., “DPR Korea: State of the Environment 2003” (report, United Nations Environment Programme, 2003), 46–49, http://www.unep.org/PDF/DPRK_SOE_Report.pdf

⁶⁷ U.S. Water News, “North Korea Says Drought Causing Widespread Damage,” August 1997, <http://www.uswaternews.com/archives/arcglobal/7norkor8.html>

crop acreage immediately prior to harvest.⁶⁸ As a result, from 1995 to 1998, an estimated 2.5 to 3 million people are thought to have died of starvation.^{69, 70, 71} More recently, massive floods in August 2007 once again intensified North Korea's chronic food shortages, raising the concern of a new wave of famine deaths.^{72, 73, 74} In 2011, North Korea's worst winter in 60 years, coupled with severe flooding, prompted the North Korean government to solicit food aid from the West.

Floods and landslides can be triggered when Pacific Ocean typhoons strike North Korea. Most recently, in July 2006, the powerful super typhoon Bilis struck mainland China, bringing an associated storm that generated near-record rainfall totals in parts of North Korea. The official North Korean death toll from the resulting floods and landslides was 549, but an independent estimate based on satellite images of landslide damage near the town of Yangdok placed the number of deaths at "probably well over 10,000."^{75, 76}

⁶⁸ Timothy J. Min, II, "Food Shortage in North Korea: Humanitarian Aid Versus Policy Objectives," Human Rights Brief, Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at Washington College of Law, American University, 1996, <http://www1.american.edu/ted/hpages/human/NKorea41.htm>

⁶⁹ Andrew Natsios, "The Politics of Famine in North Korea" (report, United States Institute of Peace, 2 August 1999), 6, <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr990802.pdf>

⁷⁰ BBC News, "Millions Dead from Starvation Says North Korean Defector," 18 February 1998, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/57740.stm>

⁷¹ BBC News, "North Korea 'Loses 3 Million to Famine,'" 17 February 1999, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/281132.stm>

⁷² Chico Harlan, "Starving N. Korea Beggars for Food, but U.S. Has Concerns About Resuming Aid," *Washington Post*, 22 February 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/02/19/AR2011021901953.html>

⁷³ BBC News, "Flood-Hit N. Korea 'Faces Famine,'" 18 October 2007, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7051479.stm>

⁷⁴ Michael Schuman, "The Real Crisis in North Korea? Food," *Time World*, 6 October 2008, http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1847428,00.html?imw=Y&loomia_si=t0:a16:g2:r1:c0.376027:b18547319&xid=Loomia

⁷⁵ Jim Andrews, "A New Week on the Subcontinent; East Asian Rains," AccuWeather.com, 17 July 2006, http://www.accuweather.com/mt-news-blogs.asp?blog=andrews&partner=accuweather&pgUrl=/mtweb/content/andrews/archives/2006/07/post_1.asp

⁷⁶ David Adam, "Death Toll in North Korea Typhoon Questioned," *Guardian*, 22 November 2006, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/nov/23/naturaldisasters.northkorea>

Chapter 1 Assessment

1. North Korea's climate is characterized by long, cold, dry winters and short, hot, wet summers.

True

North Korea's continental climate is characterized by cold dry winters that last from December through March. Short, hot, wet summers are distinctly cooler in the country's northeastern section.

2. North Korea's longest river is the Amnok.

True

The country's longest river is the Amnok, which flows for 800 km (497 mi) from its headwaters on Mount Paektu to its mouth in Korea Bay, an arm of the Yellow Sea (West Sea).

3. North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, is a relatively recent location of human habitation.

False

Pyongyang is one of the most ancient sites of continuous human habitation on the Korean Peninsula. Since 108 B.C.E., there has been a historical record of villages or cities on or near the city's present-day site. Legend places Pyongyang's founding as early as 1122 B.C.E.

4. Volcanic eruptions and earthquakes pose major threats in North Korea.

False

Volcanic eruptions and earthquakes do not pose major threats in North Korea. The country's most devastating natural disasters involve extremes in precipitation: too much rain or not enough rain.

5. The tallest mountains are in the southern parts of the country.

False

The tallest peaks lie in the north. These mountains include Mount Paektu, North Korea's highest point at 2,744 m (9,003 ft).

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

Overview

During most of the 10 centuries prior to the division of the Korean Peninsula in 1945, much of Korea was unified under single successive dynasties. Modern-day North Korean cities such as Kaesong and Pyongyang played important governmental roles in the early periods of this era; as did the present-day South Korean capital of Seoul. Because of North Korea's proximity to Manchuria (Northeast China), its cities have at times been within border regions between the Korean states of the South and the Manchurian tribal states of the North.



© PHGCOM / Wikipedia.org
Korean earthenware vessel
Ca. 4000 BC

Origins

Scholars know little about the first humans who inhabited the Korean Peninsula. The earliest artifacts from the Neolithic Era (c. 7000 B.C.E.) demonstrate the existence of small settlements along rivers and coastal areas.^{77, 78, 79} Korean legend dates the founding of its civilization to the third millennium B.C.E. According to the legend, Tangun, the offspring of a god and a bear-woman, was born on Mount Paektu. In 2333 B.C.E. Tangun became the first king of Kochosun (Old Chosun). Another legend suggests that the Chinese sage Kija came to Korea in the 10th or 11th century B.C.E. and founded the Kija Chosun dynasty.^{80, 81}

By the fourth century B.C.E., a number of walled-town states had developed along the Taedong River in northwestern Korea (modern-day North Korea) and the Liao River in southern Manchuria. This federation of states lost all its Manchurian territory to the Chinese state of Yan in the third century B.C.E. Between 194 and 180 B.C.E., General Wiman gained control of Kochosun, beginning a brief period of territorial expansion during an era known as the Wiman Chosun. By 108 B.C.E., Chinese Han Dynasty forces swept down from the north, taking control of the Korean Peninsula as far south as the Han River Valley in modern-day South Korea. The Han Chinese subsequently divided Wiman Chosun into four commanderies (local administrative units), the most important

⁷⁷ Alison Behnke, *South Korea in Pictures* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company, 2005), 18.

⁷⁸ Christopher L. Salter, *Modern World Nations: South Korea* (Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publishers, 2005), 35.

⁷⁹ Metropolitan Museum of Art, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, "Korea, 8000–2000 B.C.," October 2000, <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/?period=02®ion=eak>

⁸⁰ Alexandre Y. Mansourov, "Will Flowers Bloom Without Fragrance? Korean-Chinese Relations," *Harvard Asia Quarterly* X, no. 2 (Spring 2006), <http://asiaquarterly.com/2008/02/01/ii-153/>

⁸¹ Hyung Il Pai, *Constructing "Korean" Origins: A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State-Formation Theories* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, July 2000), 117–18.

of which was Lelang (Nangnang), whose capital was located near present-day Pyongyang.⁸²

Paekjae, Kaya, and Silla

South of the Han River, several villages formed three loose federations known as the Samhan. They consisted of Pyonhan in the south central region, Mahan in the southwest, and Chinhan in the southeast. The Samhan paid tribute to the Lelang commandery and traded iron with Chinese neighboring states.⁸³ For three or four centuries, three more centralized states (Paekjae, Kaya, and Silla) dominated and eventually absorbed the Samhan states.



Cheonmado, only surviving picture of the Silla kingdom
Courtesy of Wikipedia

The Paekjae Kingdom conquered the Mahan, eventually expanding northward into the area near Seoul in present-day South Korea. The Kaya Federation evolved from the Pyonhan confederacy and thrived because of its advanced iron industry and sea trade. In the sixth century, Paekjae and Silla conquered and divided Kaya.⁸⁴ The Silla Kingdom unified later than either Paekjae or Kaya, consolidating and expanding the earlier Chinhan federation within a hereditary monarchy established in the fourth century.⁸⁵

Goguryo and the Three Kingdoms

North of the Korean Peninsula, the powerful Goguryo Kingdom emerged around the second century C.E.⁸⁶ By 313, Goguryo forces had conquered a large portion of Manchuria and taken control of Lelang to the south, placing them adjacent to the Paekjae Kingdom. For 350 years, Goguryo, Paekjae, and Silla battled for supremacy on the Korean Peninsula, an era known as the Period of the Three Kingdoms. Silla and Paekjae formed several temporary alliances against stronger Goguryo, interrupted by periods in which they fought against each other.⁸⁷

⁸² Metropolitan Museum of Art, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, “China, 1000 B.C.–1 A.D.,” October 2000, <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ht/?period=04®ion=eac>

⁸³ Hyung Il Pai, *Constructing “Korean” Origins: A Critical Review of Archaeology, Historiography, and Racial Myth in Korean State-Formation Theories* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, July 2000), 231.

⁸⁴ Ki-baek Yi, *A New History of Korea*, trans. Edward W. Wagner and Edward J. Shultz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 41.

⁸⁵ Bruce G. Cumings, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting,” in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 6–7, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

⁸⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Koguryō,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/321038/Koguryo>

⁸⁷ Bruce G. Cumings, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting,” in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 6–12, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

Chinese forces of the Sui and Tang dynasties took part in these ongoing battles, waging attacks against both the Goguryo and Paekjae kingdoms. Goguryo won several spectacular victories against the Chinese forces but found itself weakened by the fighting. Silla forces routed them in 668, eight years after Paekjae had fallen in a combined attack by the Silla and Tang armies. After defeating Goguryo, Silla turned its military attention toward the Tang Dynasty. By 676, Silla's armies had driven Tang forces north of the Taedong River, which flows through Pyongyang, marking the first time a single dynasty unified the Korean Peninsula.⁸⁸



© don.lee
Paekche tiles, 7th century

Impact of the Three Kingdoms Era

The Period of the Three Kingdoms was one of remarkable political and societal changes on the Korean Peninsula. Powerful aristocracies developed around tribal chiefs who established themselves in the capitals of the kingdoms. The aristocrats were divided into classes of varying power and privilege based on societal position. In Silla, for example, the *kolpum* (bone rank) system based political power on bloodlines. Only those paternally descended from the Kim and Pak clans could enter the ruling elite.⁸⁹



© ddol-mang / Wikipedia.org
Shamanism in Korean history

Prior to the Period of the Three Kingdoms, shamanism was the native religion practiced on the Korean Peninsula. In 372, a Chinese monk introduced Buddhism to Goguryo royalty, who quickly embraced it as the state religion, blending it easily with shamanistic traditions and beliefs. Buddhism also became the state religion of Paekjae, and although leaders of Silla were more resistant, by 527 that kingdom's aristocratic hierarchy had embraced Buddhism.⁹⁰

The Unified Silla Dynasty and Parhae

While the Silla Dynasty unified the southern two-thirds of Korea for more than 250 years, Parhae dominated the area north of the Taedong River. Originally known as the Chin Kingdom, Parhae was founded in 698 by Tae Cho-yong, a former Goguryo general.⁹¹ Most of this kingdom lay in Manchuria and was populated by the local Malgal people (ancestors of the Manchu) and exiled Goguryo aristocrats. By 720, Parhae forces

⁸⁸ Bruce G. Cumings, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 8–11, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

⁸⁹ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 46.

⁹⁰ Buddhism Today, "Buddhism in Korea," *Korean Buddhism Magazine*, 1997, <http://www.buddhismtoday.com/english/world/country/027-korea.htm>

⁹¹ Bill Caraway, "Chapter 3: Paekche and Silla: Unified Silla," Korean History Project, 2012, <http://www.koreanhistoryproject.org/Ket/C03/E0304.htm>

had moved southward, conquering the tribes of modern-day northwest North Korea.⁹² These actions led Silla to build a line of fortifications in 721 to guard against further advances of Parhae forces. This northern boundary followed a path stretching along the Taedong River in the west to Wonsan Bay in the east—making Pyongyang a border outpost.⁹³

Silla and Parhae paid tribute to Tang China and remained heavily influenced by its culture.^{94, 95} Both states sent students, administrators, and monks to China for study. The experiences and training that these students brought home were blended into indigenous Korean cultures.⁹⁶ Trade between China and Silla flourished. Gold, silver, ginseng, and textiles were exported to China in exchange for books, tea, swords, and ceremonial items.⁹⁷

Period of the Later Three Kingdoms

Silla's central governmental authority began to decline in the last half of the eighth century as local warlords emerged and banditry spread across the countryside. By the beginning of the 10th century, two warlords, Kyonhwon and Kungye, controlled most of Silla except for the far southeastern region near the capital of Kyongju. Kyonhwon and Kungye declared themselves kings of the regions they controlled, using the historic names Paekjae and Goguryo, respectively, for their kingdoms. Historians refer to this time as the Period of the Later Three Kingdoms to distinguish it from the period of the earlier incarnations of the Parhae and Goguryo kingdoms. During the warlords' rule, the Korean Peninsula was subjected to more than three decades of open warfare among the three powers.



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Portrait of a government officer
late Koryŏ dynasty

In 918, Kungye was removed by one of his generals, Wang Kon, who shortened the name of the kingdom from Goguryo to Koryo, which is the origin of the English word *Korea*.^{98, 99} Wang Kon's forces were ultimately joined by the troops of Kyonhwon, who himself had been removed as the leader of

⁹² Bill Caraway, "Chapter 3: Paekche and Silla: Unified Silla," Korean History Project, 2012,

<http://www.koreanhistoryproject.org/Ket/C03/E0304.htm>

⁹³ Michael J. Seth, "Chapter 3: United Silla," in *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 66.

⁹⁴ Bruce G. Cumings, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 11–12,

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

⁹⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Parhae," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/443541/Parhae>

⁹⁶ Bruce G. Cumings, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 11–12,

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

⁹⁷ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 64–65.

⁹⁸ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 53.

Parhae by his oldest son. With further military assistance from Parhae refugees from the north (whose kingdom had been conquered by the Mongol Khitan tribes in 926), Wang Kon's army defeated Paekjae in 936, after having earlier obtained Silla's surrender. With this victory, the Korean Peninsula once again came under unified rule, this time as the Koryo Kingdom under the Wang Dynasty.

Koryo

Wang Kon carefully cultivated the allegiance of Parhae, Silla, and Paekjae leaders.^{100, 101} To further establish the authenticity of his leadership, Wang married a Silla princess and bestowed on himself the title Chonsu (Mandate of Heaven), a philosophy of heaven-granted rule that the Chinese had long used to legitimate their rulers.¹⁰²

Under Wang, the Koryo capital was moved to Songak (modern-day Kaesong), much nearer to the center of the kingdom. Pyongyang, which had declined during the unified Silla era, became a secondary capital, named Sogyong (Western Capital). From there, Koryo extended its authority northward to the Amnok (Yalu) River, the modern-day border between China and North Korea.¹⁰³

Koryo was unable to fend off Mongol threats from the north. In 1231, Mongol forces carried out the first of numerous invasions of Koryo.¹⁰⁴ Koryo's military rulers were overthrown in 1258. The peace agreement with the Mongols required Koryo kings to intermarry with Yuan princesses, effectively making Koryo a vassal state of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty. Koryo military leaders revolted against the Mongol-supported monarchy in 1269, inviting further Mongol military intervention.¹⁰⁵ By 1273, the Mongols had overcome the last vestiges of Koryo military resistance.^{106, 107}

In the 1350s, violent uprisings in central and southern China forced the Mongol Yuan Dynasty to flee northward in 1368. The



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Avalokiteshvara, 1310
Koryo dynasty of Korea



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Qgadal Khan
leader of the Mongol invasions

⁹⁹ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 75.

¹⁰⁰ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 54.

¹⁰¹ Mary E Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara: CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 16.

¹⁰² Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 76.

¹⁰³ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 76–77.

¹⁰⁴ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 63–65.

¹⁰⁵ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 107.

¹⁰⁶ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 65–66.

¹⁰⁷ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 107.

successor Ming Dynasty continued to battle Yuan forces to the north, contributing to a series of political and military events that within a few decades ushered in Korea's longest-lasting dynasty.¹⁰⁸

In 1388, Koryo military leader General Choe Yong attacked Ming forces in Manchuria. One of his deputies, Yi Song-gye, commanded some of the expeditionary forces. After reaching the Amnok River, Yi returned to Kaegyong, where he killed Choe Yong and deposed King U. Four years later, Yi proclaimed himself king, establishing the Yi Dynasty. Yi changed the name of the Koryo state to Chosun, and Hanyang (modern-day Seoul) became the new capital.¹⁰⁹



© Jjw / Wikipedia.org
Tomb of General Ch'oe Yŏng

Early Chosun

During the early years of the Chosun Kingdom, several substantive transformations were carried out in Korean society. Neo-Confucianism, a rationalist philosophy that expounded rules for governance and societal behavior based on the “moral principles that governed the universe,” became dominant in academic study.¹¹⁰ Buddhism, on the other hand, fell into official disfavor, in part because of the close association of its priests with the hereditary aristocracy of the Koryo period.¹¹¹ As part of overall land reform, the state confiscated the large holdings of the Buddhist temples. A government-enacted Rank Land Law bolstered its financial status by ensuring that a greater percentage of land use taxes were deposited in state coffers.¹¹² But Chosun land reform policies did not result in the abolition or even reduction of private land ownership. Rather, the reform policies further consolidated land resources vis-à-vis the *yangban*, a class of civil and military officials who were required to pass civil service examinations demonstrating their knowledge of the Confucian texts and their neo-Confucian interpretations.¹¹³ Under the Rank Land Law, the *yangban* came to possess much of the privately held land in the region around the capital.¹¹⁴ The *yangban*



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Taejo, first king of Chosŏn Dynasty

¹⁰⁸ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 112.

¹⁰⁹ DJun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 72.

¹¹⁰ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 125.

¹¹¹ DJun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 71.

¹¹² John B. Duncan, *The Origins of the Chosŏn Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 209.

¹¹³ Donald M. Seekins, “Chapter 2: The Society and Its Environment,” in *South Korea: A Country Study*, eds. Andrea Matles Savada and William Shaw (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1990), <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/kptoc.html>

¹¹⁴ John B. Duncan, *The Origins of the Chosŏn Dynasty* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 210.

also accumulated wealth through slave ownership, a practice that was a significant part of Korean society until its abolition in 1894.¹¹⁵

A high point of the early Chosun period was the reign of King Sejong (1418–1450). This was a time of political stability and economic prosperity, highlighted by numerous cultural and scientific achievements. During this time the first Korean alphabet, *Hangul*, was developed; prior to its introduction, the Korean language could be written only by using Chinese characters (*Hanja*), a difficult process for most people. In addition, during Sejong's time on the throne, the state's northern border, largely defined by the Amnok and Tumen rivers, became fixed. Borderlands were colonized and militarily reinforced to ensure that they would be respected. This border is still the boundary between North Korea and its neighbors, China and Russia.¹¹⁶



© Kai Hendry
Tomb of King Sejong

The Imjin War

In 1592, Japanese military leader Toyotomi Hideyoshi, having recently unified Japan, launched an invasion of Korea as part of a larger goal of conquering China. Japanese forces quickly overran the kingdom as the Chosun royal court fled the capital and traveled to the Chinese border near the mouth of the Amnok River. While peasant armies led by *yangban* leaders fought a guerrilla war against the Japanese, the Japanese Navy suffered significant defeats by Admiral Yi Sun-sin, who commanded a fleet of the world's first armor-plated ships, known as *kobukson* (turtle ships).¹¹⁷ The war came to a stalemate after Yi's naval forces and the Chinese Ming Dynasty Army forced the Japanese Army into the southeastern tip of the Korean Peninsula. A second unsuccessful Japanese military invasion in 1597, again thwarted by Yi's heavily outnumbered fleet, eventually led to the Japanese withdrawal from the peninsula.¹¹⁸

The Imjin War, as this conflict came to be known, left much of Korea devastated by Japanese scorched-earth tactics. It also created a lingering resentment and fear of the Japanese that Japanese colonization of the Korean Peninsula refueled more than 300 years later.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 161.

¹¹⁶ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 75–76.

¹¹⁷ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 140–41.

¹¹⁸ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 82–83.

¹¹⁹ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 141–42.

The Manchus

As Korea recovered from the Imjin War, the Manchus, a Jurchen tribal group from the north, began their assaults on Ming China, which ultimately resulted in the rise of the Manchu's Qing as the next Chinese dynasty. The pro-Ming Chosun royal court found itself on the losing side of this struggle for control of China; as a result, Manchu forces invaded Korea in 1627 and 1636. In the second invasion, the Chosun king was captured at his refuge on Kanghwa Island and the Chosun Kingdom was made a tributary state of Qing China.¹²⁰



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Kanghwa Island

Like the Japanese, the Koreans viewed the Manchus as barbarians. The Koreans outwardly maintained loyalty to the Qing Dynasty over the succeeding centuries, but their resentment of Qing rule was never far beneath the surface.^{121, 122}

Isolation

Following the Manchu invasions, Korea increasingly isolated itself from the world (as did many of its neighbors in East Asia during this time). But Korea, having suffered through invasions by Manchus, Mongols, and the Japanese, probably took the most extreme measures to keep itself apart from the outside world.¹²³ For this reason, some Westerners during the 19th century referred to the Chosun Dynasty as the “hermit kingdom.”¹²⁴ In reality, outside influences seeped into the peninsula; Christianity, for example, was introduced via Korean envoys returning from tributary and diplomatic missions to the Chinese capital of Beijing, where Jesuit scholars were in residence.¹²⁵ In 1785, the Chosun royal court declared Catholicism heretical to Confucian doctrine, an action that led to the execution of 300 converts in 1801.¹²⁶

In 1864, Yi Ha-ung, father of 11-year-old King Kojong, took control of Chosun as Taewongun (Grand Prince) until his son came of age. During the next 10 years, he continued the fight to suppress outside influences. In 1866, nine French Jesuit priests who had smuggled themselves onto the peninsula were executed, as were thousands of Korean converts to Catholicism, prompting a fleet of French warships to briefly invade Kanghwa Island.¹²⁷

¹²⁰ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 141–42.

¹²¹ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 143.

¹²² Mary E. Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 26.

¹²³ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 211–12.

¹²⁴ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 212–13.

¹²⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Korea: Korea Since c. 1400: The Chosŏn (Yi) Dynasty: The Introduction of Roman Catholicism,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/693609/Korea>

¹²⁶ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 101.

¹²⁷ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 103.

That same year, the merchant ship *USS General Sherman*, seeking trade and armed with cannons, sailed up the Taedong River to Pyongyang, defying the Chosun ban on foreign vessels. The ship found itself beached after the river's abnormally high waters receded; thereafter, accounts differ about what happened and who bore responsibility for the events. In the end, the ship was burned and the entire crew killed.¹²⁸ Five years later, five U.S. warships launched a punitive attack on Kanghwa Island, but—like the earlier French expedition—the forces left after encountering strong resistance.¹²⁹



US NAVY Photo
USS General Sherman

Foreign Influence

France and the United States were not the only nations seeking access to, and influence over, Korea. Soon after young King Kojong took control of the throne in 1874, the Japanese initiated their own attack on Kanghwa Island after their trade entreaties were denied. This military intimidation led to a treaty in 1876, giving the Japanese commercial access to Korean ports. There soon followed a number of similar treaties between Korea and the United States, Britain, Russia, and other countries. These pacts were encouraged by the Chinese, who saw the Western powers as an effective deterrent against the Japanese gaining too much influence in Korea.¹³⁰ Importantly, the treaties with the Western nations explicitly acknowledged Korea's tributary status with China.¹³¹



© futureatlas.com
Japanese naval flag

But the Western treaties did not put an end to the Japanese-Chinese rivalry over Korea. In 1894, a rebellion by members of the Donghak religious movement (a group that rejected the Neo-Confucian doctrine that had long characterized Korean societal organization) led to the incursion of Japanese and Chinese troops into Korea. The resulting Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 ended quickly in a Japanese victory.¹³² After the war, Japan forced China to accept Korea's independence, although in practice this meant that Korea was now within Japan's sphere of influence, rather than China's. Numerous internal reforms were passed under Japanese pressure, including the abolition of slavery, the end of the *yangban* civil service system, and the introduction of a modern judicial system.

¹²⁸ Douglas C. Sterner, "The Hermit Kingdom and the General Sherman Incident," Home of Heroes, 2008, http://www.homeofheroes.com/wallofhonor/korea1871/2_hermit.html

¹²⁹ Michael J. Seth, *A Concise History of Korea: From the Neolithic Period Through the Nineteenth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 222.

¹³⁰ Bruce G. Cumings, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 24–29, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

¹³¹ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 106–7.

¹³² Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 110–11.

The Decline of Chosun

Near the end of the 19th century, King Kojong tried to reassert his royal authority and put a halt to the reform efforts. Fearing Japanese plots against him, he aligned himself with Russia, and even ruled Korea for a year while in refuge at the Russian legation in the capital. He later reemerged as self-proclaimed Emperor of Taehan (Great Han), but the colonial maneuverings of Japan and Russia dominated the last years of his rule. War broke out between the two powers in 1904, and Japan's decisive victory over the Russian Baltic fleet at the Battle of Tsushima Strait in May 1905 led Russia to accept a peace negotiation.¹³³ In the Treaty of Portsmouth, which concluded the Russo-Japanese War, Russia conceded Japan's territorial rights in Korea. With China and Russia now out of the picture—and the United States having negotiated a secret agreement to leave Japan alone in Korea in return for Japanese noninterference in the Philippines—Korea's future status as a Japanese colony became inevitable.^{134, 135}



Courtesy of Wikipedia
King Kojong

Japanese Colonization

Japan annexed Korea in 1910, which ended the Chosun Dynasty. Shortly after, a Korean resistance fighter assassinated Ito Hirobumi (the former Japanese Prime Minister who had only recently resigned as Resident-General of Korea) in Manchuria.¹³⁶ The next 35 years hardened Korean feelings toward their colonial overlords, and remnants of this bitterness exist in Korea to this day.¹³⁷ Japanese rule was brutally oppressive during the early years after Korean annexation, but Western powers such as the United States, Britain, and France, preoccupied with World War I after 1914, were not inclined to reproach their Asian ally.^{138, 139}



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Opening of railway from
Seoul to Pusan

After World War I ended, nationwide demonstrations swept across Korea, initiated by a rally in Seoul in which a Korean Declaration of Independence, signed by 33 religious leaders, was recited.¹⁴⁰ Although the protests failed to produce Korean independence, they helped bring about nominally less

¹³³ History.com, "This Day in History: The Battle of Tsushima Strait," 2012, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history.do?action=Article&id=5039>

¹³⁴ Mary E. Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 35.

¹³⁵ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 120–21.

¹³⁶ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 124–25.

¹³⁷ Esther Pan, "Japan's Relationship With South Korea," Council on Foreign Relations, 27 October 2005, http://www.cfr.org/publication/9108/japans_relationship_with_south_korea.html

¹³⁸ Mary E. Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 38.

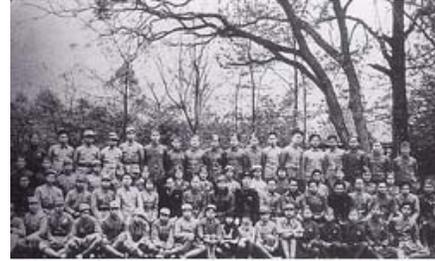
¹³⁹ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 130.

¹⁴⁰ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 126–30.

militaristic rule in Korea and some reforms. Tight censorship controls were loosened, and educational opportunities for Koreans were increased.¹⁴¹

World War II

In the early 1930s, Japan's military increasingly dominated its government. In 1931, Japanese forces seized Manchuria and created a puppet state. Korea became a logistical base for the Manchurian operation, which in 1937 evolved into the second Sino-Japanese War. During this period of Japanese occupation, colonial forces instituted repressive measures to assimilate Koreans into Japanese culture. Koreans were required to adopt Japanese surnames, and all schools were directed to use Japanese for instruction.¹⁴² Worship at Japanese-built Shinto shrines became mandatory.¹⁴³



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Korean Liberation Army

After Japan joined the Axis Powers and brought the United States into World War II with its surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, many Koreans were mobilized into forced military conscription or compulsory labor in mines and factories. Korean resistance fighters fled the Korean Peninsula and neighboring Manchuria. One of their young military commanders was Kim Song Ju, a Communist who took the name Kim Il Sung before retreating to a training camp near the Soviet city of Khabarovsk in January 1941. According to a Soviet military official who groomed Kim for a future leadership position, Kim's new name was the name of a legendary anti-Japanese Korean guerrilla fighter.¹⁴⁴

Formation of North Korea

After the second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August 1945, followed a few days later by Japanese surrender, the Soviet Union agreed to the United States' proposal that the Korean Peninsula be divided along the 38th parallel and that each nation temporarily occupy a section.¹⁴⁵ In the North, the Soviet Union named Kim Il Sung leader of the new interim government; he quickly became head of the North Korean Bureau branch of the Korean Communist Party, which was independent from the Korean Communist Party branch south of the 38th parallel.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 130–31.

¹⁴² Mary E. Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 41.

¹⁴³ Wm. Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, and Arthur Tiedemann, *Sources of Japanese Tradition: 1600 to 2000*, vol. 2, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 797.

¹⁴⁴ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 135–36.

¹⁴⁵ Mary E. Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 43.

¹⁴⁶ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 146.

By 1948, the realities of Cold War geopolitics had pushed aside most thoughts about reunifying Korea. In South Korea, longtime anti-Japanese resistance figure and ardent anti-Communist, Syngman Rhee, was elected president. The election took place only after a May 1948 parliamentary election that was boycotted by several key political figures because of its ramifications for the permanent separation of North and South.^{147, 148} Following the South Korean elections, Kim Il Sung was nominated after one-party elections to be premier of the newly formed Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). In addition, Pak Honhyong, former head of the Communist Party in the South, took two positions: vice premier and foreign minister.



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Syngman Rhee

The 1948 elections were followed by a leftist-led guerrilla war in South Korea that the Rhee government, using Japanese colonial collaborators as police officers, eventually suppressed.¹⁴⁹ By the spring of 1950, the rebellion in the South had quieted. But only months later, North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel, starting the Korean War, in which hostilities lasted for three years.

The War and Its Immediate Aftermath

Between the invasion in June 1950 and the signing of the armistice in July 1953, millions of North and South Koreans were killed in fighting that spread to nearly every corner of the peninsula. In addition, more than 33,000 U.S. forces, fighting alongside the South Koreans, were killed, representing about 90% of the total deaths of UN forces. China, which supported the North Korean forces, lost hundreds of thousands of soldiers.¹⁵⁰



© Christopher Rose
The Freedom Bridge

The war witnessed several retreats and advances by both sides, but by the conclusion of hostilities, the two Koreas remained divided by a border that followed roughly the prewar 38th parallel division.¹⁵¹ The border zone became known as the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), and continues to be one of the most heavily guarded and defended borders in the

¹⁴⁷ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 153.

¹⁴⁸ Dae-Sook Suh, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 97–98.

¹⁴⁹ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005) 154.

¹⁵⁰ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 155.

¹⁵¹ Chong-Sik Lee, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting,” in *South Korea: A Country Study*, eds. Andrea Matles Savada and William Shaw (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1992), <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/krtoc.html>

world.¹⁵² It should be noted that the 1953 armistice put a halt only to active combat; technically, North and South Korea are still at war.^{153, 154}

After the war, North Korea was left in tatters. About two-fifths of its industrial facilities, largely built during the Japanese occupation, were destroyed, and one-third of all homes were left in ruins.¹⁵⁵ Kim instituted a 3-year plan, followed by a 5-year plan that focused on rebuilding the heavy industrial infrastructure of the country.¹⁵⁶ The Soviet Union and China were important contributors of economic aid that helped carry out the rebuilding of the country.

Cult of Personality

The postwar period also saw Kim consolidate his position as unchallenged leader through a series of purges. Pak Honyong and several others associated with the Communist Party in the southern part of Korea were charged in show trials. They were convicted of being American spies and put to death. Leaders of two factions of the North Korean Communist Party (renamed the Korean Workers' Party) were either expelled from power or driven into exile because of connections to Soviet and Chinese communism.¹⁵⁷



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Kim Il Sung portrait

With North Korea economically dependent on, and geographically lodged between the world's two largest communist states—the Soviet Union and China—Kim Il Sung was careful to maintain cordial relations with both nations. But maintaining neutrality in relations with the two powers became more difficult as a Sino-Soviet political rift began to develop in the late 1950s.¹⁵⁸ During this period, the tenets of Kim Il Sung's philosophy of *juche*, or self-reliance, began to be stressed, most likely stemming in part from his concern over Chinese or Soviet influences on North Korean internal politics.¹⁵⁹

North Korea during the late 1950s and 1960s began to rewrite its history, idealizing Kim Il Sung's role in the formation of the state and placing great emphasis on his extensive

¹⁵² Philip Walker, "The World's Most Dangerous Borders," *Foreign Policy*, 24 June 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/06/24/the_worlds_most_dangerous_borders?page=0.8

¹⁵³ Chong-Sik Lee, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting," in *South Korea: A Country Study*, eds. Andrea Matles Savada and William Shaw (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1992), <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/krtoc.html>

¹⁵⁴ Andrew C. Nahm, "History: Korea After Reunification," in *An Introduction to Korean Culture*, eds. John H. Koo and Andrew C. Nahm (Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym, 1997), 92–94.

¹⁵⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Korea: Korea Since c. 1400: The Korean War: Armistice and Aid," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/693609/Korea>

¹⁵⁶ Mary E. Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 58.

¹⁵⁷ Bruce G. Cumings, "Chapter 1: Historical Setting," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 40–42, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

¹⁵⁸ Dae-Sook Suh, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 179.

¹⁵⁹ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 159.

wisdom and the heroic achievements of his family. As this cult of personality developed, North Koreans began to call Kim Il Sung *suryong* (Great Leader), a title previously reserved for the Soviet leaders Lenin and Stalin.¹⁶⁰

Military Buildup, Economic Decline, and Succession

Kim Il Sung increasingly felt threatened by South Korea's modernized military and security alliance with the United States and Japan. More money was allocated to defense spending, and by 1971 defense spending accounted for 30% of the national budget.^{161, 162} North Korean attempts at subversion and infiltration across the DMZ, including a 1968 failed assassination attempt of South Korean President Park Chung Hee, increased during this period. In 1968, North Korea also seized the U.S. intelligence ship, USS *Pueblo*, off its Sea of Japan coast, holding its crew for 11 months.^{163, 164}



During the 1970s and into the 1980s, North Korea's economy began to decline significantly as foreign aid began to decrease, technological obsolescence hindered industrial development, and oil and energy shortages became chronic.¹⁶⁵ In 1976, North Korea defaulted on its debts to Japan and West European countries; it defaulted again in 1980 after its foreign loans were restructured.^{166, 167} The situation worsened in 1991, when the Soviet Union, North Korea's biggest supplier of aid, ceased to exist.

Kim Il Sung died in 1994, shortly after agreeing to freeze North Korea's nuclear weapons program in exchange for a U.S. promise to assist in building light water nuclear power reactors designed to increase energy production.^{168, 169} His son, Kim Jong Il, became the nation's new leader. He did not inherit his father's position of president, a title that was retired upon Kim Il Sung's death. Instead, Kim Jong Il retained his position as chairman

¹⁶⁰ Dae-Sook Suh, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 197.

¹⁶¹ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 165.

¹⁶² Global Security, "China's Defense Budget: China's 'Official' Budget," 3 April 2012, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/china/budget.htm>

¹⁶³ Global Security, "North Korea-South Korea Tensions," 7 November 2011, http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/north_korea2.htm

¹⁶⁴ History.com, "This Day in History: USS Pueblo Captured," 2012, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/uss-pueblo-captured>

¹⁶⁵ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 170.

¹⁶⁶ Mary E. Connor, *The Koreas: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 59.

¹⁶⁷ Joseph S. Chung, "Chapter 3: The Economy," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Andrea Matles Savada (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1994), <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/kptoc.html>

¹⁶⁸ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 170.

¹⁶⁹ Bradley K. Martin, *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader: North Korea and the Kim Dynasty* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2006), 497.

of the National Defense Commission, expanding the position's powers to make it the highest in the state.

During Kim Jong Il's period of rule, some observers noted that the North Korean system seemingly changed from a party dictatorship to a military dictatorship.¹⁷⁰ Since the late 1990s, the guiding tenet of *songun* (military first) has become a prominent aspect of the *juche* ideology.¹⁷¹ The strongly militaristic message has manifested itself most dangerously in North Korea's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons. In February 2005, the North Korean Foreign Ministry announced that the country now had nuclear weapons.¹⁷²

North Korea Today

After taking power, Kim Jong Il faced serious problems trying to revive the nonproductive North Korean economy. Famine conditions from 1995 to 1997 drew attention to the country's inability to provide basic necessities. Since 2002, modest economic reforms have been implemented. But the nation still suffers from a lack of outside investment and limited ability to carry out foreign trade to meet its needs. Despite its *juche* message of self-reliance, North Korea has found itself increasingly dependent on foreign aid, primarily in the form of food shipments and fuel oil from the United States, South Korea, Japan, and China.¹⁷³



© www.kremlin.ru
Kim Jong-il and Vladimir Putin

North Korea's nuclear weapons program, including the development of rocket-based delivery systems, continues to dominate the country's relations with its immediate neighbors and Western nations. An ongoing series of disarmament discussions, the Six-Party Talks (consisting of North Korea, South Korea, Russia, Japan, China, and the United States), have been carried out since North Korea withdrew from the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2003. Over the course of these talks, North Korea agreed to disable its nuclear development facilities at Yongbyon, although the negotiation of terms for verification inspections developed into a stalemate. In October 2008, the United States removed North Korea from its State Sponsors of Terrorism list after North Korea agreed to give inspectors access to declared nuclear sites.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Bradley K. Martin, *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader: North Korea and the Kim Dynasty* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2006), 485.

¹⁷¹ Choe Sang-Hun, "Pyongyang Pushes 'Army-First' Policy," *New York Times*, Asia Pacific, 2 August 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/02/world/asia/02iht-army.2363688.html?_r=2

¹⁷² Daniel A. Pinkston, "North Korea's Foreign Policy Towards the United States," *Strategic Insights* 5, no. 7 (September 2006),

<http://www.nps.edu/Academics/centers/ccc/publications/OnlineJournal/2006/Sep/pinkstonSep06.html>

¹⁷³ Mark E. Manyin, "Foreign Assistance to North Korea" (report, Congressional Research Service, 26 May 2005), 6–8, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/r131785.pdf>

¹⁷⁴ Paul Richter, "U.S Drops North Korea from Terrorism List After New Deal," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 October 2008, <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/oct/12/world/fg-norkor12>

In late 2008, after Kim Jong Il had disappeared from public view for several months, it was widely reported that he had suffered a stroke. Speculation immediately arose concerning his potential successor. In February 2009, reports surfaced from both North and South Korea that the youngest of Kim Jong Il's three sons, Kim Jong Un, had been selected to succeed his father.¹⁷⁵

Transitioning to New Leadership: Kim Jong Un

In 2010, the North continued its confrontational policies with the South, seriously escalating tensions. In March, the North Korean Navy allegedly sank a South Korean warship, and, in November, fired on the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong, killing two marines and two civilians and wounding others. Satellite images showed renewed nuclear efforts. Later that year, Kim promoted his youngest son, Kim Jong Un, to the rank of four-star general and appointed him to a senior government position, increasing speculation that he was the heir apparent. Serious inflation gripped the nation and the food situation worsened. Although the political situation remained stable, defectors continued to find their way out of the country.¹⁷⁶



Kim Jong Il died in December 2011. Kim Jong Un, named “supreme leader” by the People’s National Assembly on 29 December, succeeded him. On 31 December, he was named commander of the Korean People’s Army.¹⁷⁷ In April 2012, the Korean Workers’ Party declared Kim “supreme leader” and First Secretary of the party. One of Kim Jong Un’s first political acts was to agree to suspend the testing of nuclear weapons. He agreed to suspend the country’s uranium enrichment program and allow international inspectors to examine North Korean facilities. All this was part of a deal designed to get desperately needed food aid. Two months later, in April 2012, North Korea launched what it claimed was a satellite rocket. International condemnation was swift, and many believed this was simply a way to test the nation’s long-range missile capacity. The launch failed shortly after takeoff.¹⁷⁸

Changes in top leadership under Kim Jong Un are taking place. He is replacing older military leaders with younger party members believed to be loyal to him. Kim appears to be following previous policy toward South Korea, accusing its government of engaging

¹⁷⁵ Richard Lloyd, “Kim Jong Il Anoints Next Leader of North Korea—His Youngest Son,” *Times*, 20 February 2009, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/asia/article2609742.ece>

¹⁷⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “North Korea: Year in Review 2010,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1741292/North-Korea-Year-In-Review-2010>

¹⁷⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “North Korea: Year in Review 2011,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1804208/North-Korea-Year-In-Review-2011>

¹⁷⁸ *New York Times*, “Kim Jong-un,” 12 April 2012, http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/k/kim_jongun/index.html

in anti-North behavior.¹⁷⁹ Longstanding threats to attack the South have become more specific in recent months. Analysts speculate that Kim Jong Un may initiate military provocations with the South in order to secure his position.¹⁸⁰ It remains to be seen whether the young Kim can firmly cement his authority. Meanwhile, there is increased uncertainty about the nation's future.^{181, 182}

¹⁷⁹ *New York Times*, "Kim Jong-un," 12 April 2012,

http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/k/kim_jongun/index.html

¹⁸⁰ Choe Sang-Hun, "North Korea Threatens South with Military Action," *New York Times*, 23 April 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/24/world/asia/north-korea-threatens-seoul-with-military-action.html?ref=kimjongun>

¹⁸¹ Choe Sang-Hun, "This Time, A Less Predictable Pyongyang," *New York Times*, 18 April 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/19/world/asia/this-time-a-less-predictable-pyongyang.html?ref=kimjongun>

¹⁸² Bill Keller, "The Day After," *New York Times*, 29 April 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/30/opinion/keller-the-day-after.html?ref=kimjongun#>

Chapter 2 Assessment

1. The Period of the Three Kingdoms was an era of remarkable political and societal changes on the Korean Peninsula.

True

Powerful aristocracies developed around tribal chiefs who settled in the capitals of the kingdoms. The aristocrats occupied classes of differing power and privilege based on their societal position. Buddhism replaced traditional shamanism.

2. The name of the kingdom of Goguryo was shortened to Koryo, which is the origin of the English word *Korea*.

True

In the early 10th century, Wang Kon shortened the name of the kingdom of Goguryo to Koryo, which is the origin of the modern word *Korea*.

3. During the early years of the Chosun Kingdom, Korean society remained essentially static.

False

Several major transformations were carried out in Korean society. Neo-Confucianism, a philosophy that expounded rules for governance and societal behavior, became dominant in academic study. Buddhism fell into official disfavor. Land reform policies brought wealth and power to the *yangban*, a class of civil and military officials.

4. In the Treaty of Portsmouth, Japan conceded Russia's territorial rights in Korea.

False

In the treaty, which concluded the 1904–05 Russo-Japanese War, Russia conceded Japan's territorial rights in Korea.

5. At the conclusion of hostilities in the Korean War, the two Koreas were separated by a border that followed roughly the prewar 38th parallel division.

True

This border zone is the Demilitarized Zone, or DMZ, which continues to be one of the most heavily guarded borders in the world. North and South Korea are still technically at war.

CHAPTER 3: ECONOMY

Introduction

North Korea's state-run, centrally planned economy remains significantly isolated from the rest of the world's economy. Because North Korea's economy has sputtered over the last few decades, partly because of the loss of aid from neighboring Russia and China, the government has begun to initiate modest economic reforms, including the development of joint business ventures with foreign corporations.



© (stephan) / flickr.com
Inside a department store, P'yongyang, North Korea

By most accounts, these economic ties have led to some improvements in North Korea's overall economy in recent years, although progress has been less evident in some parts of the country. Whether Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea, will continue to pursue reforms and outside investment or pull back—fearing the political repercussions of North Koreans' increasing awareness of, and interaction with, the outside world—remains to be seen. One early sign that the Kim regime was worried about losing its political grip because of the reforms was the government's decision in October 2005 to reinstitute governmental food rationing, reversing the trend of several years in which the barter and selling of food in private markets had increasingly become the norm.¹⁸³

The new government, under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, has sought more foreign investment to prop up the nation's economy. In June 2011, before Kim Jong Un assumed leadership of North Korea, the nation had announced its intention to create a free trade zone on Hwanggumpyong and Wihwa islands near its border with China. (An economic zone near Rason already exists.) North Korea hopes that investment from China will fuel the growth of these projects, especially in infrastructure and transportation. Each of these sites is relatively isolated, ensuring that activities will not disrupt or “contaminate” other policies by the government. The new laws establishing the operations in these zones have the potential to further open investment to South Korea and Japan.^{184, 185}

¹⁸³ Human Rights Watch, “North Korea: Policy Changes May Foster New Hunger,” 5 May 2006, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2006/05/03/north-korea-policy-changes-may-foster-new-hunger>

¹⁸⁴ 38 North, U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, “China's Embrace of North Korea: The Curious Case of the Hwanggumpyong Island Economic Zone,” 19 February 2012, <http://38north.org/2012/02/hgp021712/>

¹⁸⁵ Bradley O. Babson, “Will North Korea's Plans for Foreign Investment Make It a More Prosperous Nation?” 38 North, U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, 2 May 2012, <http://38north.org/2012/05/bbabson050212/>

Industry and Manufacturing and Services

Prior to the partition of the Korean Peninsula in 1945, northern Korea was the site of most of Korea's heavy industry, whereas warmer, less mountainous southern Korea was the center of agricultural production and light industries such as textiles. Northern industries were oriented toward processing raw materials and creating semifinished goods, which were shipped to Japan for final processing.¹⁸⁶ After the Korean War, during which a large percentage of North Korea's industries had been heavily damaged, North Korea funneled much of its redevelopment effort into reconstructing and expanding its heavy industries, especially metals and chemicals.¹⁸⁷



© yeogigeogi / flickr.com
Consumer goods for export

Today, industry accounts for about 44% of GDP (gross domestic product), and the industrial sector remains heavily dependent on mineral resources.¹⁸⁸ The mining industry is one of the largest contributors to the economy despite unrealized potential because of a lack of infrastructure and materials.¹⁸⁹ North Korea produces iron and steel, machinery, chemicals, and textiles. Other manufactured products include armaments, vehicles, glass, ceramics, and some consumer goods (such as processed food and clothes).¹⁹⁰ The development of the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) just north of the South Korean border, where cheap North Korean labor is used to produce consumer goods such as watches and shoes for South Korean companies, has broadened the light manufacturing base of North Korea. These products are produced for export, mostly to South Korea.^{191, 192}

Even though the service industry is the country's most undeveloped economic sector, services account for about 33% of GDP.^{193, 194} Most activity in this sector comes from financial services and the small tourism industry.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁶ David Kang, "Chapter 3: The Economy," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 136,

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

¹⁸⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The Economy," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

¹⁸⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "Korea, North: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

¹⁸⁹ Choi Kyung-soo, "The Mining Industry of North Korea," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 23, no. 2 (June 2011): 211–30, http://www.kida.re.kr/data/kjda/05_Choi%20Kyung-soo.pdf

¹⁹⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The Economy: Manufacturing," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

¹⁹¹ Mark E. Manyin and Dick K. Nanto, "The Kaesong North-South Korean Industrial Complex" (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 April 2011), 5–9, 12, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34093.pdf>

¹⁹² Daniel J. Knudsen and William J. Moon, "North Korea and the Politics of International Trade Law: the Kaesong Industrial Complex and WTO Rules of Origin," *Yale Journal of International Law* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 251–52, <http://www.yjil.org/docs/pub/35-1-knudsen-moon-korea-kaesong.pdf>

¹⁹³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Korea, North: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012,

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

Agriculture

Over the last two decades, North Korea has struggled to produce enough food to feed its people. In most years, imports and aid shipments of basic grains have been necessary to avoid famine conditions. A relatively good harvest in 2008 eliminated fears of a massive shortfall, but the country continues to remain only one bad harvest away from another food crisis.¹⁹⁶ Geography is certainly a significant part of the problem, as North Korea's northern climate shortens growing seasons and the mountainous terrain in the center of the country is generally not suitable for growing crops. Grains are the principal crops grown in agricultural areas: rice is grown primarily in the southwestern part of the country and corn is grown in the coastal plains of the northeast.¹⁹⁷



© Kok Leng Yeo
The Chonsam Cooperative Farm

Cooperatives organize farm production, with management committees overseeing all aspects of farm activity, from seeding to harvesting.¹⁹⁸ The cooperatives deliver farm harvests to the government, which handles the distribution of food. When production dropped dramatically in the mid-1990s after years of floods, the government implemented several reforms to help stimulate agricultural productivity. These included streamlining farm work teams, loosening price restrictions to help spur increased production of cash crops, and decreasing usage of nitrogen-based fertilizers, which were overused and depleting soil fertility.^{199, 200} Potatoes were encouraged as a substitute crop for rice and corn crops because they are better suited to North Korea's climate and have higher nutritional value.²⁰¹ In recent years, the government has begun to allow some "private farmers" to sell more products at prices close to market prices.²⁰² Nevertheless,

¹⁹⁴ Dick K. Nanto and Emma Chanlett-Avery, "North Korea: Economic Leverage and Policy Analysis" (report, Congressional Research Service, 4 June 2009), <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/125938.pdf>

¹⁹⁵ Jana Kasperkevic, "A Brief and Fascinating Guide to North Korea's Economy," Business Insider, 6 January 2012, <http://www.businessinsider.com/north-korea-facts-economy-2012-01?op=1>

¹⁹⁶ Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, "The North Korean Food Situation: Too Early to Break Out the Champagne," *Asia Pacific Bulletin* 27 (5 February 2009), <http://www.nkeconwatch.com/nk-uploads/haggard-noland-champagne.pdf>

¹⁹⁷ Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, "The North Korean Food Situation: Too Early to Break Out the Champagne," *Asia Pacific Bulletin* 27 (5 February 2009), <http://www.nkeconwatch.com/nk-uploads/haggard-noland-champagne.pdf>

¹⁹⁸ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The Economy: Agriculture," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

¹⁹⁹ Woon-Keun Kim, "The Agricultural Situation of North Korea," Food and Fertilizer Technology Center, 1 September 1999, http://www.agnet.org/library.php?func=view&style=&type_id=4&id=20110726131553&print=1

²⁰⁰ Jamie Miyazaki, "North Korea's Potato Gambit," Asia Times Online, 14 September 2004, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/FI14Dg04.html>

²⁰¹ Jamie Miyazaki, "North Korea's Potato Gambit," Asia Times Online, 14 September 2004, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/FI14Dg04.html>

²⁰² GlobalTrade.net, "International Trade in North Korea," 2012, <http://www.globaltrade.net/m/c/North-Korea.html>

recent statements by Kim Jong Un suggest that there will be no significant or new efforts to revitalize the agricultural sector.²⁰³

Fishing

Fish is the most important source of protein in North Korean diets. Fishing fleets operate out of ports on both of North Korea's coasts; pollack, sardines, mackerel, herring, pike, and shellfish are some of the fish species that are caught.²⁰⁴ In March 2012, Kim Jong Un stopped exporting North Korean marine products to China, demanding that China send corn to aid in the food crisis.²⁰⁵

Forestry

Large areas of forest still exist in North Korea's northern interior, but its near-coastal areas have been essentially deforested. Most forest cutting currently carried out is for firewood.²⁰⁶ However, a limited amount of raw timber is exported to China.^{207, 208}

Banking and Currency

Accurate, up-to-date information about North Korea's banking sector is difficult to obtain. By at least one estimate, as many as 20 banks of various types and sizes may exist in the country.²⁰⁹ Foremost among these is the Central Bank of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is responsible for issuing and regulating the won, the nation's currency, and for carrying out most governmental banking transactions. The Central Bank also audits all usage of state funds, including commercial transactions.^{210, 211}



Courtesy of Technology Integration - DLIFLC
North Korean Won

²⁰³ Randall Ireson, "Developing the DPRK Through Agriculture," 38 North, U.S.-Korea Institute at SAIS, 8 February 2012, <http://38north.org/2012/02/rireson020812/>

²⁰⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The Economy: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

²⁰⁵ Koichiro Ishida, "N. Korea Stops Seafood Exports to China, Asks for Corn," Asahi Shimbun, 12 March 2012, http://ajw.asahi.com/article/asia/korean_peninsula/AJ201203120041

²⁰⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The Economy: Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

²⁰⁷ Li Dunqiu, "Economic and Social Implications of China-DPRK Border Trade for China's Northeast" (paper, Regional Implications of DPRK Security Behavior: The "Bold Switchover" Concept Conference, Beijing, 18–19 January 2006), http://www.nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/PSA/BS_Conf06_Li.pdf

²⁰⁸ Gong Keyu, "Current China-DPRK Relations," *Global Review* (Spring 2012): 78, http://www.sis.org.cn/Sh_Yj_Cms/Mgz/201201/201246153155AT98.DOC

²⁰⁹ Stephen Timewell, "Small Steps Towards the Real World," *Banker*, 5 December 2005, <http://www.thebanker.com/World/Asia-Pacific/North-Korea/Small-steps-towards-the-real-world?ct=true>

²¹⁰ North Korean Economy Watch, U.S. Embassy, Seoul, "North Korean Financial Institutions (loads of Info)," April 1995, <http://www.nkeconwatch.com/2002/03/05/north-korean-financial-institutions-loads-of-info/>

The Foreign Trade Bank is the other major governmental bank, and its responsibilities focus on handling all foreign exchange transactions and on monitoring the nation's foreign exchange reserves. It also sets foreign exchange rates.²¹²

Over the last two decades, several banks that are partly or wholly funded through foreign investment have opened, providing foreign currency banking operations for companies, organizations, and individuals doing business in North Korea.^{213, 214}

One state-owned bank that has drawn negative attention is the Danchon Commercial Bank (also known as the Korea Changgwang Credit Bank). According to charges made by the U.S. Treasury Department, Danchon is the primary financial conduit through which North Korea handles its sales of arms and ballistic missiles to other countries. For this reason, the Treasury Department placed the bank on its blacklist, resulting in the freezing of its assets in U.S. banks and a ban on any future transactions between Danchon and U.S. citizens or banks.²¹⁵

Trade

North Korea is not a member of the World Trade Organization or the International Monetary Fund, the principal world bodies responsible for developing trade guidelines and compiling trade statistics.²¹⁶ North Korea had a negative trade balance in 2011.²¹⁷ Major imports include petroleum, coking coal, machinery and equipment, textiles, and grains. Exports include minerals, metallurgical products, textiles, and agricultural and fishery products.^{218, 219}



© Prince Roy
Fishing in the Yalu river

²¹¹ David Kang, "Chapter 3: The Economy," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2008), 162–63, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

²¹² Stephen Timewell, "Small Steps Towards the Real World," *Banker*, 5 December 2005, <http://www.thebanker.com/World/Asia-Pacific/North-Korea/Small-steps-towards-the-real-world?ct=true>

²¹³ Naenara, "Law on Foreign-Invested Bank," *North Korean Economy Watch*, 11 February 2008, <http://www.nkeconwatch.com/category/policies/law-of-the-dprk-on-foreign-invested-bank/>

²¹⁴ David Kang, "Chapter 3: The Economy," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 162–63, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

²¹⁵ Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, U.S. Department of State, "Executive Order 13382," 3 July 2008, <http://www.state.gov/t/isn/c22080.htm>

²¹⁶ Marcus Noland, "Chapter 6: North Korea's External Economic Relations: Globalization in 'Our Own Style'," in *North Korea and Northeast Asia*, eds. Samuel S. Kim and Tai Hwan Lee (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), 165–94.

²¹⁷ Trading Economics, "North Korea," 21 March 2012, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113428.pdf

²¹⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "Korea, North: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

²¹⁹ Directorate General for Trade of the European Commission, "North Korea," 21 March 2012, http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2006/september/tradoc_113428.pdf

China is North Korea's most significant trading partner, accounting for as much as 70% of its foreign trade.^{220, 221} Much of North Korea's trade with China is based on energy imports and exports. China is North Korea's largest provider of crude oil and other oil products, while North Korea is a net exporter of coal and electricity to China.^{222, 223} North Korea also imports meat, machinery, plastics, and grains from China, while being a net exporter to China of seafood, ores (primarily iron ore), iron and steel, and woven clothing.²²⁴ In recent years, more of China's manufactured consumer goods have been flowing across the border and reaching North Korea's informal markets.^{225, 226}

Two-way trade between North and South Korea was legalized in 1988. South Korea was for years one of North Korea's most significant trading partners. In 2010, nearly 37% of North Korean exports were bound for South Korea and about 20% of all imports were from South Korea.^{227, 228} The KIC, where North Koreans employed by South Korean companies assemble products primarily for sale in South Korea, was responsible for a significant portion of this trade. Noncommercial trade, usually in the form of goods supplied by South Korea for humanitarian purposes or for use in inter-Korean cooperation projects, also accounted for a high percentage of the total bilateral trade between the two Koreas.^{229, 230} Following the sinking of a South Korean warship by the North in 2011, all trade between the Koreas was suspended except for the KIC. But in January 2012, South Korea offered to restart economic cooperation with the North,

²²⁰ Central Intelligence Agency, "Korea, North: Economy," in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

²²¹ Jeremy Page, "Trade Binds North Korea to China," *Wall Street Journal*, 24 December 2011, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203686204577116162967853258.html>

²²² Dick K. Nanto and Mark E. Manyin, "China-North Korea Relations" (report, Congressional Research Service, 28 December 2010), 16, <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41043.pdf>

²²³ Nathaniel Aden, "North Korean Trade with China as Reported in Chinese Customs Statistics: 1995–2009 Energy and Minerals Trends and Implications," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 23, no. 2 (June 2011), http://www.kida.re.kr/data/kjda/06_Nathaniel%20Aden.pdf

²²⁴ Nathaniel Aden, "North Korean Trade with China as Reported in Chinese Customs Statistics: 1995–2009 Energy and Minerals Trends and Implications," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 23, no. 2 (June 2011), http://www.kida.re.kr/data/kjda/06_Nathaniel%20Aden.pdf

²²⁵ Esther Pan, "North Korea's Capitalist Experiment," Council on Foreign Relations, 8 June 2006, http://www.cfr.org/publication/10858/north_koreas_capitalist_experiment.html

²²⁶ Stephan Haggard, Marcus Noland, and Erik Weeks, "North Korea on the Precipice of Famine" (policy brief, Peterson Institute for International Economics, May 2008), 10–12, 14–16, <http://www.iie.com/publications/papers/noland0508.pdf>

²²⁷ Dick K. Nanto, "Increasing Dependency: North Korea's Economic Relations with China," in *Korea's Economy 2011*, vol. 27, eds. Florence Lowe-Lee and Troy Stangarone (Korea Economic Institute of America, 2011), 77, http://67.227.178.49/sites/default/files/publications/30848_nanto_sp.pdf

²²⁸ Marcus Noland, "Chapter 6: North Korea's External Economic Relations: Globalization in 'Our Own Style,'" in *North Korea and Northeast Asia*, eds. Samuel S. Kim and Tai Hwan Lee (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002), 165–94.

²²⁹ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: North Korea," 4 April 2012, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2792.htm>

²³⁰ Mark E. Manyin and Dick K. Nanto, "The Kaesong North-South Korean Industrial Complex" (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 April 2001), 5–9, 12, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34093.pdf>

pending the suspension of North Korea's nuclear program. North Korean officials rejected the offer.²³¹

North Korea's negative trade balance is offset by both foreign aid and unreported sources of trade revenue, such as arms and missiles sales, illegal drug trafficking, and counterfeit currency.^{232, 233} Estimates vary widely about how much foreign currency these unreported sources bring in, but a detailed 2009 report concluded that North Korea's revenues from both arms/missiles and illicit exports were declining in the 2000s.²³⁴

Investment

There is little foreign direct investment in North Korea, mostly because of international sanctions. The North Korean government prohibits foreigners from establishing any enterprise, including publishing, broadcasting, and telecommunications, that it regards as a threat to its national economy. It also prohibits any business that fails to conform to national security policy. Infrastructural development, hotel construction, and telecommunications are attracting the most attention, largely from South Korea, China, and Japan.²³⁵



© Mimura / Wikipedia.org
Kaesong Industrial Complex

South Korean Investment

Most recent foreign direct investment in Korea has been through South Korean companies, many of which have built manufacturing facilities at the KIC. The South Korean government has provided significant financial support for the Kaesong project by way of subsidies, guarantees, and low-interest-rate loans provided to companies that open operations in the KIC.²³⁶ The largest private investor in Kaesong is Hyundai Asan Corporation, a South Korean company that also made a large investment in North Korean

²³¹ Jiyeon Lee, "South Korea Ready for 'New Era' of Relations with North, President Says," CNN U.S., 1 January 2012, http://articles.cnn.com/2012-01-01/asia/world_asia_south-korea-president-speech_1_pyongyang-national-defense-commission-lee-myung-bak?_s=PM:ASIA

²³² Edward M. Graham, "How North Korea Finances Its International Trade Deficit: An Educated Guess," *Korea's Economy* 2007 23 (2007): 79–81, <http://www.keia.org/sites/default/files/publications/17.Graham.pdf>

²³³ Dick K. Nanto, "Increasing Dependency: North Korea's Economic Relations with China," in *Korea's Economy 2011*, vol. 27, eds. Florence Lowe-Lee and Troy Stangarone (Korea Economic Institute of America, 2011), 77, http://67.227.178.49/sites/default/files/publications/30848_nanto_sp.pdf

²³⁴ Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, "Follow the Money: North Korea's External Resources and Constraints" (working paper, Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2009), <http://www.iie.com/publications/papers/noland-haggard02081.pdf>

²³⁵ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: North Korea," 4 April 2012, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2792.htm>

²³⁶ Mark E. Manyin and Dick K. Nanto, "The Kaesong North-South Korean Industrial Complex" (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 April 2011), 5–9, 12, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34093.pdf>

tourism through its construction of a resort near Mount Kumgang.²³⁷ North Korea seized all Hyundai Asan assets in Mount Kumgang late in 2011 and is trying to launch its own tourism efforts in the resort area.²³⁸

Chinese Investment

Additional foreign investment in North Korea comes from China. By one estimate, about 200 Chinese companies have invested in North Korea, including joint venture projects that are now manufacturing items such as bicycles, running shoes, clothing, beverages, television sets, and personal computers.²³⁹ About 70% of China's direct investment is in mining.²⁴⁰ Unlike the South Korean investments, which are part of the overall government policy of economic engagement with the North as a means of normalizing political relations, Chinese investments are strictly business decisions, pursued by companies that conclude that economic opportunities in North Korea outweigh the political risks involved.²⁴¹

Taepung International Investment Group announced that it had partnered with North Korea on transportation infrastructure projects and the construction of electric power plants. China is a major investor in the group, contributing nearly USD 10 billion.²⁴²

Other Investment

One of the more active recent investors in North Korea is the Egyptian-based telecommunications company Orascom Telecom, which in 2008 launched Koryolink, North Korea's first mobile phone system. The company also opened a bank in North Korea to handle payments from subscribers to the system.²⁴³ An unusual aspect of the deal involved the company acquiring the exclusive license to North Korea's mobile phone service by committing, through its affiliate Orascom Construction, to complete the 105-story Ryugyong Hotel in Pyongyang by 15 April 2012 (the 100th anniversary of the birth of former North Korean leader Kim Il Sung).²⁴⁴ In January 2012, the hotel remained

²³⁷ James Brooke, "An Industrial Park in North Korea Nears a Growth Spurt," *New York Times*, 28 February 2006,

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/28/business/worldbusiness/28park.html?_r=2&pagewanted=print

²³⁸ Yonhap News Agency, "North Korea Newsletter No. 174," 8 September 2011,

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2011/09/07/18/0401000000AEN20110907008600325F.HTML>

²³⁹ Ting-I Tsai, "Filling North Korea's Bare Shelves," *Asia Times*, 10 January 2007,

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/IA10Dg01.html>

²⁴⁰ Investment Watch, "WantChinaTimes [sic]: 70% of Chinese Investments in North Korea in Mining," 21 April 2012, <http://investmentwatchblog.com/wantchinatimes-70-of-chinese-investments-in-north-korea-in-mining/#.T7GSmMWQIsI>

²⁴¹ Peter Ritter, "Risky Business," *Time Magazine World*, 20 September 2007,

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1663635,00.html>

²⁴² Kim So-hyun, *Korea Herald*, "North Korea Desperate for Foreign Investment," *Asia One News*, 4 March 2010, <http://www.asiaone.com/News/Latest+News/Asia/Story/A1Story20100304-202397.html>

²⁴³ Tarek Al-Issawi, "Orascom Telecom of Egypt Opens Bank in North Korea (Update2)," *Bloomberg*, 16 December 2008,

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601087&sid=ayACO0S5c80g&refer=home>

²⁴⁴ Donald Kirk, "Orascom Gets into Pyramid Business," *Asia Times*, 23 December 2008,

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/JL23Dg01.html>

vacant. The pyramid-shaped hotel, the most striking landmark on Pyongyang's skyline, sat vacant and unfinished for 16 years until Orascom resumed work on it in 2008. Estimates in the South Korean media have suggested that it may take as much as USD 2 billion to complete the hotel and make it safe for use.^{245, 246}



Energy and Mineral Resources

Energy

North Korea does not currently produce any crude oil or natural gas, although numerous efforts have been made to discover economically viable offshore deposits.^{247, 248} Thus, most of the country's current oil needs are met via imports from China. In addition, the United States, China, Russia, and South Korea have been shipping heavy fuel oil to North Korea since 2007. These shipments are part of the continuing Six-Party Talks on nuclear disarmament, although they were suspended in December 2008 because of a lack of progress on verification protocols.²⁴⁹

North Korea has a moderately large amount of coal deposits.²⁵⁰ Still, the nation's coal production has dropped dramatically since its peak in the mid-1980s.^{251, 252} Coal produces as much as 70% of the nation's primary energy, with the remaining percentage generated via numerous hydroelectric facilities or oil-burning facilities.^{253, 254}

²⁴⁵ Jon Herskovitz, "North Korea's 'Hotel of Doom' Wakes From Its Coma," Reuters, 17 July 2008, <http://www.reuters.com/article/rbssTechMediaTelecomNews/idUSSEO9654020080717>

²⁴⁶ Mark Strauss, "A Fabulous New Luxury Hotel—in North Korea?" Smithsonian.com, March 2012, <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/A-Fabulous-New-Luxury-Hotel-In-North-Korea.html>

²⁴⁷ Keun Wook Paik, "North Korea and Seabed Petroleum" (paper, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 7 July 2011), 1–11, http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/docs/Keun_Wook_Paik.pdf

²⁴⁸ John C. Wu, "The Mineral Industry of North Korea," in *2007 Minerals Yearbook* (U.S. Geological Survey, December 2009), 14.1, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2007/myb3-2007-kg.pdf>

²⁴⁹ David Gollust, "U.S. Says Fuel Oil Shipments to North Korea Suspended," Voice of America, 27 October 2009, <http://www.voanews.com/content/a-13-2008-12-12-voa38-66805077/374039.html>

²⁵⁰ John C. Wu, "The Mineral Industry of North Korea," in *2007 Minerals Yearbook* (U.S. Geological Survey, December 2009), 14.1, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2007/myb3-2007-kg.pdf>

²⁵¹ Energici, "Korea, North Energy Profile," 2010, <http://www.energici.com/energy-profiles/by-country/asia-m-z/north-korea>

²⁵² Nathaniel Aden, "North Korean Trade with China as Reported in Chinese Customs Statistics: 1995–2009 Energy and Minerals Trends and Implications," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 23, no. 2 (June 2011), http://www.kida.re.kr/data/kjda/06_Nathaniel%20Aden.pdf

²⁵³ Robert F. Ash (based on an earlier article by Joseph S. Chung), "Economy," in *Regional Surveys of the World: The Far East and Australasia*, 34th ed. (London: Routledge, 2003), 674.

²⁵⁴ David Kang, "Chapter 3: The Economy," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 146–47, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

Minerals

Iron ore, magnesite, and zinc are some of the most economically important minerals mined in North Korea and have the most extensive reserves.²⁵⁵ Other mineral products that contribute to North Korea's economy include copper, graphite, limestone, lead, salt, gold, and tungsten. In recent years, during the rule of Kim Jong Il, North Korea started issuing leases or forming joint ventures with foreign partners to develop mining operations for some of these rich deposits. Chinese and South Korean companies, in particular, have been active in securing mineral development deals.²⁵⁶

Most of North Korea's iron ore production occurs in the far northeast near the city of Musan, just across the border in China.²⁵⁷ In 2006–2007, there were conflicting reports that the rights to these deposits, which are extracted in Asia's largest open-air iron mine, had been sold to Chinese interests.^{258, 259}

Magnesite, which is used in the production of various heat-resistant materials, is mined in areas around the northeastern city of Danchon, where it is also processed into the derivative product magnesia clinker (magnesium powder molded into highly heat-resistant, solid form).²⁶⁰ Overall, North Korea is the world's third-largest producer of magnesite.²⁶¹

The region around Danchon is also the location of North Korea's largest zinc mine. In recent years, North Korea's zinc exports to China and South Korea have jumped significantly.²⁶² Zinc exports to South Korea alone doubled between 2006 and 2007.²⁶³ Gold production has increased in recent years. Mines in Hamgyeongnam and Hwanghaebuk provinces are currently operating.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁵ John C. Wu, "The Mineral Industry of North Korea," in *2007 Minerals Yearbook* (U.S. Geological Survey, December 2009), 14.1, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2007/myb3-2007-kg.pdf>

²⁵⁶ Blaine Harden and Ariana Eunjung Cha, "N. Korea Cashes In on Mineral Riches," *Washington Post*, 24 February 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/23/AR2008022300695.html>

²⁵⁷ John C. Wu, "The Mineral Industry of North Korea," in *2007 Minerals Yearbook* (U.S. Geological Survey, December 2009), 14.1, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2007/myb3-2007-kg.pdf>

²⁵⁸ John C. Wu, "The Mineral Industry of North Korea," in *2007 Minerals Yearbook* (U.S. Geological Survey, December 2009), 14.1, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2007/myb3-2007-kg.pdf>

²⁵⁹ Lee Jong-Heon, "China Taps North Korea Resources," *Energy Daily*, 4 May 2007, http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/China_Taps_North_Korea_Resources_999.html

²⁶⁰ Robert F. Ash (based on an earlier article by Joseph S. Chung), "Economy," in *Regional Surveys of the World: The Far East and Australasia*, 34th ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), 671.

²⁶¹ John C. Wu, "The Mineral Industry of North Korea," in *2007 Minerals Yearbook* (U.S. Geological Survey, December 2009), 14.1, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2007/myb3-2007-kg.pdf>

²⁶² Blaine Harden and Ariana Eunjung Cha, "N. Korea Cashes In on Mineral Riches," *Washington Post*, 24 February 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/23/AR2008022300695.html>

²⁶³ John C. Wu, "The Mineral Industry of North Korea," in *2007 Minerals Yearbook* (U.S. Geological Survey, December 2009), 14.1, <http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/2007/myb3-2007-kg.pdf>

²⁶⁴ Choi Kyung-soo, "The Mining Industry of North Korea," *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 23, no. 2 (June 2011): 211–30, http://www.kida.re.kr/data/kjda/05_Choi%20Kyung-soo.pdf

Standard of Living

While foreign organizations or governments conduct all estimates of North Korea's gross domestic product per capita (PPP), which thus are based on unofficial data, these estimates generally show that North Korea has the lowest GDP per capita in East Asia and one of the lowest in Asia.²⁶⁵ According to estimates, the per capita income in North Korea is approximately USD 1,800.²⁶⁶ There is some evidence that economic reforms introduced in the early 2000s helped raise some of the qualitative indicators, such as more goods on store shelves and fewer power outages, that suggest a general improvement in the standard of living. But food, electricity, clean water, and access to adequate healthcare remain in short supply in some parts of the country, as indicated by reports of North Korean refugees and the few foreigners who have visited these regions.^{267, 268} Unsanctioned street markets have helped bring needed food and goods to some cities, although the prices are often out of reach for many residents.^{269, 270} The reinstatement of food rationing has decreased the role of the markets in feeding the population.



© (stephan) / flickr.com
Inside a department store, P'yongyang, North Korea

In 2009, the government devalued the national currency, the won, in an effort to halt inflation and spur economic growth. Instead, the reforms—which resulted in worthless money—led to an increase in homelessness and suicides.^{271, 272} The failed devaluation worsened both the small market economy and food shortages. The government executed

²⁶⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, “GDP: Per Capita (PPP),” in *The World Factbook*, 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>

²⁶⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, “Korea, North: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

²⁶⁷ Bruce Wallace, “North Korea Marks a 60th Anniversary,” *Los Angeles Times*, 19 October 2005, http://articles.latimes.com/2005/oct/19/world/fg-pyongyang19?s=o&n=o&sessid=c65e161c9339d40e288a2c03f0e28fe1bce3b82c&pg=0&pgtp=article&eagi=&page_type=article&exci=2005_10_19_world_fg-pyongyang19

²⁶⁸ Barbara Demick, “Glimpses of a Hermit Nation,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3 July 2005, http://articles.latimes.com/2005/jul/03/world/fg-chongjin3?s=g&n=n&m=Broad&rd=www.google.com&tnid=1&sessid=c65e161c9339d40e288a2c03f0e28fe1bce3b82c&pgtp=article&eagi=&page_type=article&exci=2005_07_03_world_fg-chongjin3&pg=1

²⁶⁹ Barbara Demick, “Trading Ideals for Sustenance,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 July 2005, <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-chongjin4jul04,1,4415409.story>

²⁷⁰ Blaine Harden, “At the Heart of North Korea’s Troubles, An Intractable Hunger Crisis,” *Washington Post*, 6 March 2009, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/05/AR2009030503613_pf.html

²⁷¹ Julian Ryall, “North Korea’s Undercover Journalists Reveal Misery of Life in Dictatorship,” *Telegraph*, 28 November 2010, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/southkorea/8165274/North-Koreas-undercover-journalists-reveal-misery-of-life-in-dictatorship.html>

²⁷² Central Intelligence Agency, “Korea, North: Economy,” in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

the official who led the reform plan.²⁷³ The country faces serious food shortages again in 2012, although they will not reach the disastrous levels of the famines of the 1990s.²⁷⁴

Human rights, as measured by freedoms of speech, religion, press, and assembly, are severely restricted in North Korea. The Ministry of Public Security (MPS) and the State Security Department (SSD) carry out internal policing. North Koreans arrested by the state security forces on charges of political crimes are sent directly to detention camps without trial.^{275, 276} Torture in the camps is common, although North Korea's UN representative denies such claims.^{277, 278}

Tourism

Tourism has never been a significant component of the North Korean economy. Although the government allows visitors into the country, the application process can be daunting. The government highly restricts travel by visitors, who must be accompanied by an official guide at all times.²⁷⁹



© Bryan Hughes
Tourism in North Korea

In 1989, during a brief thaw in relations between North and South Korea, the Hyundai Asan Corporation signed a joint venture agreement with the North Korean government to develop a tourist resort centered at Mount Kumgang, located near the eastern end of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).²⁸⁰ Nearly a decade later the resort opened. By 2007, it was attracting 350,000 visitors a year, mostly from South Korea, and had recorded several years of profitability.²⁸¹ Unfortunately, as is often the case in commerce between North and South Korea, politics took precedence over economics. A South Korean tourist was

²⁷³ Associated Press, "North Korea Executes Finance Official Pak Nam Gi Over Botched Currency Reform: Report," *New York Daily News*, 18 March 2010, http://articles.nydailynews.com/2010-03-18/news/27059414_1_currency-reform-lee-seung-yong-north-korea

²⁷⁴ Allen Wagner and David Schlangen, "An Interview with Clark Sorensen," National Bureau of Asian Research, 24 April 2012, <http://www.nbr.org/research/activity.aspx?id=238>

²⁷⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "2008 Human Rights Report: Democratic People's Republic of Korea," 25 February 2009, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/eap/119043.htm>

²⁷⁶ Human Rights Watch, "World Report 2011: North Korea," 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2011/north-korea>

²⁷⁷ Eliane Engeler, "UN Expert: North Korea Commits Widespread Torture," Huff Post World, 16 March 2009, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/huff-wires/20090316/un-un-north-korea/>

²⁷⁸ Human Rights Watch, "World Report 2011: North Korea," 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/world-report-2011/north-korea>

²⁷⁹ Smartraveller, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "Democratic People's Republic of Korea Overall," 15 February 2012, http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/North_Korea

²⁸⁰ Susan Chira, "The Two Koreas Agree to Develop Resort in North," *New York Times*, 2 February 1989, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=950DE4DC1638F931A35751C0A96F948260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>

²⁸¹ Moon So-young, "Tourism Boost to North in Works," *JoongAng Daily*, 5 February 2008, http://article.joinsmsn.com/news/article/article.asp?total_id=3034423&cloc=

shot and killed in July 2008 after wandering into a restricted military area adjacent to a Kumgang resort beach, and immediately the two governments became embroiled in a war of words over the event.²⁸² Hyundai Asan, who also operated day tours to the historical city of Kaesong for nearly a year until North Korean officials suspended such trips in December 2008, announced in February 2009 that it was nearing bankruptcy, in part because of revenue losses at the Kumgang resort.^{283, 284} In 2011, North Korea announced that it was ending its contract with Hyundai Asan for operating Mount Kumgang tours and seized South Korean properties, announcing that the North would redevelop the facilities.^{285, 286} North Korea has recently reopened the site for international tourism.^{287, 288, 289}

Transportation

Most North Koreans walk or use bicycles for personal transportation because cars are an unaffordable luxury for the average citizen. Those traveling between cities mostly do so via public transport, either train or bus. Travel permits are officially required for North Koreans who wish to travel between counties or provinces, although in practice many North Koreans simply move about the country illegally.²⁹⁰

North Korea's mountainous geography limits transportation connections between the eastern and western sides of the country. A single east-west main rail line links Pyongyang to the country's eastern coast at Wonsan, from which a separate railway runs northward along the coast to the Russian border. Other north-south rail lines connect the North Korean capital with major cities on the western side of the country, and some separate branch lines splinter off to mining centers.²⁹¹



© Kok Leng Yeo
A bicyclist near the Taedong River

²⁸² North Korea Economy Watch, "(Updated) South Korean Tourist Fatally Shot at Kumgang," 13 August 2008, <http://www.nkeconwatch.com/2008/07/21/south-korean-tourist-fatally-shot-at-kumgang/>

²⁸³ Jean H. Lee, Associated Press, "North Korea to End Southerner Visits to Kaesong," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 November 2008, <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/11/25/MNEU14B3KG.DTL&hw=jean+lee+associated+press&sn=004&sc=494>

²⁸⁴ Institute for Far Eastern Studies, "IFES February 2009 Recap," North Korea Economy Watch, 3 March 2009, <http://www.nkeconwatch.com/2009/03/05/ifes-february-2009-recap/>

²⁸⁵ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: North Korea," 4 April 2012, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2792.htm>

²⁸⁶ Yonhap News Agency, "North Korea Newsletter No. 174," 8 September 2011, <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2011/09/07/18/0401000000AEN20110907008600325F.HTML>

²⁸⁷ Zhang Yan and Liu Mingtai, "DPRK Tourist Site Soon Opens to Chinese Visitors," China Daily.com.cn, 21 March 2012, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-03/21/content_14876174.htm

²⁸⁸ Lu Hui, "DPRK to Open Mt. Kumgang to Int'l Tourists," Xinhua News, 1 April 2012, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-04/01/c_131503242.htm

²⁸⁹ Financial Info, "Korea Will Open to Visitors in April, the Mount Kumgang Tourism [sic]," 2 April 2012, <http://www.financialinfo.co/korea-will-open-to-visitors-in-april-the-mount-kumgang-tourism.html>

²⁹⁰ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: Economy: Transportation," 2012, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-34935>

²⁹¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: Economy: Transportation," 2012, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-34935>

International air travel to and from North Korea is via Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport. Air Koryo is the national air carrier. It schedules flights to several international destinations.^{292, 293} Air Koryo also handles domestic air transportation on a charter basis to various military-civilian joint-use airfields. The only other commercial airline serving North Korea is Air China, which schedules a few weekly flights between Beijing and Pyongyang.²⁹⁴

North Korea's road system, because of the shortage of fuels and automobiles, is less important in transporting goods and people than is rail transit. Less than 10% of the country's roads are paved; the exceptions are the express highways that connect Pyongyang with Nampo, Wonsan, and Kaesong, as well as a few other segments (such as the recently constructed road connecting South Korea with the KIC).^{295, 296}

The Amnok (Yalu) and Taedong rivers, both of which empty into the Yellow Sea, and the Chaeryong River, a tributary of the Taedong, are the most important North Korean rivers for transporting agricultural and mining products. Major coastal ports are located at Nampo, Haeju, and Tasa on the Yellow Sea, and Wonsan, Hungnam, Chongjin, and Najin on the Sea of Japan.²⁹⁷

Business Outlook

Kim Jong Il's autocratic regime long proclaimed the message of self-reliance, or *juche*. But the North Korean need for outside developmental assistance to repair its crumbling industrial and mining infrastructure, and for hard currency to finance its import needs, made the 2000s the "era of the joint ventures" in Korea. The results to date have been mixed.²⁹⁸ Given the government's disinclination to allow foreign influence, some of these new ventures



© (stephan) / flickr.com
North Korean children

have resulted in a clash of cultures and business failure. Even the most successful joint ventures, such as the KIC, are vulnerable to the ever-shifting political winds between North and South Korea. This trend has been especially evident since the 2007 election of

²⁹² Nordkorea-Info.de, "Air Koryo," 2012, <http://www.nordkorea-info.de/tourismus/air-koryo>

²⁹³ Laura Jackson, "Air Service in North Korea: A Short Story," Official Airline Guide (OAG), 9 April 2009, <http://www.oagtravel.com/Travel-News/Archive-2008/October/Air-Service-in-North-Korea-A-Short-Story>

²⁹⁴ Laura Jackson, "Air Service in North Korea: A Short Story," Official Airline Guide (OAG), 9 April 2009, <http://www.oagtravel.com/Travel-News/Archive-2008/October/Air-Service-in-North-Korea-A-Short-Story>

²⁹⁵ Jamie Miyazaki, "Where Are North Korea's Shenzhens?" Asia Times, 24 October 2003, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/EJ24Dg01.html>

²⁹⁶ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "North Korea: Economy: Transportation," 2012, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-34935>

²⁹⁷ Encyclopædia Britannica Online, "North Korea: Economy: Transportation," 2012, <http://search.eb.com/eb/article-34935>

²⁹⁸ Peter Ritter, "Risky Business," Time Magazine World, 20 September 2007, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1663635,00.html>

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, who has taken a relatively tough stance with the Kim government.^{299, 300}

North Korea's continued "rogue nation" reputation interferes with its ability to bring in needed investment. Negative publicity over the country's human rights practices, illicit drug sales, and counterfeiting activities inhibit some outside investors, as does the periodic confrontational behavior exhibited by North Korea toward its neighbors and some Western nations.³⁰¹ Although the North Korean economy appears to be in its best shape in years, the death of Kim Jong Il has created a climate of uncertainty. The country continues to try to build its economic relations with China. Additionally, it has invited Russia to partner in some development plans. Current plans emphasize a restructuring of light industry and agriculture, although North Korea is not seeking international aid to assist in these efforts. Relations with South Korea are still strained and are not expected to improve because North Korea appears reluctant to revive economic relations with its southern neighbor.³⁰²

Analysts expect conflicts between the government and the growing private commercial sector to continue. Private market merchants expect that restrictive regulations will ease on private commerce, but it is unclear whether the new government will follow that path.³⁰³

²⁹⁹ *Washington Times*, "N. Korea's Border Closures Threaten Joint Factories," 16 March 2009, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/mar/16/nkoreas-border-closures-threaten-joint-factories-1/?page=all>

³⁰⁰ Andrew Salmon, "North Korea: Barely Open for Business," *Asia: NZ Online*, 22 February 2012, <http://www.asianz.org.nz/our-work/action-asia-business/action-asia-insights/north-korea>

³⁰¹ Peter Ritter, "Risky Business," *Time Magazine World*, 20 September 2007, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1663635,00.html>

³⁰² Dong Yong-seung, "Economic Outlook of North Korea in 2012," *Korea Focus*, January 2012, http://www.koreafocus.or.kr/design3/essays/view.asp?volume_id=120&content_id=104005&category=G

³⁰³ Dong Yong-seung, "Economic Outlook of North Korea in 2012," *Korea Focus*, January 2012, http://www.koreafocus.or.kr/design3/essays/view.asp?volume_id=120&content_id=104005&category=G

Chapter 3 Assessment

1. Before the partition of the Korean Peninsula in 1945, northern Korea was the site of most of Korea's heavy industry.

True

Prior to 1945, northern Korea was the site of most of Korea's heavy industry, whereas warmer, less mountainous southern Korea was the center of agricultural production and light industries such as textiles.

2. Over the last two decades, North Korea has struggled to produce enough food to feed its people.

True

In most years, imports and aid shipments of basic grains have been necessary to avoid famine conditions. A relatively good harvest in 2008 eliminated fears of a massive shortfall, but the country continues to remain one bad harvest away from a food crisis.

3. China is North Korea's most significant trading partner.

True

Trade with China accounts for about 70% of North Korea's foreign trade. Much of this trade is based on energy imports and exports.

4. The government of the DPRK does not permit foreign direct investment in North Korea.

False

The new government, under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, has shown an inclination to seek more foreign investment to prop up the nation's economy. But there is little foreign direct investment in North Korea, mostly because of international sanctions.

5. North Korea currently produces its own supplies of crude oil and natural gas.

False

North Korea presently does not produce any crude oil or natural gas, although numerous efforts have been made to discover economically viable offshore deposits. Most of the country's current oil needs are met via imports from China.

CHAPTER 4: SOCIETY

Introduction

Because North Korea has been generally isolated from the West for many decades, our understanding of its culture is mostly limited to what can be gleaned from those who have recently defected from the country. Foreign visitors to North Korea often comment that they have virtually no opportunity to interact freely with the general populace.



© Martyn Williams
Chuch'e Tower, P'yŏngyang

Despite these limitations, several areas of certainty illuminate our knowledge of North Korea's people and their culture. For example, despite nearly 70 years of separation from their ethnic kin in the South, North Koreans continue to share many cultural touchstones with South Koreans, such as language, food, and artistic and historical traditions. Although North Koreans have moved away from the cultural traditions of their pre-communist past in various respects, their society still reflects them in many ways. As several North Korean observers have noted, even the uniquely North Korean philosophy of *juche*, or self-reliance, echoes the ancient Neo-Confucian values and isolationist policies that took root on the Korean Peninsula during centuries of Chosun Dynasty rule (1392–1910).^{304, 305}

Ethnic Groups and Language

North Korea is one of the least ethnically diverse nations in the world. Virtually everyone is ethnic Korean and speaks the Korean language.³⁰⁶ But since 1948, when the two Koreas came into being, North Koreans have spoken a form of the language that has taken a somewhat different path from the Korean spoken in the South.³⁰⁷ North Koreans have introduced few new words into their vocabulary, and some words of foreign origin (mostly English and Japanese) have been purged. New words that have entered the Korean spoken in the North have primarily originated from Chinese or Russian.³⁰⁸



© Bryan Hughes
People of P'yŏngyang

³⁰⁴ PBS Newshour, “North Korea: Nuclear Standoff—Kim Il Sung,” 19 October 2006,

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/asia/northkorea/keyplayers/kimilsung.html

³⁰⁵ Bruce G. Cumings, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting,” in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Andrea Matles Savada (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1993),

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/kptoc.html>

³⁰⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, “Korea, North: People and Society,” in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

³⁰⁷ Kim Yoo-chul, “North and South Divided by Common Korean Language,” redOrbit, 21 October 2005, http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/279815/north_and_south_divided_by_common_korean_language/

³⁰⁸ Mark S. Lovmo, “Language Purism in Korea,” Selected Research on Dokdo Island, 2002, <http://dokdo-research.com/gallery15.html>

In contrast, South Koreans have been exposed to many new words of Western origin, which have become standard parts of their vocabulary. Results of a survey conducted in 2000 showed that North Koreans were unable to understand more than 8,000 words that are now in the South Korean lexicon.³⁰⁹ The government in the South provides instruction in the new vocabulary to defectors from North Korea to prepare them for immersion into South Korean society.³¹⁰

Both North and South Korea use the *Hangul* alphabet (known as *Chosun muntcha* in North Korea) for written Korean.³¹¹ South Koreans still occasionally use Chinese characters for some words of Chinese origin, but the North Korean regime has banned the practice.³¹²

Religion

Even though the Constitution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) provides for religious freedom, in reality the right to practice the religion of one's choice does not exist. Religious activity that takes place in North Korea is carried out within narrow confines allowed by the government. Some reports suggest that the North Korean regime has organized many of the country's sanctioned religious groups solely for propaganda purposes or for use in contacts with foreign religious organizations or nongovernmental aid agencies.³¹³



© Bryan Hughes
At a buddhist temple, Mt. Myohyang, DPRK

Official North Korean estimates place the number of practicing Protestant Christians at 12,000 and Roman Catholics at 800. There are four known state-controlled churches operating in North Korea, all in Pyongyang: two Protestant, one Orthodox, and one Roman Catholic. The North Korean government also estimates that 10,000 of its citizens are practicing Buddhists. Although there are about 300 Buddhist temples in North Korea, the government classifies the vast majority of them as cultural artifacts rather than active places of worship.³¹⁴

³⁰⁹ Kim Yoo-chul, "North and South Divided by Common Korean Language," redOrbit, 21 October 2005, http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/279815/north_and_south_divided_by_common_korean_language/

³¹⁰ Voice of America, "Sixty Years After Division, Korean Language Has Gone in Separate Directions," 2 November 2009, <http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-03-16-voa49.cfm>

³¹¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "North Korea: The People: Language," 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322222/North-Korea>

³¹² Mark S. Lovmo, "Language Purism in Korea," Selected Research on Dokdo Island, 2002, <http://dokdo-research.com/gallery15.html>

³¹³ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Korea, Democratic People's Republic of" in *July–December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report*, 13 September 2011, http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010_5/168360.htm

³¹⁴ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Korea, Democratic People's Republic of" in *July–December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report*, 13 September 2011, http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010_5/168360.htm

The Donghak (Eastern Learning) religious movement—whose name was later changed to Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way)—first emerged in Korea in the 1860s. This indigenous, egalitarian-based religion is estimated by the government to have 40,000 practitioners.^{315, 316} Chondogyo, a monotheistic belief system, blends elements of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and Catholicism. In North Korea, its membership is supposedly represented by the political party Chondogyo Chongudang (Party of the Young Friends of the Heavenly Way), but in reality the religion is firmly under the direction of the ruling Korean Workers' Party.³¹⁷

Cuisine

Rice is North Korea's staple food, served at most meals either alone or with other grains. *Panchan* (side dishes) may accompany the rice. The most ubiquitous *panchan* is kimchi, a dish Koreans usually make with pickled cabbage. Southern varieties of kimchi are known for their spiciness, but in North Korea, kimchi is not as heavily flavored with salt or red pepper.³¹⁸ It is more likely to include fish.³¹⁹ Other spices and vegetables such as radishes, mushrooms, turnips, and cucumbers are added as available. Because kimchi is fermented, it may be safely stored for months. In the late fall, households make large pots of it for storage over the winter in an event known as *kimjang*. As the kimchi sours over time, cooks use it as an ingredient in stews and other dishes rather than as a side dish.³²⁰



© Dave77459
Bulgogi, a favorite Korean beef dish

There are several North Korean specialty dishes, although food shortages make the preparation of some of these dishes less common outside the capital. *Pyongyang naengmyeon* consists of cold buckwheat noodles served in a chilled beef broth and decorated with pear slices, cucumbers, white radishes, kimchi, hard-boiled eggs, and other food items. Another favorite dish is *Pyongyang onban*, in which boiled or steamed rice is served in warm chicken broth, covered with a mung-bean pancake, and garnished with green onions, chicken slices, and mushrooms or other items. Beef is relatively rare in North Korea, but when it is available, a popular dish to make is *bulgogi*. It is made by charcoal-grilling thin strips of meat that have been soaked in a marinade of soy sauce,

³¹⁵ Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Korea, Democratic People's Republic of" in *July–December, 2010 International Religious Freedom Report*, 13 September 2011, http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2010_5/168360.htm

³¹⁶ Djun Kil Kim, *The History of Korea* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 110.

³¹⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Korea, North," in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

³¹⁸ Life in Korea, "Korean Food: Kimchi," n.d., <http://www.lifeinkorea.com/Food/food.cfm?Subject=kimchi>

³¹⁹ Janet Fletcher, "Cooking in Common: Korea's Kimchi Addiction Catches On in the West," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 January 2008, <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/01/30/FDMGUH4OI.DTL>

³²⁰ Janet Fletcher, "Cooking in Common: Korea's Kimchi Addiction Catches On in the West," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 January 2008, <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/01/30/FDMGUH4OI.DTL>

pepper, sugar, onions, sesame seeds, sesame oil, and garlic.³²¹ Outside Korea, this dish is often called Korean barbecue.

Traditional Dress

In North Korea, traditional Korean dress is referred to as *chosun-ot* (*hanbok* in South Korea). In ancient times, the wealthy wore brightly colored silken *chosun-ot*, whereas peasants wore cotton or hemp *chosun-ot* that was subdued in coloring.³²² Today, one generally sees brightly colored clothing worn only by performers in traditional presentations or by public figures, such as tour guides, hosts, and servers at some restaurants.³²³



© Steve Mohundro
Woman in traditional dress

The traditional *chosun-ot* worn by women features two pieces. The *jogori* is a full-sleeved short jacket that is tied together in front by long ribbons. The *cheema* is a high-waisted, gathered wraparound skirt, usually worn long and full. Over the centuries, the woman's



© Steve46814 / Wikipedia.org
P'ansori performance

jogori has alternately shortened and lengthened, with the modern version typically falling midway between the chest and the waist.³²⁴ The collar of the *jogori* is a detachable white strip known as a *dongjong*. The *chosun-ot* for men also features a *jogori* jacket, although it is longer than the women's version, extending to the waist or even lower. It is paired with *paji*, or loose-legged trousers.³²⁵ In winter, both men and women wear the *durumagee*, a long overcoat.

Gender Issues

Several commentators have noted that the years of famine in North Korea during the mid-1990s seemingly had a profound effect on the role of women in society.^{326, 327, 328} Most communist countries have traditionally had a high percentage of women working outside the home, but North Korea in the 1980s and early 1990s was an exception, having a much

³²¹ Alison Behnke, *North Korea in Pictures* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2005), 52.

³²² Alison Behnke, *North Korea in Pictures* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2005), 53.

³²³ Alison Behnke, *North Korea in Pictures* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2005), 53.

³²⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, "Dress: The History of Eastern Dress: Korea," 2012,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/171379/dress/14046/The-history-of-Eastern-dress>

³²⁵ Cho Woo-hyun, "Characteristics of the Korean Costume and Its Development," *Koreana* 9, no. 3 (Autumn 1995),

http://koreana.kf.or.kr/popup.asp?flag=view&article_id=500&sword=&volumn=9&no=3&lang=English

³²⁶ Kyungja Jung and Bronwen Dalton, "Rhetoric Versus Reality for the Women of North Korea: Mothers of the Revolution," *Asian Survey* 46, no. 5 (September/October 2006): 741–60,

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/as.2006.46.5.741#abstract>

³²⁷ Andrei Lankov, "North Korea: Market Forces Have Female Faces," *Asia Times*, 6 April 2005,

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/GD06Dg01.html>

³²⁸ Kyung-ae Park, "Economic Crisis, Women's Changing Economic Roles, and Their Implications for Women's Status in North Korea," *Pacific Review* 24, no. 2 (May 2011):171–74.

higher percentage of housewives (70% by one estimate) than other socialist nations.³²⁹ As the North Korean economy faltered and food rations that were provided at factory jobs became insufficient to feed families, women increasingly became vendors—selling homemade foods or unneeded goods from the home—at unsanctioned markets that sprang up in towns and cities. In some cases, they became involved in small-scale service businesses, such as shops and restaurants.³³⁰ Many women spent increasing amounts of time far from home as they traded and even smuggled goods.^{331, 332}



Initially, this bottom-up market economy primarily involved women from the hardest hit sectors of the North Korean economy. But eventually some housewives in more elite North Korean families, in which rations had not been as severely cut, began to resell goods purchased at cheap official prices at their husbands' factories. Meanwhile, many North Korean men remained in jobs at factories that were part of the official economy but were no longer operating. They showed up at their workplaces only to remain qualified for the meager monthly wages and food rations; if these were no longer available, they stayed in their jobs anyway, hoping that the situation would improve. Thus, in a short period of time, women became the most important provider in many North Korean families.³³³

The effects of these economic changes are seemingly profound, based on commentaries by recent defectors from North Korea. Many men have taken on a more domestic role in the family, carrying out housekeeping and childcare responsibilities—behavior that would have been unthinkable a few decades ago.^{334, 335} This change in traditional roles is difficult for some men to accept; some observers identify it as the likely underlying cause of increased domestic violence.³³⁶

³²⁹ Kyung-ae Park, "Economic Crisis, Women's Changing Economic Roles, and Their Implications for Women's Status in North Korea," *Pacific Review* 24, no. 2 (May 2011): 171–74.

³³⁰ Kyung-ae Park, "Economic Crisis, Women's Changing Economic Roles, and Their Implications for Women's Status in North Korea," *Pacific Review* 24, no. 2 (May 2011): 171–74.

³³¹ Andrei Lankov, "North Korea: Market Forces Have Female Faces," *Asia Times*, 6 April 2005, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/GD06Dg01.html>

³³² Kyung-ae Park, "Economic Crisis, Women's Changing Economic Roles, and Their Implications for Women's Status in North Korea," *Pacific Review* 24, no. 2 (May 2011): 171–74.

³³³ Andrei Lankov, "North Korea: Market Forces Have Female Faces," *Asia Times*, 6 April 2005, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/GD06Dg01.html>

³³⁴ Andrei Lankov, "North Korea: Market Forces Have Female Faces," *Asia Times*, 6 April 2005, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/GD06Dg01.html>

³³⁵ Kyung-ae Park, "Economic Crisis, Women's Changing Economic Roles, and Their Implications for Women's Status in North Korea," *Pacific Review* 24, no. 2 (May 2011): 171–73.

³³⁶ Kyung-ae Park, "Economic Crisis, Women's Changing Economic Roles, and Their Implications for Women's Status in North Korea," *Pacific Review* 24, no. 2 (May 2011): 171–73.

Arts

Although Korea as a whole has a rich history of artwork, artistic expression has been greatly stifled in the 60-plus years since North Korea became a nation. Obligated to produce work in the service of the state’s philosophy and propaganda, North Korean artists, musicians, writers, and filmmakers are limited in their ability to experiment in their media or to invest subtlety and nuance in their work.³³⁷

Literature

North Korean literature remains largely unknown outside the country’s heavily guarded borders. Only a handful of stories have been translated into English. A few more have been published in their original language in South Korea. The most famous of these is probably Hong Sok Chung’s *Hwang Chin-i*, a historical novel set in the 16th century during the Chosun Dynasty. Published in South Korea in 2002, the novel was successful in terms of both sales and critical reception. It was also the first North Korean work to receive a South Korean literary prize. Because of its historical setting, the book was largely able to avoid the ideological constraints placed on North Korean fiction set in a more contemporary time.³³⁸



© Kok Leng Yeo
Mural of Kim Il Sung

Visual Arts

North Korean artists paint in various government-run studios. Each artist has a ranking, with most artists ranked from the lowest level of C to the highest level of A. Above these rankings, the most accomplished painters are designated as “Merited Artist” or “People’s Artist.” Most painting is done in the traditional Korean brush-and-ink style known as *Chosunhwa*; these works include some of the large public murals that typically would be painted using oils.^{339, 340} In the 1970s, landscapes of natural settings were approved as appropriate subject matter, although each North Korean artist is still expected to produce at least one painting each year that celebrates revolutionary themes.³⁴¹

One can view public art throughout North Korea. Artists generally render posters and murals in a naturalistic style commonly known as socialist realism, but referred to as

³³⁷ Alison Behnke, *North Korea in Pictures* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company, 2005), 54.

³³⁸ Words without Borders, “An Interview with Hayun Jung,” 2007, <http://wordswithoutborders.org/article/an-interview-with-hayun-jung>

³³⁹ Jane Portal, “Art Under Control in North Korea,” openDemocracy, 28 June 2006, http://www.opendemocracy.net/arts-commons/art_northkorea_3690.jsp

³⁴⁰ Adrian Dannatt, “Inside the Democratic People’s Republic of North Korea,” *Art Newspaper*, 18 March 2009, <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/article.asp?id=17096>

³⁴¹ Adrian Dannatt, “Inside the Democratic People’s Republic of North Korea,” *Art Newspaper*, 18 March 2009, <http://www.theartnewspaper.com/article.asp?id=17096>

“*juče* realism” in North Korea; abstraction is strictly forbidden.³⁴² Posters often visually illustrate exhortation or slogans, and are more likely than public murals to exhibit bright colors and bold thematic elements. In some posters, artists use colors and perspective in less naturalistic ways to heighten the dramatic or visual effect.³⁴³

Public murals and large-scale paintings, which often show one of the Kims in a group tableau, are usually painted in muted colors, using more detail. In many of these large works, artists use ink rather than oils and employ a style similar to that seen in some medieval Christian paintings: the arrangement of characters leads the eye to the central element (e.g., the Christ child). The scenes in North Korean murals generally focus the eye toward the Great (or Dear) Leader.³⁴⁴ The use of shading and the softening of background details often heighten this effect.

Folk Culture and Folklore

Most of the ancient Korean myths and legends come from sources that can be traced to the Koryo Dynasty (918–1392) and the Chosun Dynasty (1392–1910), although many of these stories recount tales from earlier times in Korean history. The Buddhist monk Iryon compiled one of the most important Koryo era sources of legends and folktales, the *Samguk Yusa*, in the 13th century.³⁴⁵ Among the stories recounted in the *Samguk Yusa* is the oldest known version of the Tangun legend, which tells about the founding of the first Korean kingdom in 2333 B.C.E. In addition to historical legends, the *Samguk Yusa* includes several folktales about ogres, animals, goblins, and other fanciful creatures and beings.³⁴⁶

Koreans have passed down myths and legends from the Chosun Dynasty era in *pansori*, traditional tales that a *sorrikun* (singer) alternately sings and narrates to rhythmic accompaniment provided by a *kosu* (drummer). Originally, there were 12 *pansori* stories (*madang*), but Koreans perform only five of them today.³⁴⁷ They are *Simchongga*, a tale in which a blind man’s sight is restored through the sacrifice of his devoted daughter; *Chunhyangga*, a story in which love conquers class differences; *Hungbuga*, a morality fable involving a virtuous younger brother and an evil older brother; *Sugungga*, a fable in which a dutiful turtle sent to secure the liver of a rabbit for his sick king is tricked by the

³⁴² Jane Portal, “Art Under Control in North Korea,” openDemocracy, 28 June 2006, http://www.opendemocracy.net/arts-commons/art_northkorea_3690.jsp

³⁴³ BBC News, “North Korea’s Art of Propaganda,” 29 July 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/in_pictures/7531260.stm

³⁴⁴ DPRK Studies, “DPRK Propaganda Picture Gallery,” 2007, <http://www.dprkstudies.org/documents/nkpic/picgal.html>

³⁴⁵ Kichung Kim, *An Introduction to Classical Korean Literature: From Hyangga to P’ansori* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 19.

³⁴⁶ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Korean Literature: Traditional Forms and Genres: Prose,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322406/Korean-literature>

³⁴⁷ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, “Korean Literature: Traditional Forms and Genres: Oral Literature,” 2012, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/322406/Korean-literature>

rabbit; and *Chokpyokka*, a retelling of the famous Han Dynasty Battle of the Red Cliffs.³⁴⁸

Sports and Leisure

North Koreans take sports and athletic activity very seriously, and children are encouraged to participate actively in team and individual sports.³⁴⁹ The yearly Mass Games in Pyongyang features thousands of children and teenagers who practice for months to perform various synchronized athletic and gymnastic routines.³⁵⁰



© Kok Leng Yeo
Karate performance created by school children

Despite the nation's reputation for isolating itself from the rest of the world and trying to avoid foreign influences, North Koreans compete in numerous sports, some of Western origin, in international competition. Foremost among these is soccer. In 1966, in probably the greatest sporting moment in North Korean history, the national soccer team, in its first appearance in the World Cup, stunningly upset the Italian national team. The men's team qualified for its second World Cup appearance in 2010 but lost all three of its games.^{351, 352} Recently, the North Korean women's soccer team has been successful in international competitions.^{353, 354}

In Summer Olympics competition, North Korea has won 41 medals, including 10 gold medals, since it first competed in 1972. Most of these medals have come in weightlifting (9 medals, 1 gold), wrestling (9 medals, 3 golds), boxing (8 medals, 2 golds), and judo (7 medals, 1 gold). North Korea has also periodically competed in the Winter Olympics, earning bronze medals in speed skating in both 1964 and 1992.³⁵⁵

Yet none of these sports qualifies as the North Korean national sport. That distinction is reserved for the Korean martial art known as *taekwondo*. Unarmed martial arts in Korea date back to at least the Goguryo Kingdom in the fourth century C.E.³⁵⁶ Taekwondo has

³⁴⁸ Min A. Chun, "The Process of Transmission in P'ansori, Korean Vocal Music, Focussing [sic] on Hŭngboga" (MA thesis, University of Maryland, 2004), 13,

<http://www.lib.umd.edu/drum/bitstream/1903/1822/1/umi-umd-1807.pdf>

³⁴⁹ Alison Behnke, *North Korea in Pictures* (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company, 2005), 56.

³⁵⁰ Andrew Holloway, "Chapter 16," in *A Year in Pyongyang* (Enfield, England: The Nihilist Amateur Press, 2011), http://www.aidanfc.net/a_year_in_pyongyang_16.html

³⁵¹ CNN.com/world sport, "North Korea Qualifies for 2010 World Cup," 18 June 2009,

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/SPORT/football/06/17/cup.korea.australia.japan/index.html>

³⁵² Justin McCurry, "North Korea's Failed World Cup Footballers Undergo Public Mauling," *Guardian*, 30 July 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jul/30/north-korea-footballers-public-mauling>

³⁵³ FIFA.com, "Korea DPR (PRK)," 2012,

<http://www.fifa.com/u17womensworldcup/teams/team=1914188/index.html>

³⁵⁴ Korea Report, "South Korea Wins First FIFA World Cup Trophy (U17 Women's Soccer)," 26

September 2010, <http://koreareport2.blogspot.com/2010/09/south-korea-wins-first-fifa-world-cup.html>

³⁵⁵ SR/Olympic Sports, "North Korea," 2012, <http://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/countries/PRK/>

³⁵⁶ Stephen D. Capener, "Chapter 2: The Historical Background of Taekwondo," in *Taekwondo: The Spirit of Korea*, ed. H. Edward Kim (Seoul: Republic of Korea Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2000),

http://www.martialartsresource.com/anonftp/pub/the_dojang/digests/spirit.html

been in existence since the 1940s, when a major general in South Korea, Choi Hong Hi, developed a hybrid martial art employing techniques from the Korean martial art *taekkyo* and the Japanese martial art *karate*. Soon thereafter, the new martial art was taught throughout the South Korean military. In 1980, eight years after he had left South Korea, Choi introduced taekwondo to North Korea, in part to express his hope for reunification.^{357, 358, 359} Choi died in 2002. He is buried in Pyongyang, where the Taekwondo Palace has for many years been considered the unofficial training center for Choi's International Taekwondo Federation.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁷ Martial Edge, "General Choi Hong Hi," 2012, <http://www.martialedge.net/definition/people/general-choi-hong-hi/>

³⁵⁸ Ari L. Goldman, "Choi Hong Hi, 83, Korean General Who Created Tae Kwon Do," *New York Times*, 29 June 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/29/sports/choi-hong-hi-83-korean-general-who-created-tae-kwon-do.html>

³⁵⁹ Dakin Burdick, "General Choi Hong-hi," *Guardian*, 8 August 2002, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2002/aug/09/guardianobituaries.northkorea>

³⁶⁰ Kim Tong-hyung, "Coming Together: World Taekwondo Festival Dissolves Barrier Between WTF, ITF," *Korea Times*, 29 June 2008, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2008/06/136_26723.html

Chapter 4 Assessment

1. Virtually all of North Korea's citizens are ethnic Koreans and speak the Korean language.

True

North Korea is one of the least ethnically diverse nations in the world. Except for a small Chinese community and a few ethnic Japanese, the entire population is ethnic Korean.

2. A dish called kimchi, still popular in South Korea, has been gradually phased out of the North Korean cuisine.

False

Kimchi is a staple of the North Korean diet. Southern varieties of kimchi are spicier than northern versions. In North Korea, kimchi is more likely to include fish.

3. North Korea does not participate in international sporting events.

False

North Korea participates in numerous international sporting events, including the World Cup, the Asian Games, and the Olympics.

4. One of the most important sources of Korean legends and folktales is the *Samguk Yusa*.

True

The Buddhist monk Iryon compiled one of the most important Koryo era sources of legends and folktales, the *Samguk Yusa*, in the 13th century. Among the stories recounted in the *Samguk Yusa* is the oldest known version of the Tangun legend.

5. In the 1980s and early 1990s, North Korea had a much higher percentage of women working as housewives than other socialist nations.

True

Traditionally, most communist countries have had a high percentage of women working outside the home, but about 70% of women were housewives in North Korea in the 1980s and early 1990s. Recent conditions are forcing women out of this traditional role.

CHAPTER 5: SECURITY

Introduction

North Korea's official state philosophy is *juche* (self-reliance), an ideology whose purpose is to impel citizens to work together to forge a uniquely Korean revolution. The idea behind the belief is that the remarkable economic achievements of North Koreans will inspire the rest of the world. According to this ideology, outside assistance is not needed. Yet the nation's economy has imploded during the last two decades, and self-reliance—which in reality has never been achieved because the Soviet Union and China have provided support for decades—represents an empty slogan more than a reflection of the country's economic state.³⁶¹



North Korea is more accurately characterized by the more recent principle of *songun chongchi* (military first). This tenet was introduced by Kim Jong Il in 1995, during the period of famine known in the country as the Arduous March. Because of the *songun* policy, the military has become North Korea's most powerful institution, stretching its reach into nearly all areas of economic and political decision-making.³⁶² According to some interpretations, history has shown that a military-dominated governmental structure such as North Korea's, driven more by pragmatism than economic ideology, can potentially be a positive force in generating needed economic reforms. But others note that the North Korean military's position of favor can only be sustained by the continued existence of external and internal tensions.^{363, 364} Analyzed from this point of view, security threats against North Korea, real or imagined, are beneficial to the military. Or, as one North Korean analyst has put it, "Those bemedalled old generals have much to lose from any outbreak of peace."³⁶⁵

Following Russia's and China's opening of closer relations with South Korea in the early 1990s, North Korea expanded its own foreign relations. The country now maintains

³⁶¹ Robert L. Worden, ed., "Introduction," in *North Korea: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), xxxii-xxxiv, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

³⁶² Alexander V. Vorontsov, "North Korea's Military-First Policy: A Curse or a Blessing?" Brookings Institution, 26 May 2006, http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2006/0526northkorea_vorontsov.aspx

³⁶³ Alexander V. Vorontsov, "North Korea's Military-First Policy: A Curse or a Blessing?" Brookings Institution, 26 May 2006, http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2006/0526northkorea_vorontsov.aspx

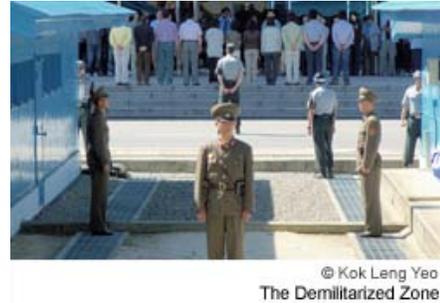
³⁶⁴ Aidan Foster-Carter and Eric J. Ballbach, "Response to 'North Korea's Military-First Policy: A Curse or a Blessing?'" Nautilus Institute, 22 June 2006, <http://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-policy-forum/response-to-north-koreas-military-first-policy-a-curse-or-a-blessing/>

³⁶⁵ Aidan Foster-Carter and Eric J. Ballbach, "Response to 'North Korea's Military-First Policy: A Curse or a Blessing?'" Nautilus Institute, 22 June 2006, <http://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-policy-forum/response-to-north-koreas-military-first-policy-a-curse-or-a-blessing/>

diplomatic relations with 150 countries and has embassies in 27 of those nations. It does not have any diplomatic ties with the United States.³⁶⁶

United States-North Korean Relations

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the United States have never had formal diplomatic relations. Between 1950 and 2008, the United States banned most commercial trade and financial transactions with the DPRK under the Trading with the Enemy Act.³⁶⁷ In 1988, after two North Korean terrorists planted a bomb that blew up a Korean Airlines flight, the United States placed North Korea on the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, where it remained until 2008.³⁶⁸



Since the early 1990s, the United States and North Korea have carried out negotiations concerning the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missiles programs. In 1994, an Agreed Framework was negotiated, providing a road map for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The United States agreed to provide North Korea with annual fuel oil shipments and to work with an international consortium to develop two light-water reactors. In exchange, North Korea agreed to freeze its nuclear program and work with the United States to safely store its existing spent nuclear fuel. In 1999, the DPRK announced a voluntary end to its long-range missile-testing program.³⁶⁹

A crisis in these negotiations occurred in late 2002 and early 2003, when North Korea announced its withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and began reprocessing spent nuclear fuel to obtain weapons-grade plutonium. The United States proposed bringing international parties into the talks. By August 2003, China, Japan, South Korea, and Russia began the first of an ongoing series of Six-Party Talks on North Korean denuclearization. After North Korea announced its first successful test of a nuclear device in October 2006, subsequent Six-Party Talks led to agreements by North

³⁶⁶ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: North Korea," July 2007, 16, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/North_Korea.pdf

³⁶⁷ Scott Fisher, "Trading with the Enemy Act," IstopKorea.com, 2007, <http://Istopkorea.com/index.htm?nk-trade-sanctions.htm~mainframe>

³⁶⁸ Dick K. Nanto, "North Korea: Chronology of Provocations, 1950–2003" (report, Congressional Research Service, 18 March 2003), 10, <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/RL30004.pdf>

³⁶⁹ James M. Minnich, "Chapter 5: National Security," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 227–30, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

Korea to dismantle its nuclear facilities.³⁷⁰ A 2008 agreement on verification measures led to North Korea's removal from the State Sponsors of Terrorism list.³⁷¹

The Obama administration's approach was one of "strategic patience," which involved maintaining pressure on North Korea's administration while waiting for verifiable changes in behavior. The United States continues to apply diplomatic and economic pressure. In 2011, the policy shifted when U.S. representatives and North Korean leaders met in New York and in Switzerland, although the death of Kim Jong Il later that year derailed any perceived progress. The United States has also pressured South Korea to normalize its relations with the North.³⁷²

Relations with Neighboring Countries

Russia

Although North Korea and Russia share only 17.5 km (10.9 mi) of border, the two countries have an extensive, interwoven history, marked by periods of both comradeship and of escalating tensions.^{373, 374} After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, relations worsened, culminating in 1992 with Russia severing all ties with North Korea. Tensions thawed in the mid-1990s, and since that time relations have gradually become more cordial.³⁷⁵



Beginning in the latter part of the Yeltsin presidency in the 1990s, Moscow's relations with North Korea have steadily normalized as both nations recognize the pragmatic advantages of closer ties. In spite of friction surrounding North Korean debt to Russia, Moscow assisted in the renovation of the Najin port facility only 30 km (18.6 mi) from the Russian border. Russia regards the warm water port as essential because it can provide year-round access to the Pacific.³⁷⁶ Russia has long-range goals of developing energy infrastructure and rail corridors on the Korean Peninsula, which would connect

³⁷⁰ James M. Minnich, "Chapter 5: National Security," in *North Korea: A Country Study*, ed. Robert L. Worden (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 2008), 227–30, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/pdf/CS_North-Korea.pdf

³⁷¹ Viola Gienger and James Rowley, "North Korea Wins Removal from U.S. Terror Blacklist (Update 3)," Bloomberg, 11 October 2008, <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aNW8jTfwHjOQ>

³⁷² Jane's, "External Affairs: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 17 November 2011.

³⁷³ Central Intelligence Agency, "Korea, North: Geography," in *The World Factbook*, 12 April 2012, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kn.html>

³⁷⁴ International Crisis Group, "North Korea-Russia Relations: A Strained Friendship," 4 December 2007, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/asia/north-east-asia/north-korea/B071-north-korea-russia-relations-a-strained-friendship.aspx>

³⁷⁵ Jane's, "External Affairs: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 17 November 2011.

³⁷⁶ Jane's, "External Affairs: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 17 November 2011.

with their existing networks in Siberia.^{377, 378} Russia recently provided North Korea with food aid, and the two sides agreed to explore the possibility of a natural gas pipeline through North Korea. The two countries plan to conduct joint naval exercises in 2012, focusing on search and rescue operations.³⁷⁹

China

China, which regards North Korea as the key to maintaining stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia, is a cautious ally. North Korea's insistence on continuing its rocket and nuclear research has placed the Chinese in an awkward position with the international community, but historical and economic ties make it unlikely that there will be any major changes in relations between the two countries.³⁸⁰



China, as North Korea's most important trading partner, provides more food, fuel, and other supplies to North Korea than any other nation. Chinese companies are among the few outside investors in North Korean industrial enterprises.³⁸¹ China also provides significant aid to North Korea.³⁸² China is widely viewed as the nation with the most significant influence on the DPRK.

China shares a long border with North Korea. Thus, for the Chinese leadership, a real concern in bilateral relations is that an internal shock in North Korea (e.g., extreme famine conditions, regime-change instability, another war between the two Koreas) could result in hundreds of thousands of North Korean refugees spilling across its border. Even now, thousands of North Koreans cross into China each year, although China has a repatriation treaty with North Korea.³⁸³

Another important consideration in Beijing is the potential effect of North Korean actions—and of China's response to those actions—on China's relations with South

³⁷⁷ Yonhap News Agency, "South Korea, Russia Agree on Gas Pipeline Project," *Downstream Today*, 29 September 2008, http://www.downstreamtoday.com/news/article.aspx?a_id=13065

³⁷⁸ Update Briefing, International Crisis Group, "North Korea-Russia Relations: A Strained Friendship," 4 December 2007, 12–13, http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/asia/north-east-asia/north-korea/b71_north_korea_russia_relations_a_strained_friendship.ashx

³⁷⁹ Troy Stangarone, "A Renaissance in Russia-North Korea Relations?" *Peninsula*, 10 November 2011, <http://blog.keia.org/2011/11/a-renaissance-in-russia-north-korea-relations/>

³⁸⁰ Jane's, "External Affairs: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 17 November 2011.

³⁸¹ Jim Yardley, "Sanctions Don't Dent N. Korea-China Trade," *New York Times*, 27 October 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/27/world/asia/27border.html>

³⁸² Bonnie Glaser, Scott Snyder, and John S. Park, "Keeping an Eye on an Unruly Neighbor: Chinese Views of Economic Reform and Stability in North Korea" (working paper, United States Institute of Peace, January 2008), 11–12, <http://www.usip.org/publications/keeping-eye-unruly-neighbor-chinese-views-economic-reform-and-stability-north-korea>

³⁸³ Sunny Lee, "Ladies First: China Opens to Korean Refugees," *Asia Times*, 20 July 2007, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/IG20Ad01.html>

Korea, Japan, Russia, and the United States. Think tanks around the world employ numerous China analysts who try to discern and analyze the political calculus that guides China's relations with its somewhat unpredictable neighbor.^{384, 385}

Although recently reaffirming its commitment to North Korea, China is concerned about its relations with the international community. China's support of the UN Security Council resolution condemning North Korea's recent satellite launch suggests that China is trying to maintain international legitimacy while continuing its support for North Korea.³⁸⁶ Tensions mounted between the two nations when North Korea seized 3 Chinese fishing vessels in May 2012, taking 29 crew members hostage. Some speculate that Kim Jong Un, who was declared the leader of North Korea after his father's death in late 2011, is sending China a message to stop pressuring North Korea over its rocket and nuclear tests.³⁸⁷

South Korea

Although the armistice agreement signed in 1953 ended combat operations on the Korean Peninsula, it did not officially end the conflict. Technically, North and South Korea remain in a state of war.³⁸⁸ Tensions between the two nations have risen and fallen over the decades. South Korea's 1998 "sunshine policy" of engagement with the North temporarily eased tensions. In a 2007 summit in Pyongyang, Kim Jong Il and South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun signed a declaration pledging further joint economic projects to help develop the North's economy and infrastructure. The North Korean leadership agreed to work with South Korea in negotiating a formal peace treaty to the Korean War.³⁸⁹

Lee Myung-Bak, who defeated Roh in the 2007 South Korean presidential election, took a much harder stance toward North Korea.³⁹⁰ In April 2008, Pyongyang cut off all official dialog with South Korea, forced all South Koreans to leave Kaesong, and demanded that the 2007 summit agreements be honored.³⁹¹ Relations further declined in

³⁸⁴ Jayshree Bajoria, "The China-North Korea Relationship," Council on Foreign Relations, 7 October 2010, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/11097/>

³⁸⁵ Bonnie Glaser, Scott Snyder, and John S. Park, "Keeping an Eye on an Unruly Neighbor: Chinese Views of Economic Reform and Stability in North Korea" (working paper, United States Institute of Peace, January 2008), 11–12, <http://www.usip.org/publications/keeping-eye-unruly-neighbor-chinese-views-economic-reform-and-stability-north-korea>

³⁸⁶ Ong Suan Ee, "A Friend in Need: What Future for Sino-North Korea Relations?—Analysis," Eurasia Review, 8 May 2012, <http://www.eurasiareview.com/08052012-a-friend-in-need-what-future-for-sino-north-korea-relations-analysis/>

³⁸⁷ Al-Jazeera, "China Probes N Korean Seizure of Fishermen," 16 May 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2012/05/20125161458462178.html>

³⁸⁸ Jack Kim, "Q + A: Why a 'State of War' Still Exists on Korean Peninsula," Reuters, 25 May 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/05/25/us-korea-north-kim-qa-idUSTRE64O20G20100525>

³⁸⁹ Norimitsu Onishi, "Korean Summit Results Exceed Low Expectations," *New York Times*, 5 October 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/05/world/asia/05korea.html>

³⁹⁰ BBC News, "Profile: Lee Myung-bak," 25 February 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7150162.stm>

³⁹¹ Choe Sang-hun, "South Korean Offer to North Is Marred by Killing of Tourist," *New York Times*, 12 July 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/12/world/asia/12korea.html>

July 2008 when the North Korean military shot and killed a South Korean tourist at the Mount Kumgang tourist resort. In January 2009, North Korea pulled out of earlier agreements with South Korea intended to lessen political and military tensions.³⁹² In May 2010, North Korea announced that it was ending its nonaggression agreement with South Korea and cut all ties.³⁹³ Tensions escalated further in 2010 when North Korea sank a South Korean warship, killing 46 sailors, and fired artillery shells on South Korea's Yeonpyeong Island, killing and wounding military personnel and civilians.³⁹⁴ South Korea's support for the more than 20,000 North Korean defectors heightens tensions between the Koreans.^{395, 396} In January 2012, Kim Jong Un declared that he would not deal with Lee's government.³⁹⁷

South Korea is scheduled to hold presidential elections in December 2012, and the two leading candidates have different positions on relations with North Korea. Park Geun-Hye is likely to moderate the hard-line position of current President Lee, while the leading opposition candidate, Moon Jae-In, favors a return to the sunshine diplomacy of former President Roh.³⁹⁸ Polls show the candidates running neck-and-neck.^{399, 400}



³⁹² Choe Sang-hun, "North Korea Scrapping Accords with South Korea," *New York Times*, 29 January 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/30/world/asia/30nkorea.html>

³⁹³ CNN World, "North Korea Freezes Relations with South Korea," 25 May 2010, http://articles.cnn.com/2010-05-25/world/n.korea.threats_1_south-korean-president-lee-north-south-korean-peninsula?s=PM:WORLD

³⁹⁴ Jane's, "External Affairs: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 17 November 2011.

³⁹⁵ Tara O, "The Integration of North Korean Defectors in South Korea: Problems and Prospects," *International Journal of Korean Studies* XV, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 155–57, <http://www.icks.org/publication/pdf/2011-FALL-WINTER/8.pdf>

³⁹⁶ New Tang Dynasty Television, "North Korean Families Plead for Defectors to Return," YouTube, 10 March 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFkWS-VMR6k>

³⁹⁷ Choe Sang-hun, "North Korea Renews Demands for Improved Relations with South," *New York Times*, 2 February 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/03/world/asia/north-korea-renews-demands-for-improved-relations-with-south.html>

³⁹⁸ Evan Ramstad, "Local Vote in South Korea Shapes Presidential Race," *Wall Street Journal*, 9 April 2012, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304587704577331340203138520.html>

³⁹⁹ Andy Jackson, "Presidential Poll: Moon Jae-in Neck-and-Neck with Park Geun-hye," *Asian Correspondent*, 18 February 2012, <http://asiancorrespondent.com/76315/presidential-poll-moon-jae-in-neck-and-neck-with-park-geun-hye/>

⁴⁰⁰ BBC News, "South Korea Vote 'Remains Too Close to Call,'" 11 April 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-17661379>

Military and Internal Security

Military

North Korea's military, officially known as the Korean People's Army (KPA), is one of the world's largest. According to recent estimates, the North Korean military has 1.2 million active duty members, a number surpassed only by military personnel numbers in China, the United States, and India.^{401, 402} Additionally, analysts believe the country can call up another 7.7 million reservists.⁴⁰³ North Korea's overall military spending may consume as much as a quarter of the nation's GDP.⁴⁰⁴



Courtesy of Wikipedia
KPA soldier

Most of the KPA consists of ground forces, a large percentage of which are deployed in forward positions near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Of these, a relatively large number (87,000 by one recent estimate) are special operations forces, trained for combat behind enemy lines.^{405, 406} The North Korean Navy, with an estimated 60,000 personnel, is primarily restricted to coastal defense and largely consists of aged surface vessels and submarines. But North Korea has one of the largest submarine fleets in the world. Many of these vessels are small midget submarines, which present a significant threat to South Korean coastal defense operations. Since 2011, North Korea has reinforced coastal defense artillery units, and 20 new artillery positions have been placed in Hwanghae Province.⁴⁰⁷ The North Korean Air Force has an estimated troop strength of 110,000, divided among 8 air divisions operating out of 21 air bases, many of which are located close to the DMZ.⁴⁰⁸

North Korean men serve at least 10 years of active duty in the KPA, with conscription beginning at age 17. After they are discharged from active duty, North Korean men are

⁴⁰¹ Walter L. Sharp, "Statement of General Walter L. Sharp Commander, United Nations Command; Commander, Republic of Korea-United States Combined Forces Command; and Commander, United States Forces Korea Before the Senate Armed Services Committee," 19 March 2009, 7, <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2009/March/Sharp%2003-19-09.pdf>

⁴⁰² Anthony H. Cordesman and Martin Kleiber, "The Asian Conventional Military Balance in 2006: Total and Sub-Regional Balances: Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia" (working draft, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 26 June 2006), 33, <http://www.comw.org/cmp/fulltext/0606cordesman.pdf>

⁴⁰³ Jane's, "Armed Forces: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 19 April 2012.

⁴⁰⁴ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, "Background Note: North Korea," 4 April 2012, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2792.htm>

⁴⁰⁵ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: North Korea," July 2007, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/North_Korea.pdf

⁴⁰⁶ Jane's, "Korea, North," *World Armies*, 19 April 2012.

⁴⁰⁷ Jane's, "Navy: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 22 March 2012.

⁴⁰⁸ Jane's, "Air Force: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 20 December 2011.

required to carry out part-time service, up to age 60, in the Workers and Peasants Red Guards (WPRG), a paramilitary civil defense force. Some North Korean women also serve in the military, although their service is not mandatory.⁴⁰⁹

Police and Internal Security Forces

The Ministry of People's Security (MPS) and the State Security Department (SSD) carry out internal security in North Korea. The 130,000 MPS employees are responsible for basic policing, border control, providing security for transportation infrastructure, and air-traffic control.^{410, 411} The SSD functions like the old Soviet KGB, conducting investigations of suspected political dissidents and managing the government's political prisons.^{412, 413} A subdivision of the SSD, the Security Command, is directly responsible for exposing corrupt or disloyal party members and regularly reports to the country's leader.⁴¹⁴

The People's Guard, with personnel estimated at 420,000, is responsible for controlling illegal movements across North Korea's border. The increase in this organization's numbers, believed necessary to combat the growing number of refugees attempting to flee North Korea, has created occasional tensions with China.⁴¹⁵

Roughly 7–8 million North Koreans serve in one of 3 paramilitary forces: The Worker-Peasant Red Guards (WPRG), the Red Youth Guard (RYG), and Paramilitary Training Units (PTU). The lightly armed WPRG is responsible for providing the population with basic military training, rear area defense, and guerilla warfare. The RYG is similarly charged and organized under the command of Korean Workers' Party (KWP) officials. The PTU, under the command of the KWP Civil Defense Bureau, is the ready reserve of the KPA and is responsible for rear area defense and security.⁴¹⁶

⁴⁰⁹ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: North Korea," July 2007, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/North_Korea.pdf

⁴¹⁰ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, "Country Profile: North Korea," July 2007, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/profiles/North_Korea.pdf

⁴¹¹ Jane's, "Security and Foreign Forces: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 20 September 2011.

⁴¹² Kongdan Oh and Ralph C. Hassig, *North Korea Through the Looking Glass* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 135–36.

⁴¹³ Jane's, "Security and Foreign Forces: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 20 September 2011.

⁴¹⁴ Jane's, "Security and Foreign Forces: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 20 September 2011.

⁴¹⁵ Jane's, "Security and Foreign Forces: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 20 September 2011.

⁴¹⁶ Jane's, "Security and Foreign Forces: Korea, North," *Sentinel Security Assessment—China and Northeast Asia*, 20 September 2011.

Terrorism

The North Korean government is not known to have participated in or sponsored any acts of terrorism since the 1987 bombing of a Korean Airlines jet en route to Baghdad.⁴¹⁷ In late 2008, North Korea was taken off the U.S. government's list of State Sponsors of Terrorism, on which it had been included since 1988.⁴¹⁸



© Anynobody / Wikipedia.org
Korean Air Boeing 707

Prior to the 1990s, North Korea kidnapped citizens from neighboring countries. South Korea estimates that nearly 500 of its citizens have been abducted by DPRK agents since the end of the Korean War.⁴¹⁹ North Korean abductions have also victimized Japan. Between 1977 and 1982, North Korean agents kidnapped at least 13 Japanese citizens, taking them as captives to North Korea. (The Japanese government claims that 17 individuals were abducted.)⁴²⁰ In 2002 the North Korean government admitted to 13 abductions, and later that year it allowed 5 abductees, whom it claimed were the only ones still alive, to return to Japan. Two years later, family members of the five abductees, who had also been taken in the kidnappings, were returned to Japan as well. Questions remain about whether any abductees are still alive. The fate of these Japanese kidnap victims is an issue that continues to cloud Japanese-DPRK relations.⁴²¹

North Korea is not known to harbor any members of international terrorist groups, other than four members of the Japanese Communist League-Red Army Faction, who surrendered themselves to North Korean officials after hijacking a Japanese Airlines flight and flying it to Pyongyang in 1970.^{422, 423}

An ongoing concern has been North Korea's willingness to sell weapons, missiles, and possibly nuclear technology to other states, some of which help arm groups that the United States and other countries consider terrorist organizations. Both Iran and Syria have purchased missiles from North Korea, and U.S. intelligence officials believe North

⁴¹⁷ Global Security, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2007: Chapter 6: Terrorist Organizations," 30 April 2008, http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/report/2008/c-rprt-terrorism_2007.htm

⁴¹⁸ Merle D. Kellerhals, Jr., "U.S. Removes North Korea from State Sponsors of Terrorism List," America.gov Archive, 14 October 2008, <http://www.america.gov/st/peacesec-english/2008/October/20081014152502dmslahrellek7.125491e-02.html>

⁴¹⁹ Global Security, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2005: Chapter 6: State Sponsors of Terror Overview," 2006, http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/report/2006/c-rprt-terrorism_2005-06.htm

⁴²⁰ Government of Japan, Headquarters for the Abduction Issue, "Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea," May 2011, <http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/ratimondai/index.html>

⁴²¹ Government of Japan, Headquarters for the Abduction Issue, "Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea," May 2011, <http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/ratimondai/index.html>

⁴²² National Police Agency of Japan, "Movements of the Japanese Red Army and the 'Yodo-go' Group," n.d., <http://www.npa.go.jp/archive/keibi/syouten/syouten271/english/0301.html>

⁴²³ Global Security, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2007: Chapter 6: Terrorist Organizations," 30 April 2008, http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/report/2008/c-rprt-terrorism_2007-06.htm

Korea was helping Syria build a nuclear reactor before it was destroyed by Israeli warplanes in 2007.^{424, 425}

Issues Affecting Security

Food Supply

Arguably, the food emergency between 1995 and 1998 brought more wrenching changes to the nation than any other event in North Korea's history. This period of famine brought the public system of food distribution to a standstill.⁴²⁶ As a result, private farmers' markets sprang up in urban areas, where nonsubsidized food was either purchased with cash or obtained through barter. With little to lose, many North Koreans also began to ignore tight governmental travel restrictions. An unprecedented wave of North Koreans migrated across the Chinese border, some for only temporary periods before coming back with goods or income from China.⁴²⁷ In response, the DPRK government set up a number of detention facilities designed to hold those caught traveling without a permit.^{428, 429}



Several factors contributed to the severity of the famine in the 1990s, beginning early in the decade when shipments of subsidized food, oil, and equipment from the Soviet Union and China declined. Two years of floods, followed by a severe drought in 1997, were the culminating events. Because North Korea's diminished economy has little to offer other nations in terms of exports, other than military hardware, the economy cannot rely on its trade capacity or hard currency reserves to make up for shortfalls in grain production during periods of excessive or insufficient rainfall. Food aid from agencies and donor countries—most notably, South Korea, China, the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations—and improved grain harvests in the 2000s have helped fend off another devastating famine in the intervening years.⁴³⁰ But North Korea continues to walk a thin line between food sufficiency and food deficit, with a summer of too much or too little rainfall capable of tipping the balance.

⁴²⁴ Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, "North Korea Missile Milestones: 1969–2011," 2012, <http://www.wisconsinproject.org/countries/nkorea/north-korea-missile-milestones.html>

⁴²⁵ Greg Miller and Paul Richter, "U.S. Opens Dossier on Syrian Facility," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 April 2008, <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/apr/25/world/fg-ussyria25>

⁴²⁶ People's Korea, "DPRK Hails End of 'Arduous March,'" 2000, http://www1.korea-np.co.jp/pk/149th_issue/2000101402.htm

⁴²⁷ Andrew Natsios, "The Politics of Famine in North Korea" (special report, United States Institute of Peace, August 1999), 11–12, <http://www.usip.org/publications/politics-famine-north-korea>

⁴²⁸ Andrew Natsios, "The Politics of Famine in North Korea" (special report, United States Institute of Peace, August 1999), 11–12, <http://www.usip.org/publications/politics-famine-north-korea>

⁴²⁹ Nanchu with Xing Hang, *In North Korea: An American Travels Through an Imprisoned Nation* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2003), 19.

⁴³⁰ Andrew Natsios, "The Politics of Famine in North Korea" (special report, United States Institute of Peace, August 1999), 11–12, <http://www.usip.org/publications/politics-famine-north-korea>

Succession and Political Reform

Kim Jong Il died unexpectedly in December 2011. He was succeeded by his third son, Kim Jong Un. The younger Kim's first few months in office have gone relatively smoothly, but the extent of his power remains unknown. So far, Kim Jong Un appears to be continuing the policies of his father, but many speculate that the superficial calm is concealing underlying tensions within the leadership. There are several rivalries that could threaten Kim Jong Un's legitimacy or lead to purges.⁴³¹



North Korea as viewed from south of the DMZ

A related issue is whether North Korea can sustain the isolationism and repression of previous years. Some suggest that North Korea will follow the Chinese development model as it struggles to reform its stagnating economy. But following the Chinese model could potentially cause the regime's downfall. The North Korean leadership considers it essential to block knowledge of the outside world from its citizens. If North Koreans become aware of the degree of prosperity in other nations, particularly in South Korea, the legitimacy of the government could be brought into question. Therefore, isolating the population remains central to government stability, although it is not clear how long such a policy can be sustained.⁴³² As citizens gain increasing access to outside media via cell phones, radio, and DVDs, it may become increasingly difficult for the government to keep its people isolated.⁴³³ One study found that nearly half of all North Koreans have watched a foreign DVD, a quarter have listened to a foreign radio broadcast or watched foreign news, and nearly a third have modified their televisions to receive nongovernment stations.⁴³⁴ Increased exposure to the outside world may not be enough to bring down the government, but it could create pressure on national leaders.⁴³⁵

⁴³¹ Jane's, "Absolute Beginner: North Korea After Kim Jong-Il," *Intelligence Review*, 11 January 2012.

⁴³² Andrei Lankov, "North Korea's Choice: Collapse or Reform," *Foreign Affairs*, 19 December 2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136966/andrei-lankov/north-koreas-choice-collapse-or-reform?page=show>

⁴³³ BBC News, "North Korea Access to Outside Media Up, Says U.S. Study," 10 May 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18030692>

⁴³⁴ News.com.au, "Outside Media, Phones Changing North Korean Worldview," 11 May 2012, <http://www.news.com.au/technology/outside-media-phones-changing-north-korean-worldview/story-e6frfro0-1226352675620>

⁴³⁵ Rachel Vandenbrink, "North Korea 'Quietly Opening,'" *Radio Free Asia*, 10 May 2012, <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/korea/media-05102012182558.html>

Chapter 5 Assessment

1. North Korea's military is one of the world's smallest.

False

North Korea's military, officially known as the Korean People's Army (KPA), is one of the world's largest. According to recent estimates, there are approximately 1.2 million active duty members and between 7–8 million reservists in the North Korean military.

2. The United States has agreed to provide North Korea annual fuel oil shipments and to work with an international consortium to develop two light-water reactors in North Korea.

True

In exchange, North Korea has agreed to freeze the development of its nuclear program and work with the United States to store its existing spent nuclear fuel safely. In 1999, the DPRK announced a voluntary end to its long-range missile-testing program.

3. China is North Korea's most important trading partner.

True

Imports from China provide more food, fuel, and other supplies to North Korea than any other nation. Chinese companies are among the few outside investors in North Korean industrial enterprises. China is also a significant provider of aid to North Korea.

4. In April 2008, Pyongyang cut off all official dialog with South Korea.

True

North Korea cut off dialog with South Korea in April 2008 in response to South Korean President Lee Myung-Bak's hard stance toward North Korea. North-South relations further deteriorated in July 2008 when the North Korean military shot and killed a South Korean tourist at the Mount Kumgang resort.

5. The period of famine in the 1990s brought North Korea's public food distribution system to a standstill.

True

As a result of the breakdown of the food distribution system, private farmers' markets sprang up in urban areas. Nonsubsidized food was purchased with cash or obtained through barter.

FINAL ASSESSMENT

1. North Korea's climate is primarily determined by ocean currents.
True or False
2. The Tumen River originates on the slopes of Mount Paektu.
True or False
3. During the Japanese occupation, Pyongyang was revitalized as an industrial center.
True or False
4. Nearly three-quarters of North Korea is covered with forests.
True or False
5. Wonsan is North Korea's largest port city on the Yellow Sea.
True or False
6. The first time the Korean Peninsula was unified under a single dynasty was when Silla's armies drove Tang forces north of the Taedong River.
True or False
7. To further establish the authenticity of his leadership, Wang Kon bestowed on himself the title Chonsu (Mandate of Heaven).
True or False
8. A high point of the early Chosun period was the reign of King Sejong.
True or False
9. Japanese rule was remarkably tolerant during the early years of Korean annexation.
True or False
10. After the Korean War, Kim Il Sung was able to consolidate his position by incorporating associates connected with the Communist Party in the South.
True or False
11. The Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC), just north of the South Korean border, produces consumer goods such as watches and shoes for South Korean companies.
True or False
12. Farm harvests are distributed to small private markets.
True or False

13. South Korean investments in North Korea are part of an overall government policy of economic engagement with the North.
True or False
14. In recent years, Chinese manufactured consumer goods have flowed increasingly across the border into North Korea.
True or False
15. North Korea does not have extensive reserves of any economically significant minerals.
True or False
16. North Korea has developed its own form of *Hangul*, the Korean alphabet.
True or False
17. Because of food shortages, North Korean specialty dishes are no longer prepared in the country.
True or False
18. The national sport of North Korea is taekwondo.
True or False
19. Koreans have passed down their myths and legends in *pansori*, traditional tales that a *sorrikun* (singer) alternately sings and narrates.
True or False
20. In many North Korean families, women have become the primary provider.
True or False
21. North Korean men serve at least 10 years of active duty in the North Korean military.
True or False
22. After North Korea announced its first successful test of a nuclear device in October 2006, subsequent Six-Party Talks led to agreements by North Korea to dismantle its nuclear facilities.
True or False
23. Thousands of North Koreans cross into China each year, even though China has a repatriation treaty with North Korea.
True or False
24. To ease regional tensions, South Korea refuses to support North Korean defectors.
True or False

25. North Korea continues to walk a thin line between food sufficiency and food deficit.

True or False

FURTHER READING

Books

- Breen, Michael. *Kim Jong Il: North Korea's Dear Leader*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2012.
- Cha, Victor D. *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future*. New York: Ecco, 2012.
- Cordesman, Anthony H. et al. *The Korean Military Balance: Comparative Korean Forces and the Forces of Key Neighboring States*. Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2011.
- Cronin, Patrick M. *Vital Venture: Economic Engagement of North Korea and the Kaesong Industrial Complex*. Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2012.
- Demick, Barbara. *Nothing to Envy: Ordinary Lives in North Korea*. New York: Spiegel and Grau, 2009.
- DiFilippo, Anthony. *US-Japan-North Korea Security Relations: Irrepressible Interests*. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Everard, John. *Only Beautiful, Please: A British Diplomat in North Korea*. Stanford, CA: Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, 2012.
- Gause, Ken E. *North Korea under Kim Chong-il: Power, Politics, and Prospects for Change*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011.
- Haggard, Stephan, and Marcus Noland. *Witness to Transformation: Refugee Insights into North Korea*. Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2011.
- Harden, Blaine. *Escape from Camp 14: One Man's Remarkable Odyssey from North Korea to Freedom in the West*. New York: Viking, 2012.
- Hoare, James E. *Historical Dictionary of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012.
- Kwon, Heonik, and Byung-Ho Chung. *North Korea: Beyond Charismatic Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2012.
- Pollack, Jonathan D. *No Exit: North Korea, Nuclear Weapons, and International Security*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Ryang, Sonia. *Reading North Korea: An Ethnological Inquiry*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard

University Press, 2012.

Schwekendiek, Daniel. *A Socioeconomic History of North Korea*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2011.

Yi, Su-hun. *Nuclear North Korea: Regional Dynamics, Failed Policies, and Ideas for Ending a Global Stalemate*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012.

Yu, Chai-Shin, and Tae Ho Lee. *Early Korean Art and Culture: Koguryo Tomb Paintings*. Toronto: Society for Korean and Related Studies Press, 2011.

Papers and Articles

Lee, Dongmin. "North Korea's Power Transition: Rising Instability or Regime Resilience?" S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore, 28 December 2011. <http://dr.ntu.edu.sg/bitstream/handle/10220/8030/RSIS1882011.pdf?sequence=1>

Lind, Jennifer. "Kim Jung Un Takes the World's Worst Job," *Foreign Affairs*, 22 December 2011. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136987/jennifer-lind/kim-jong-un-takes-the-worlds-worst-job>

Films

Chosin. Directed by Brian Iglesias. New York, 2010.

Korea: Battles Not Forgotten. Directed by John Ford. Renton, WA, 2012.

Shadows and Whispers: The Struggle of North Korea's Refugees. Directed by Jung-Eun Kim. New York, 2011.