Seoul National University

Graduate School of International Studies

**Korean Peninsula and Great Power War (To be updated)**

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**Course Objective**

The course discusses geopolitical dynamics in the world and the place of wars in Korea with a focus on major power transitions. For this objective, the course covers South Korea’s interactions with these power transitions in a comprehensive manner by observing the timeframe that ranges from the era of the Three Kingdoms to modern day Korea. The course discusses grand strategy of various Korean states in dealing with great powers and their geo-political rivalry. It is also intended to cover topics related to how South Korea perceives and adapts to the ever-changing world such as its role as a middle power in dealing with outstanding issues like nuclear weapon development, unification, alliance management, and 21st century geopolitical situations in the region and beyond.

**Course Requirements**

1. Class Participation  (10%)

2. Short Memo (20%)

3. Group Presentation (30%)

4. Short Essay (40%)

**Guidelines**

* **Attendance** will be important for keeping up with the class. Good attendance and active participation will be reflected in the grade. Missing more than one-third of class will result in an F grade according to the school regulation.
* For the **group presentation**, students will provide a summary of each week’s topic based on the reading materials and independent research. The presentation should provide a creative discussion of each issue related to the Peninsula; based on the questions provided by the lecturer.
* Each student should **submit a short essay** on their presentation topic. The paper should focus on the geopolitical dynamics as well as domestic politics and economics of Korea. The paper should be between 800 to 1,000 words with footnotes and bibliography.
* Students are always welcome to **ask the instructor** for clarification during or after class when needed. Yet, the students are not to come to the instructor for an explanation of the material for missed classes. Students are advised to ask other colleagues about this.
* All students must exhibit professionalism in and out of the classroom. Students are required to uphold an honor code regarding “**academic standards, cheating, plagiarism, and the documentation of written work**,” and be aware of the **responsibility**.
* Students will write a total of **three memos** during the course. The memos must be submitted 24 hours before the class with a maximum of 500 words that focus on analysis and assessment of the readings instead of the summary. Students may choose the weeks according to their preference.

**Weekly Schedule (Tentative)**

**Week 1 (Sep. 2)**: Introduction

**Week 2 (Sep. 9)**: Goguryeo-Sui/Tang War in the 7th Century

* Eckert, C. J. (1990). Korea, old and new: a history. p. 24~41 (Chapter 3. Aristocratic Societies Under Monarchical Rule)
* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 2: The Period of the Three Kingdoms, Fourth Century to 676. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 27–47). Rowman & Littlefield.
* Kim, J., Tucker, S. C., & Kim, G. H. (2018). How did the Weaker Actor Defeat the Stronger Actor? Koguryŏ's War with Sui (612–614) Revisited. *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies*, *18*(2), 225–244. <https://doi.org/10.21866/esjeas.2018.18.2.005>
* Jinwung, K. (2016). An Ancient Middle Power's Diplomatic Dilemma: The Nature of Koguryŏ's Tributary Relationship with China. *Journal of Asian History.*, *50*(2), 175–199. <https://doi.org/10.13173/jasiahist.50.2.0175>

**Week 3 (Sep. 23)**: Silla-Tang Alliance in the 7th Century

* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 2: The Period of the Three Kingdoms, Fourth Century to 676. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 27–47). Rowman & Littlefield.

**Week 4 (Sep. 30)**: The Silla Unification (668) & the Rise of Balhae (698)

* Eckert, C. J. (1990). Korea, old and new: a history. p. 42~56 (Chapter 4. The Fashioning of an Authoritarian Monarchy)
* Kim, C. S. (1969). Sources of Cohesion and Fragmentation in the Silla Kingdom. *Journal of Korean Studies (Seattle, Wash. : 1979)*, *1*(1), 41–72. https://doi.org/10.1353/jks.1969.0000

**Week 5 (Oct. 7)**: Mongol Invasion of Koryo & Mongol-Koryo Invasion of Japan in the 13th Century

* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 5: Military Rulers and Mongol Invaders, 1170 to 1392. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 107-127). Rowman & Littlefield.
* Yoon, Y. (2006). The Focal Issues in the Historical Study of the Koryŏ’s Resistance against Mongol. *International Journal of Korean History*, *10*, 43–70.

**Week 6 (Oct. 14)**: Japanese Invasions of Joseon in the 16th Century

* Lee, J.-Y. (2017). Introduction. In *China's Hegemony* (pp. 1–26). New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press. https://doi.org/10.7312/lee-17974-002
* Lee, J.-Y. (2017). The Imjin War (1592-1598). In *China's Hegemony* (pp. 104–134). New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/lee-17974-006>
* Lee, J.-Y. (2016). THE MAKING OF QING HEGEMONY**.** In *China's Hegemony* (pp. 135–167). United States: Columbia University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7312/lee-17974-007>
* Kang, D. C., & Ma, X. (2018). Power transitions: Thucydides didn’t live in East Asia. *The Washington Quarterly*, *41*(1), 137–154. https://doi.org/10.1080/0163660x.2018.1445905

**Week 7 (Oct. 21)**: Manchu Invasions of Joseon in the 17th Century

* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 6: The Neo-Confucian Revolution and the Choson State, 1392 to the Eighteenth Century. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 133 to 162). Rowman & Littlefield.

**Week 8 (Oct. 28)**: Late Joseon and Great Power Wars: The Sino-Japanese War 1894-95

* Gordon, D.M. (2006). The China-Japan War, 1931-1945. *The Journal of Military History* *70*(1), 137-182. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jmh.2006.0052>.
* Greve, A. Q., & Levy, J. S. (2017). Power Transitions, Status Dissatisfaction, and War: The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895. *Security Studies*, *27*(1), 148–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2017.1360078>
* Jager, S. M. (2023). III. Wars and Imperialism. In *The Other Great Game: The Opening of Korea and the Birth of Modern East Asia* (pp. 135–185). essay, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 9: Korea in the Age of Imperialism, 1876 to 1910. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 247–283). Rowman & Littlefield.

**Week 9 (Nov. 4)**: Late Joseon and Great Power Wars: The Russo-Japanese War 1904-05

* Jager, S. M. (2023). V. The Russo-Japanese War - World War Zero. In *The Other Great Game: The Opening of Korea and the Birth of Modern East Asia* (pp. 309–394). The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 9: Korea in the Age of Imperialism, 1876 to 1910. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 247–283). Rowman & Littlefield.

**Week 10 (Nov. 11)**: The 2nd Sino-Japanese War (1937-45)

* Drea, E. & Ven, H. (2010). 1. An Overview of Major Military Campaigns during the Sino-Japanese War, 1937 – 1945. In M. Peattie, E. Drea & H. van de Ven (Ed.), *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937-1945* (pp. 27-47). Redwood City: Stanford University Press.<https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503627338-008>
* Jowett, P. S. (2016). *China and Japan at war 1937-1945 : rare photographs from wartime archives / Philip S. Jowett.* (1st ed..).

**Week 11 (Nov. 18)**: The Pacific War

* Sagan, S. D. (1988). The origins of the Pacific War. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, *18*(4), 893-922.

**Week 12 (Nov. 25)**: The Korean War

* Eckert, C. J. (1990). Korea, old and new: a history. p. 344~346 (The Korean War, 1950-1953)
* Jervis, R. (1980). The Impact of the Korean War on the Cold War. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *24*(4), 563–592. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002200278002400401>
* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 11: Division and War, 1945 to 1953. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 333–364). Rowman & Littlefield.
* Stueck, W. (1997). The Korean War as International History. In *The Korean War* (pp. 348–370). Princeton: Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400821785.348

**Week 13 (Dec. 2)**: The Vietnam War and Korea

* Mueller, J. E. (1971). Trends in Popular Support for the Wars in Korea and Vietnam. *American Political Science Review*, *65*(2), 358-375.

**Week 14 (Dec. 9)**: 21st Century US-China Competition and Middle Power Korea

* Seth, M. J. (2024). Chapter 16: Contemporary South Korea, 1997 to 2023. In *A Concise History of Korea: From Antiquity to the Present* (4th ed., pp. 511–544). Rowman & Littlefield.

**Week 15 (Dec. 16)**: Final Paper