The Korean War An International Perspective
History 4780-001

Instructor: Edward J. Davies, II  
Office: 367 CTIHIB  
Hours: 2:45 – 3:30 pm via zoom & By Appointment  
Email: e.davies@utah.edu  
Class Meeting Room: Zoom

REQUIREMENTS

**Two Examinations:** A midterm in-class and a take-home Final. The Final examination must be at least 10 typed pages.

**Two Books Reviews from Assigned Readings:** These should provide a critical commentary on each book.

**Attendance:** class will meet at assigned time and days unless otherwise notified. Given the pandemic, I will understand if unexpected circumstance prevent you from joining the class via zoom.

**Code of Behavior:** Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct, misrepresenting one’s work, and inappropriately collaborating. Definitions can be found in the Student Code at [http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html](http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Master the Narrative of Imperialism and Resistance in Korea and the Philippines 1850-1953  
Comparing Colonial Systems: Japan and Korea, the USA and the Philippines  
Develop Analytical Skills  
Polish Writing Skills  
Engage the debates over the USA and its colonial antecedent in Pursuing Intervention  
Understand Nationalism and the Struggle for Sovereignty  
Understand the dynamics of making war  
Understand the Consequences of War

COURSE CONTENT

Until 1876 Korea, known as the Hermit Kingdom, had remained outside of the international community with profound consequences for its peoples. Student will learn of the impact of state policies on the course of a society’s development. In the case of Korea, its political leaders attempted to navigate among the great powers contending for domination in the peninsula. Korea stood at the center of major power rivalry in the 1890s. Eventually Korea came under Japan’s sway by the end of the 1890s and a formal colony by 1910. As such, it joined foreign ruled Vietnam, Malaysia, Burma and Indonesia (or the Dutch East Indies) as formal colonies of industrial powers. This aspect will form the early part of the course that considers the larger historical context of Korea. Students will also come to understand the implications of international rivalry on individual states. History cannot be ignored! If so we fail to grasp the impact of current decisions on our own society, we risk the outcomes so disastrously experienced in the Korean peninsula.

The end of wars also brings dramatic changes to its participants. Asian War brought the United States into Korea and removed Japan as the dominating power. The War was actually just one of several conflicts that raged in the late 1940s and into the 1950s and beyond. The British confronted communist insurgency in Malaysia and the French faced a similar challenge in Vietnam. Similarly, the Dutch returned to their once occupied colony in Indonesia to find a national movement underway. In all these cases, the European powers were attempting to re-impose their rule after years of Japanese occupation and growing national demands.

The wars of liberation that raged in Southeast create the potential for comparisons with the Korean War of the early 1950s where the United States attempted to keep the Southern part of the peninsula free of communist rule. Unlike Southeast Asia where colonial rulers returned to assume their former positions as rulers, the United States entered the Korea as part of the larger Cold War. Issues such as former collaborators and national factions, including communist-led one, shaped the struggles for sovereignty in the Post-Word War II Korea.
REQUIRED TEXTS
Hildi Kang, Under the Black Umbrella
Helie Lee, Still Life With Rice
Carter Eckert, Old and New Korea: A History
Halberstam, The Coldest Winter: America and the Cold War

Center for Disability Services
University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

COURSE OUTLINE

Weeks 1 & 2
Northeast Asia in Historic and Strategic Perspective 1890-1910
The Age of Imperial Powers: Japan and the United States
Isolated Polities and Responses to Imperial Powers: Tokugawa Japan and Choson Korea Japanese and U.S.
Colonialism: Korea and the Philippines Compared
Creating a Colonial Order: Japan in Northeast Asia / The U.S. and the Western Pacific
Governing Subject Peoples: Language, Administration and Race
Assignment: Eckert, Korea, pp. 107-177, Kang, Under the Black Umbrella

Week 3
Resistance to Colonial Rule: The Korean State and Japan / The U.S. and the Filipino War
World on Fire: The Russian Revolution, Imperial Power and Uprisings in Asia & The Southeast Asia
Assignment: Eckert, Korea, pp. 178-253 Kang, Under the Black Umbrella, pp. 37-87

Week 4
Ruling Colonial Peoples: The Interwar Years, 1920-1937
Assignment: Kang, Under the Black Umbrella, pp. 87-129 Eckert, Korea, pp. 254-305
Lee, Still Life With Rice, pp. 1-105

Week 5 & 6
World War II: Korea’s Economic Role as a Colony of Japan
The Philippines as a Battleground
World War II: The Japanese Recruit Laborers & Soldiers
The U.S. and Japanese Internment
World War II: The Japanese recruit Korean Women for the Empire: The Comfort Women
Agony, Despair and Forgetting

Week 7
The Impact of Surrender on Korea
The Scramble for Power in Postwar East Asia and the Pacific
Assignment: Eckert, Korea, pp. 305-326
Kang, Under the Black Umbrella, pp. 136-149

Week 8
The Impact of Surrender and the International Context: The USA and the USSR
Lee, Still Life With Rice, pp. 170-185

Week 9
The Revolution in the North
Creating South Korea Assignment: Lee, Still Life With Rice, pp. 185-247
Week 10
The Outbreak of the Korean War: The Immediate Causes and the Larger Context of the War
Planning a war The First Days: North Korean Victories The Push to Pusan
Assignment: Eckert, Korea, pp. 327-340 Halberstam, The Coldest Winter

Week 11
Recovery: The Inchon Landing The Push North to the Yalu The People’s Republic Enters the War
Assignment: Eckert, Korea, pp. 340-352 Thompson, Cry Korea: The Korean War: A Reporter’s Notebook

Week 12
Using Allies: Japan and the Korean War Using the United Nations
Assignment: Lee, Still Life With Rice, pp. 240-320

Week 13
Stalemate: Limited War
The U.S. and the Propaganda War Eisenhower and peace

Week 14
The Impact of the Korean War on the USA Domestic and Military
The War Torn Korean Peninsula
Assignment: Eckert, Korea, pp. 389-410

Week 15
Conclusion: The Korean War in Historic Memory

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement
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Wellness Statement
Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - www.wellness.utah.edu; 801-581-7776.

Veterans Center
If you are a student veteran, I want you to know that the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

LGBT Resource Center
If you are a member of the LGBTQ community, I want you to know that my classroom is a safe zone*. Additionally, please know that the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: http://lgbt.utah.edu/. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.
Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language

If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources include: the Department of Linguistics ESL Program (http://linguistics.utah.edu/esl-program/); the Writing Center (http://writingcenter.utah.edu/); the Writing Program (http://writing-program.utah.edu/); the English Language Institute (http://continue.utah.edu/eli/). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.