

## The Korean Peninsula: any form of colonialism and imperialism, and ideological divisions

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### ABSTRACT

The warless period persisted until well some 500,000 to 300,000 years ago. After modern humans had left Africa to dominate and colonize the world, any form of colonialism and imperialism emerged because war and warfare became a necessary byproduct of colonial and imperial rule of modern humans. Furthermore, ideological divisions of civilizations or countries that are also known as states or nations took place. This paper will analyze how and why the Korean Peninsula was dominated and colonized by colonial and imperial powers/colonizers/colonists and after the third but historic ideological division from 1945 to the present and the third but historic official and formal ideological division from 1948 to the present, North Korea transformed into from a (formally) colonized country into a middle power country with its strongest measure continuing to be capability of military and nuclear deterrent and South Korea transformed from a (formally) colonized country into a brutal sub-neo-colonial and sub-neo-imperial hard power country, and then into a neo-colonial and neo-imperial soft power country.

**KEYWORDS:** The Korean Peninsula, China, Japan, Russia, European colonial and imperial powers, the United States of America, Mongolia, colonialism, imperialism, ideological division, North Korea, South Korea

### 1. BACKGROUND

Even before the appearance of Genus Homo, modern humans 300,000 years ago in Africa an external migration from Africa to all the different parts of the world and an internal migration within Africa took place about 2 million years ago. (Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a) Approximately 600,000 years ago, humanity split in two. One group preferred to stay in Africa, evolving into modern humans. The other struck out overland, into Asia, and then Europe, coming to be Homo neanderthalensis-the Neanderthals. (Longrich, 2020) Ancestral humans already possessed political and social skills. (Fukuyama, 2012, p. 30) The first forms of human social organization were called families, which lived in bands<sup>2</sup> or clans' communities or groups or societies as pre-farming mobile/nomadic hunters-(fishers)-gatherers, or foragers. (Fukuyama, 2012, p. 53) The warless period persisted until well some 500,000 to 300,000 years ago when ancestral humans mastered in using fire and developed weapons to engage in conflict over basic survival needs, such as food, resources, and territory. Thus, consequently, the earliest known (organized, unorganized, disorganized) killing or violence or brutality that later triggered (organized, unorganized, disorganized) war and warfare among pre-farming mobile/nomadic hunter-(fisher)-gatherer, or forager, bands or clans' communities or groups or societies took place. (Andreatta & Schöenberger, 2023; for more details, please see, Stetka, 2016; Charles, 2021; Greenspan, 2023) Ancestral humans' remains from a cave in northern Spain demonstrate evidence of a lethal attack 430,000 years ago. It was concluded that it is likely that two fractures on that skull may have been caused by multiple blows and may have indicated an intention to kill. Scientists propose that the study offers grisly evidence that (organized, unorganized, disorganized) killing or violence or brutality is an intrinsic part of the ancestral humans' culture.

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<sup>2</sup>In general, a band is composed of a small kin group, no larger than clan or an extended family.

(Sala et al., 2015) It shall be indicated that probably humanity's ills-in particular, modern humans' territoriality, killing or violence or brutality, wars-are innate, but not modern inventions and phenomena and a fundamental part of ancestral humans and that it is presumably that ancestral humans have been killing or violating or brutalizing each other since as long as there have been ancestral humans. According to Raymond C. Kelly (2000 and 2005), the warless period lasted until well after the appearance of modern humans, ending merely at the occurrence of economic and social shifts that were related to sedentism, when organized raiding of villages or settlements were incentivized by new conditions. (Kelly, Raymond C., 2000 and 2005) Later, modern humans also began their dispersal out of Africa or the great migration of modern humans or the migration of modern humans on a mass scale about 220,000 years ago with the aim of dominating and colonizing the world. (Blaxland & Dorey, 2025; for more details, please see, Gugliotta, 2008) Fossils demonstrate that modern humans lived outside of Africa between 210,000 and 100,000 years ago. According to Biology and Paleontology, far from peaceful, Neanderthals were likely dangerous warriors and skilled fighters, rivaled merely by modern humans. Evolutionary biologist Nicholas Longrich looks at the evidence for a war between them and modern humans. The best evidence demonstrates that Neanderthals fought and excelled at war and that they met modern humans, and they were not immediately overrun. On the contrary, for approximately 100,000 years ago, Neanderthals have resisted modern humans' expansion or dominance and colonization, the spreading to all the different parts of the world. It may be apparent that failed dispersal attempts were made by modern humans, who were probably replaced by local Neanderthal populations (Stringer, 2012; The Atlantic, 2018 and 2025). It shall be mentioned that the Neanderthals were not violent than modern humans. Modern humans may be invoked as a uniquely dangerous species. Moreover, they may be considered to be the most dangerous human species to other human populations because they compete for land and resources. (Longrich, 2019; for more details, please see, Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) When the great migration of modern humans, which led modern humans to possess a position of world dominance that it has never renounced and made a signal to the extinction of whatever rivals endured, was concluded, modern humans became the last-and only-man standing and the only surviving human species between 40,000 and 15,000 years ago, according to genetics and fossils. Thus, any form of colonialism and imperialism began to appear because war and warfare became a necessary byproduct of colonial and imperial rule of modern humans. (Longrich, 2020)<sup>3</sup> The transition from pre-farming to farming led to the global late Mesolithic or Monolithic Period or Middle Stone Age (12,000 B.C.E. or 11,300 or 11,000 B.C.E.-10,000 B.C.E. or 10,700 cal Before Present or 9,500 B.C.E.) upheaval and the beginning of Neolithization or Neolithic Revolution or Neolithic Period or the early Neolithic Period or New Stone Age (10,000 B.C.E.-3,000 B.C.E. or 6,000-4,500 Before Present). Hence, while the era of synchronously global and marvelous cultural changes and the improvement of international relations took place, basic warfare is known to have broken out soon after the Neolithic Revolution. Once modern humans settled in one place to farm, it is highly possible that (organized, unorganized, disorganized) killing or violence or brutality between farming hunter-(fisher)-gatherer, or forager, bands or clans' communities or groups or societies had become more common. Inter-polity systems, which are positioned at the center of international relations, emerged in Europe for the first time roughly 9,000 B.C.E. when farming hunter-(fisher)-gatherer, or forager, bands or clans' communities or groups or societies gained benefits from rich marine resources along the Atlantic seaboard to settle down.<sup>4</sup> During the Neolithic Period, modern humans

<sup>3</sup>Evidence of the buried individuals at the cemetery Jebel Sahaba in Sudan, suggest that they may have experienced trauma and (organized, unorganized, disorganized) killing or violence or brutality at several points during their lives. Jebel Sahaba is regarded as one of the earliest sites, which displayed signs of mass conflict and one of the earliest known war, was thought of as a repeated conflict approximately 13,400 years ago. The discovery indicates definitive evidence that organized war or warfare predates the so-called global late Mesolithic upheaval and the prehistory of (organized, unorganized, disorganized) killing or violence or brutality before the origin of farming. The discussion of earliest agriculture is nearly as old as archaeology itself. Sporadically 12,000 years ago, in the aftermath of the introduction of agriculture in the Fertile Crescent, the focus of development shifted to fertile alluvial plains and densities started to increase even in areas without crops. (Greenspan, 2023)

<sup>4</sup>World history has been full of examples of one civilization/state/nation gradually expanding by incorporating adjacent territory and settling its people on newly conquered territory since ancient times, i.e., colonies of the city-states of Greece and Phoenicia in other parts of the Mediterranean, colonies of the Roman Empire in large parts of North Africa, West Asia, and Western Europe; in medieval times, colonies of the Huns in Europe in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century C.E., colonies of the Sassanid Empire in West Asia, namely, Yemen and Oman, colonies of the Arabs in Mesopotamia, Northern Africa, and the Levant, colonies of the Vikings of Scandinavia in Canada or North America, Denmark, England or the United Kingdom, Greenland, Iceland, Ireland, parts of the European mainland, Scotland, Southern Norway, and Southern Sweden, and Wales. (Longrich, 2020) Three waves of European colonialism were identified by some commentators: (i) The first wave of European

settled in villages or settlements (i.e., Jericho (JAIR•ih•koh) or the village of Jericho (Era: c. 8,000 B.C.E., Location: in Southwest Asia). Roughly 8,000 or 7,000 B.C.E. modern humans' societies across different kinds of parts of the world began to transition to tribal forms of organization. (Fukuyama, 2012, p. 55) Food surpluses led to the possibility of the development of social elite who were not engaged in agriculture, commerce or industry, yet led to the domination of their tribes' communities or groups or societies and monopoly of decision-making. Nevertheless, larger societies led it to be more feasible for people to adopt various decision-making and governance models. (Eagly & Wood, 2000) There is evidence of diplomacy between different tribes' communities or groups or societies, but also of endemic warfare. (Holslag, 2018, p. 26) This could have been led by abduction of resource, or women, status competition, and theft of livestock or crops. (Holslag, 2018) Modern humans witnessed the first known civilization, namely Mesopotamia or Iraq (c. 6,500 B.C.E.-539 B.C.E.) (Era: c. 8,000 B.C.E.-2,000 B.C.E., Location: Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq)) and the first known state, namely Uruk (4,000-3,000 B.C.E., Location: Mesopotamia). Throughout history, civilizations/states/nations have been divided and reorganized in different kinds of ways, which geographical, political, and social shifts. Such divisions, which a frequently deemed as administrative or political subdivisions, have contained departments, provinces, regions, states, and more, each serving different purposes being dependent on the particular state/nation and time period. Examples vary from the ancient Roma Empire provinces to the modern-day states of the United States of America. In addition to that, even today, powerful states/nations are still currently warring and powerless states/nations are still currently resisting any form of colonialism and imperialism, and ideological divisions and had to struggle for being a independent state, i.e., Afghanistan war (2001-2014); Iraq war from 2003 to 2011 and the ideological division of Iraq into autonomous regions, and even separate states/nations, the renewed war in Iraq in 2014, a close of the most recent war in the country in 2017; Syrian Civil war (2012-); the Russo-Ukrainian war that began in February 2014; Gaza war (on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2023-ongoing); the Iran-Israel proxy conflict, which is also called the Iran-Israel proxy war or Iran-Israel Cold war (on 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2025-ongoing). Some of them could not gain the independence from them, but some of them are. Even in terms of fulfilling their people needs they are fully independent. Like Hong Kong, the most independent country, any nation is truly independent when it possesses every source to satisfy the needs of its people and it is in need of having independence in terms of economy, goods, marine, military, etc. Every nation is independent in the perspective of some matters, i.e., Canada is an independent country in terms of freedom. However, in this world, no nation in this universe is truly independent. This is because every country is dependent on another country for specific reasons like foods, goods, marine, military, petrol, weapons, etc., i.e., the United States of America is the top Gross Domestic Product rate country. Although it is the world's most powerful country and is independent in the matters of freedom and luxury products, the majority of its top five sources of petroleum imports come from its major trading partners like Canada, Columbia, Mexico, Russia, and Saudi Arabia. (Artificial Intelligence (AI), 2025) I feel obliged to emphasis that this article is excerpted from my forthcoming book that is related to any form of colonialism and imperialism on the Korean Peninsula, whose title has not been determined yet and that because there is a specific limit on the number of article pages, it was not possible to refer to all the references/citations within the text of this article, and furthermore they are properly found in my aforementioned forthcoming book and my forthcoming post-doctoral research book, namely the effects of multiple simultaneous historic events from pre-history to the present within and outside of South Korea on its industrial relations system, social and economic inequality. I also feel obliged to mention that the term 'formally colonial and imperial rule' is used for denoting the term 'strong/heavy influence on any civilization/state/nation' and the term 'being subordination/a tributary state to any civilization/state/nation', and the term 'partly but not formally colonial and imperial rule' was used for denoting the term 'less/weak influence on any civilization/state/nation'.

### **Neighboring civilizations/states/nations sharing its borders with land and/or sea borders civilizations/states/nations: China, Japan, and Russia**

**In pre-historic times**, ancestral modern humans began to live on the Korean peninsula, which was progressively developing its own distinct civilization and culture. The international relations between the Korean peninsula and

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colonialism/expansion commenced with the involvement of the two main countries, namely Portugal and Spain, (ii) The second wave of European colonialism ushered in Great Britain's involvement in Asia in behalf of the British East India Company, and furthermore other European colonial and imperial powers including France, Portugal and the Netherlands possessed involvement in European colonialism in Asia, and (iii) The third wave, namely new-imperialism was composed of the Scramble for Africa that was regulated by the terms of the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 that effectively divided Africa among the European powers-to be more precisely, vast regions of Africa came under the sway of Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. (Gilmartin, 2009 (2017))

China and the international relations between the Korean peninsula and Russia (Russian Far East) may date back to the Lower Paleolithic Period (700,000-120,000 B.C.E.), the international relations between Africa and Europe may go back to 45,000 B.C.E., the international relations between the Korean Peninsula and Japan dates back to the Jōmon period (c. 14,500 or 14,000-1,000 B.C.E. or 10,000-300 B.C.E.) that is called the earliest historical era of Japanese history. A developmental process gave rise to the association of economic patterns among hunter-(fisher)-gatherers, or foragers of not only the Korean Peninsula, but also the China, Russian Far East, and Japan. The international relations between the United States of America and East Asia may be traced back to the Late/Upper Paleolithic Period (50,000 or 40,000 B.C.E.-12,000 or 11,000 B.C.E. or 10,000 B.C.E.), approximately 14,000 B.C.E. The international relations between the United States of America and Asia and Siberia may date back to about 13,500 to 13,000 B.C.E. The international relations between the Korean Peninsula and Southeast Asia (as well as South China) is traced back to some 10,000 B.C.E., the international relations between the Korean Peninsula and Europe may be traced back to 7,000 years to the Neolithic Age, and the international relations between the Korean Peninsula and Mongolia may be traced back to Early Neolithic and Early Neolithic Chulmun Times or Early times or Pre-Chulmun Times (c. 6,000 B.C.E. to 4,000 B.C.E. (Kulpo Culture) or 3,500 B.C.E.) on the Korean Peninsula, the international relations between Russia and Europe may date back to 4,500 B.C.E., and the international relations or the earliest relationships between the Korean Peninsula (including a part of Manchuria) and the Eurasian nomadic culture may date back to 3,500 B.C.E. **In ancient times**, the appearance of complex society has long been regarded as a social and economic corollary of the Korean Bronze Age (late 800 or 700 B.C.E.-300 B.C.E.) that witnessed the establishment of the first known ancient permanent sedentary Kingdom(s), namely the first Kingdom of Gojoseon (c. 800 or 700 B.C.E.-195 B.C.E.). In 195 B.C.E., the Korean Peninsula under the administration of the first Kingdom of Gojoseon (c. 800 or 700 B.C.E.-195 B.C.E.) came to be subordination/a tributary state to Imperial China (mostly, Manchurian and Mongolian Dynasties), thus it came under the sway of the formally ancient colonial and imperial rule of China, and furthermore the Korean Peninsula had to begin to resist against the expansionist ambitions of neighboring civilizations/states/nations sharing its borders with land and/or sea borders civilizations/states/nations (China, Japan, and Russia). The presence of Chinese Lelang or Lo-Lang or Nangnang colony in 108 B.C.E. led the Korean Peninsula under the administration of Wiman Joseon (194 B.C.E.-108 B.C.E.) to be under the formally ancient colonial and imperial rule of China and the beginning of a period of time when the Korean Peninsula was divided into three ancient rival Kingdoms-that is to say, Proto-Three Kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula or the Samhan Period (2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E.-2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> century C.E.), which is deemed as the proto-historical period on the Korean Peninsula, in the aftermath of the fall of Wiman Joseon (194 B.C.E.-108 B.C.E.) and prior to the maturation of Three Kingdoms of the Korean Peninsula (c. 50 B.C.E.-668 C.E.) that were named the Goryeo Dynasty or the Goguryeo or Koguryo (37 B.C.E.-668 C.E.) in the North (extending into Manchuria), the Baekje or Paekhe (18 B.C.E.-660 C.E. or 663 C.E.) in the Southwest, and the Silla Kingdom (57 B.C.E.-668 C.E.) in the Southeast, to come into being at around the same time and to transform into full-fledged kingdoms. This may be deemed as the first known ideological division and the beginning of co-existing with another sometimes formally and sometimes partly but not formally sometimes willingly sometimes unwillingly. (For more details, please see, Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) **In medieval times**, Chinese culture and government administration contained the use of Confucian examination system to train government officials and had a strong influence on all of the states of the Three Kingdoms Period of the Korean Peninsula. In addition, the medieval times are labeled as the strong influence of China on Japan. This may be thought of as the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China on the Korean Peninsula and the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China in Japan. The Silla Kingdom (57 B.C.E.-668 C.E.) began to control all of the Korean Peninsula in 668 C.E., and led to the formation of a new state, namely the Unified Silla Kingdom (668 C.E.-892 C.E.), with significant Chinese aid. (Cartwright, 2016) Furthermore, it is the first time that the Unified Silla Kingdom in 668 C.E. united people on the Korean Peninsula. However, the Korean Peninsula could not be an independent state because there were the states of the Balhae or Parhae Kingdom (698 C.E.-926 C.E.) at this time in the north of the Korean Peninsula, most of whose territory belonged to Manchuria, the Little Goguryeo (699 C.E.-820 C.E.), and the Tamna Kingdom (Tributary of Silla) (662 C.E.-925 C.E.). Therefore, most historians do not consider it a Korean state proper. (Cartwright, 2016) The powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.), which led to the beginning of Dynastic Period that include the Chosŏn/Joseon Dynasty (1392-1876, the unofficial and informal collapse, or 1895, the official and formal collapse) and the Korean Empire (1897-1905, the unofficial and informal collapse, or 1910, the official and formal collapse), gave rise to a unified Korean Peninsula's state and a Korean Peninsula's dynasty that would last for over 500 years. However, aside from the powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.), there were other dynasties such as the Tamna (Vassal of Goryeo) Dynasty (938-1105) and Heungyo Dynasty (1029-1030). Until the last dynasty formally and officially fell or even the last dynasty attempted to become unified with it, the powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) may not be thought of as an independent state. Therefore, until the establishment of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876) the first known



ideological division continued, and furthermore some kingdoms/dynasties went under the formally ancient colonial and imperial rule of China, even the powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.), while other kingdoms/dynasties went under the partly but not formally ancient colonial and imperial rule of China. This means that all in all, they continued to be prone to co-exist with another sometimes formally and sometimes partly but not formally sometimes willingly sometimes unwillingly. Meanwhile, Japan carried on the Feudal Wars, which led to culminate in military governments, namely the Shōgunate (1192-1867), after a long period of clan warfare until the 12<sup>th</sup> century and started to having a crucial role in changing ‘the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region regarding regionalization and regionalism’ and thus led to ‘the beginning of the new era and the advent of medieval colonial and imperial rule in the Asia-Pacific region.’ Therefore, it may be indicated that the aim of Japan is to be no longer under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China and is to be decolonized and to be deemed as the most recognized dominant colonial and imperial power, i.e., Japan received the fruit of its labor, and then became successful in being decolonized in 1858 and being cited as the most recognized dominant colonial and imperial power on the Korean Peninsula in 1876 and as formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power in 1895 when the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan went under the formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan. From the end of the Tang dynasty (618-907) and throughout nearly the entire reign of the Song dynasty (960-1279 or 947-1127), the tributes of the powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) to China began to decrease year by year. (Meng Weizhan, 2015) In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, from 1231 to 1336, the powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) had to continue to be under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of the Mongols-ruled China, unwillingly. In 1338 Giovanni di Monte Carvino, who was first archbishop of Mongol Beijing (Khanbalik), passed away, yet his existence and mission means the role of Christianity in the medieval colonial and imperial expansion of European colonial and imperial powers. This relationship between empire building and religious missionizing led to the formation of a legacy that maintains to design the world today, in 2007, a legacy that was labeled by Anibal Quijano as the colonial matrix of power. Religion leads to the formation of a significant component of this matrix. Therefore, I assumed that in 1338, China was under the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism. Thus, in 1338, the Korean Peninsula maintained to be under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China, and furthermore the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, indirectly through China. Japan also went under the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, indirectly through China. Thus, both the Korean Peninsula and Japan went under the multiple medieval colonial and imperial rules: the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China and the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, indirectly through China. During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644/1662), the friendly relations between China and the Korean Peninsula reached its second peak. In 1368, the powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) continued to be under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China, willingly. (Meng Weizhan, 2015) In 1392, the powerful Goryeo/Koryŏ Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) military commander or general named Yi Song-gye or Seong-gye succeeded in forming and ruling an independent state according to strict Confucian tenets, namely the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876) and Confucianism served as the state religion. Even if the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876) was an independent state, it is acknowledged as being the most exemplary tributary state to the new Manchus-led Qing Dynasty or the Manchus-led Qing Dynasty (1636 or 1644-1911 or 1912). This means that the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876) maintained to be under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China, and furthermore the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, indirectly through China and that this is how Confucianism and Christianity began to be in the harmony with each other. The idea of a newly established independent state the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876) espoused may be regarded as an interesting example of co-existing with another because it led to the continuity of co-existing with another sometimes formally and sometimes partly but not formally, although it was an independent state. The 15<sup>th</sup> century is not just part of the Late Medieval era, but may also be regarded as the start of the Renaissance. It shall be mentioned that in 1401, Japan maintained to be under the tributary state to the Chinese Empire, and thus to be under the multiple medieval colonial and imperial rules: the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China and the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, indirectly through China, as China was under the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers. For the process of European colonial and imperial powers’ expansion and endeavors from the late 15<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, according to historians of the Atlantic world, the Dutch, English (later British), French, Portuguese, and Spanish have frequently than not characterized the imperial states as the most powerful players. (For more details, please see, Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and

Forthcoming-b) **In modern times**, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards states/nations in the Asia-Pacific region could not escape from being colonized and dominated by European colonial and imperial powers, Russia, Japan, China, and the United States of America, formally and/or partly but not formally. In 1543, European colonial and imperial powers paid a visit to Japan. Thus, Japan went under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, namely Portuguese, in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, directly, as it was under the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China, and thus it came under the sway of the multiple modern colonial and old-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, directly. The two invasions between the years of 1592 and 1598, the Imjin Wars, were launched by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598), the Japanese military leader. He sought to put into reality his long-held plan to invade the Korean Peninsula and China through the Korean Peninsula that would play an important role in the Japanese invasion of China. Finally, in 1592, Japan succeeded in invading the Korean Peninsula; however, Japan had to retreat in 1598. Thus, between the years of 1592 and 1598, as Japan maintained to come under the sway of the multiple modern colonial and old-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1543, directly, the Korean Peninsula came to be under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of Japan, and thus it became under the multiple modern colonial and old-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, indirectly through China since 1338 and indirectly through Japan since 1543. As European colonial and imperial powers and Japan attempted to invade China, China also attempted to invade the Korean Peninsula. In early 1627, Later Jin (1616-1636), which was known as Jin or the Great Jin or a Jurchen-led royal dynasty of China in Manchuria or a dynastic khanate in Manchuria, Prince Amin of the Later Jin (1616-1636) invaded the Korean Peninsula. The Korean Peninsula maintained to be a tributary state under Chinese protection. Thus, the Korean Peninsula maintained to be under the multiple modern colonial and new-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China until the Chinese empire' influence on the Korean Peninsula weakened in 1858 and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, indirectly through China. Furthermore, China could escape from going under the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of Japan, and thus the multiple modern colonial and new-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of Japan and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers; however, China continued to be under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers. Furthermore it continued to be under the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers. Japan pursued a policy of isolating itself from the world from 1639 to 1853, yet the Tokugawa Shogunate (1185-1867) pursued foreign trade merely with European colonial and imperial powers. (Yurdagul, 2019) This may indicate that Japan shall be deemed as a partial isolated state/nation and that European colonial and imperial powers may be considered to be an ally with Japan or that it preferred to be under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, but not to be under the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China. In addition to that, the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876) preferred to become the isolated country from the 17<sup>th</sup> century until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, because of proximity to Chinese civilization, in fact, the relationship between the Korean Peninsula and China was a complex and subtle cultural exchanges and Chinese influence would be able to seek into the Korean Peninsula as much as it gave rise to the tributary of its taste and outlook. (Buzo, 2007, p. 10; Woo-Cumings, 2005) This may emphasize that the Korean Peninsula shall be deemed as a partial isolated state/nation and that it preferred to be under the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China. In 1628, the first visit of European colonial and imperial powers to the Korean Peninsula happened. Hence, the Korean Peninsula began to come under sway of the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, directly as it was under the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China. Thus, the Korean Peninsula went under the multiple modern colonial and new-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China until the Chinese empire' influence on the Korean Peninsula weakened in 1858 and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, directly. With the onset of the Industrial Revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, capitalism developed in Europe and large businesses brought about. European colonial and imperial powers expanded their colonies in Asia and Africa (KCCUK, 2024). (Sterner, 2002) Modern colonial and old-imperial goal and ambition of the United States of America was to establish trade and commerce relations with China in 1784. China could not escape from coming under the sway of the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules this time. As China was still under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1338 in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, it

came to be under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of the United States of America in 1784 in the context of trade and commerce, and thus China went under the multiple modern colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of the United States of America. In 1784, less/weak influence of China on both Japan and the Korean Peninsula led them to be under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China, and thus they went under the multiple modern colonial and old-imperial rules: the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, directly, and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of the United States of America, indirectly through China. (For more details, please see, Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) **In contemporary times from French Revolution (5 May 1789-9 November 1799) until World War II or the Second World War (1939-1945)**, French Revolution (1789-1799) led to the beginning of contemporary times due to the tremendous influence on the entire world. In the 1800s, the political turmoil led the Korean Peninsula to be the target of outside influences. (Essaypride, 2017) Apart from the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America in China since 1784, contemporary colonial and new-imperial goal and ambition of the United States of America was to establish trade and commerce relations with Japan in 1791. Thus, as Japan went under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1543, directly, and the United States of America since 1784, indirectly through China, it came under the sway of the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1543, directly, and the United States of America in 1791, directly. Apart from the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America in China since 1784 and contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America in Japan since 1791, contemporary colonial and new-imperial goal and ambition of the United States of America was to establish trade and commerce relations with the Korean Peninsula in 1844. Thus, as the Korean Peninsula still went under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1628, directly, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, indirectly through China since 1784 and indirectly through Japan since 1791, it came under the sway of the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1628, directly, and the partly but not contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America in 1844, directly. Japan came under the sway of the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia in 1854, directly. In 1858, Japan was under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, including the Netherlands in 1858 and France in 1858, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia. However, in 1858, Japan sought to dominate and colonize the Korean Peninsula and China, and finally, China but not the Korean Peninsula went under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia, directly. Thus, on the one hand, China came under the sway of the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia. On the other hand, Japan was not under the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China anymore, but continued to be under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America. In 1858, despite the less/weak influence of Chinese empire on the Korean Peninsula, the Korean Peninsula preferred to continue to be under the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, and thus to be the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial

rule of the United States of America. It is historically acknowledged that the official and formal collapse of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876, the unofficial and informal collapse, or 1895, the official and formal collapse) and the Korean Empire (1897-1905, the unofficial and informal collapse, or 1910, the official and formal collapse) happened in 1910. However, in 1876, after the 1876 Treaty of G/Kanghwa or Treaty of G/Kanghwa or Korea-Japan Treaty of 1876, which was also the first denominable betrayal of the United States of America, with Japan under military threat, as the Korean Peninsula was under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, it began to be under the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan as well, and thus to be under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan. Japan relinquished control of European colonial and imperial powers, the United States of America, and Russia, officially and formally, and thus it was not under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules anymore: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia. It, as the most recognized dominant colonial and imperial power on the Korean Peninsula, permitted the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: from 1876 until 1884, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America. Therefore, I indicate that the unofficial and informal collapse of the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1876) occurred in 1876. This treaty played a crucial role in determination of the current position of China, Japan, and European colonial and imperial powers, Russia, and the United States of America regarding the relationship with the Korean Peninsula-to be more precisely, North Korea and South Korea, in contemporary times. By 1884, the Korean Peninsula went under the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia, and thus Japan, as the most recognized dominant colonial and imperial power on the Korean Peninsula, permitted the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: from 1884 until 1895, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia. D/Tonghak (Eastern Learning) Peasant Uprising of 1894-1895 or D/Tonghak (Eastern Learning) rebellion of 1894-1895 or Korean mass revolt sparked the First Sino-Japanese War that occurred on August 1, 1894. Although it led to the persecution of impoverished people of the Korean Peninsula, they turned increasingly to D/Tonghak Peasant Uprising of 1894-1895. In 1895, after the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), as the Chinese empire was weaker than when it was in 1858, Japan emerged as formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power, and Japanese hegemony began on the Korean Peninsula and began the formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule on the Korean Peninsula and permitted the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: from 1895 until 1905, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia, but not the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China. Pro-Japanese activities are considered to be the pro-Japan collaboration from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until 1945. This was considered to be the second ideological division that leads to the roots of anti-Japanese sentiment/stance on the Korean Peninsula, and prolonged until the third but historic ideological division from 1945 to the present and the third but historic official and formal ideological division from 1948 to the present that suggested indirectly and subtly an essential clue to the trigger of the Korean War (1950-1953). (Tashiro, 1986)<sup>5</sup> This also means the beginning of

<sup>5</sup>These two kinds of ideologies are summarized as follows: (i) those who were nationalist and were stoking anti-Japanese sentiment or stance, and (ii) those who were known as pro-Japanese. People of the Korean Peninsula initiated to make collaboration with Imperial Japan/the Empire of Japan. Some of them make contribution to or gain benefit from the colonization of the Korean Peninsula, and some was actively to work to counter the independence movement on the Korean Peninsula. In particular, owing to the South Korea's gradual democratization during the 1980s and 1990s, such people were taught by much of South Korea to have been



collaborations by colonizers and power relations that lead to the emergence of the chaebŏl that are the large, conglomerate family-controlled firms of South Korea that are characterized by strong ties with government agencies during the administration of Syngman Rhee (1948-1960), who was the first and last president of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea<sup>6</sup> or South Korea from 1919 to his impeachment in 1925 and from 1947 to 1948 (1919-1948) under another, namely China and was also the president of the People's Republic of Korea or North Korea from 1945 to 1946 (Kwon, Seung-ho, 1997), and furthermore even the chaebŏl were prone to co-exist with another. After the formal end to the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, despite its resistance and struggle, Japan overturned the Korean Empire (1897-1905) and forcibly annexed the country with the backing of Great Britain and the United States of America. This was the second betrayal of the United States of America. In 1905, Japan, as formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power, continued to be the formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule on the Korean Peninsula and permitted the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: from 1905 until 1945, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, but not the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia. The European colonial and imperial powers began to grant independence to their former colonies or colonized states/nations, and thus 'the third era/phase of decolonization' started in earnest (the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed 'the first era/phase of decolonization' and after the World War I in 1918, 'the second but major era/phase of decolonization' took place). New fledgling nations obtained political independence, yet were bound by economic ties, which were still controlled by the contemporary colonial and new-imperial powers. (For more details, please see, Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) **In contemporary times after World War II or the Second World War (1939-1945)**, the former colonialism, namely a form of economic new-imperialism was implied by neo-colonialism. In 1945, after the end of the Second World War or World War II (1939-1945), the Korean Peninsula came to be an independent state. (Buzo, 2007) However, the division of the contemporary Korean Peninsula de facto began on 2 September 1945, when Japan had to sign the surrender document, hence ending the Pacific Theater of World War II (1939-1945) and increasing resentment and weakness caused impractical direct colonization-more precisely, the Korean Peninsula ab initio came under the formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America in the context of religion, namely Protestantism and in the context of military regime of the United States Army Military Government (USAMGIK or, more simply, AMG), and then the administration of Syngman Rhee (1948-1960). (Kim, Crystal, 2009) At that time, South Korea and North Korea were divided, despite being the same people and on the same peninsula. Thus, it may be assumed that the Korean Peninsula could not be an independent state, because it, which was part of Japan's territory, was occupied by forces of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), broadly known as the Soviet Union. In 1948, the third but historic ideological division officially and formally occurred and the Korean peninsula was divided into two parts: North Korea under interim the Soviet Union on 9<sup>th</sup> September, 1948 and South Korea under interim the United States of America on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1948. (Buzo, 2007) In the modern history of the Korean Peninsula, the third but historic ideological division from 1945 to the present and the third but historic official and formal ideological division from 1948 to the present may be deemed as the third but historic American betrayal. (Kim, Crystal, 2009)

#### **North Korea: the middle power with capability of military and nuclear deterrent**

Although North Korea was independent state, it went under the formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the Soviet Union until the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991 and then it went under the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of China from 1991 until now. North Korea is ranked 17 of 27 for comprehensive power, with an overall score of 11.3 out of 100 and obtained 0.6 points (+6% change) in overall score in 2024. It is a middle power in Asia and its overall score increased by 0.6 points in 2024. Its weakest measure is regarded as its diplomatic influence, for which it showed a decline in lasting place in 2024. Its borders were still closed and a great number of embassies in Pyongyang have shut. It is second-last for cultural influence and economic relationships. Its strongest measure maintains to be military capability, for which it ranks 7<sup>th</sup>, an increase from 2023, and furthermore it is strong in the resilience measure, for which it ranks 9<sup>th</sup> due

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collaborators with Japan, and thus traitors to South Korea, i.e., the members of the Iljinhoe or Five Eulsa Traitors. An increasing support for punishing pro-Japanese collaborators took place. (Koreanlii, 2025)

<sup>6</sup>The Korean Provisional Government (KPG), formally the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea or South Korea was a Korean government-in-exile that was based in China during the formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America.

to its nuclear deterrent capability. North Korea has less/weak influence in the Asia-Pacific region than expected given its available resources. Its negative power gap was still approximately the same as before. (Power.lowyinstitute) In 2023, North Korea ranked the number 171 (out of 226) in total exports and exported a total of \$393M, which made it the number 171 exporter in the world. During the past five reported years, its exports have increased by \$89.1M from \$304M in 2018 to \$393M in 2023. The top destinations were China (\$292M), Poland (\$10.3M), Senegal (\$10.3M), Angola (\$10.2M), and Austria (\$10.1M). In terms of imports, the top origins were China (\$2B), Togo (\$24.7M), Peru (\$18.5M), Gabon (\$17.7M), and India (\$1.88M). (OEC, 2024-nk) In March 2025, North Korea exported \$33.7M and imported \$204M from China. This leads to a negative trade balance of \$171M. Between March 2024 and March 2025 its exports to China increased by \$3.72M (12.4%) from \$30M to \$33.7M, while imports increased by \$76.4M (59.7%) from \$128M to \$204M. (OEC, 2025-nk) On the one hand, this indicates that all in all, North Korea is still among the world's most China-dependent economies, is still under the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of China, and is prone to co-exist with another. On the other hand, North Korea, as a partial isolated state/nation, has transformed into from a (formally) colonized country into a middle power country with its strongest measure continuing to be capability of military and nuclear deterrent.

### **South Korea: a brutal sub-neo-colonial and sub-neo-imperial hard power country, then a neo-colonial and neo-imperial soft power country**

Although South Korea was independent state, it went under the formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America and the United States of America, as formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power, permitted the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1945 to 1964, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan. As the population in South Korea increased<sup>7</sup>, the economy collapsed and South Korea started to experience the beginning of multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies, especially Japan-dependent economies and the United States of America-dependent economies. South Korea is classified as 'an interesting variation as a post-colonial location, which has moved, merely very recently, from a neo-colony whose have migrants' and emigrants' return was destined for the United States of America, to a sub-neo-colonial-empire and sub-neo-imperial-empire to that other ex-colonized peoples of Asia migrate, short of reaching metro-poles. This particular post-colonial movement to South Korea must be, once again, go back to South Korea's neo-colonial and neo-imperial relations to the United States of America, in the post-1945 era, as South Korea's emergence as a sub-neo-colonial-empire and sub-neo-imperial-empire itself is due to its paradoxically profitable domination by the United States of America.' (Lee, Jin-kyung, 2010) South Korea's troops turned into the first to enter South Vietnam in 1964. South Korea was responsible for the creation and early operation of the partly but not formally sub-neo-colonial and sub-neo-imperial rule in Vietnam and is that the Vietnamese camp towns<sup>8</sup> and prostitution districts were solely reserved for even the brutal soldiers of South Korea during the Vietnam War between 1964 and 1973 owing to their status as a sub-neo-colonial-empire and sub-neo-imperial-empire within the United States of America's a neo-colonial-empire and neo-imperial-empire. South Korean government sources revealed that the subject of compensation for Vietnam War atrocities has been never raised by Vietnam and South Korean government did not provide any compensation for Vietnamese comfort women. Troops of South Korea were among the last to depart almost ten years later. (Lee, Na-young, 2006; Yurdagul, 2018) During the Vietnam War (1953 or 1955-1975)<sup>9</sup>, Vietnam

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<sup>7</sup>It is certain that South Korea would not able to 'enhance its economy earlier than thought, if the United States of America did not provide aid until 1965 and protect the open economy and export-led growth, and open its tremendous and beneficial market to exports of South Korea.' The United States of America was thought of as the largest and most remarkable single aid sponsor through the properties left behind Japan. (Savada & Shaw, 1990)

<sup>8</sup>Women from the Korean Peninsula in Japanese Imperial Army comfort stations were in the group of women, who were being treated as the slaves of World War II (1939-1945) Comfort Women System of the Japanese Imperial Army. (Ward, 2024) During and after the Korean War (1950-1953), separate comfort stations were maintained for the soldiers of the United Nations, the United States of America, and South Korea. (Lee, Na-young, 2006; Yurdagul, 2018)

<sup>9</sup>Some states/nations supported the United States of America in the Vietnam War (1953 or 1955-1975), by contributing a substantial number of combat troops (South Korea), by providing troops and military aid to South Vietnam (Australia and Republic of Türkiye), by sending troops to support South Vietnam (New Zealand), by supporting the United States of America and South Vietnam with troops and bases (Thailand), and by providing logistical support, including Rest and Recuperation (R & R) locations and supply hubs (Philippines). They, along with the United States, led to the formation of a coalition of anti-communist allies in the Vietnam War

went under the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1964 to 1973, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of South Korea, as South Korea was under the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America. South Korea maintained to experience the multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, nurses and miners to West Germany), Middle-East-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, construction workers to the Middle East), Japan-dependent economies, Vietnam-dependent economies and the United States of America-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, North and South America). South Korea maintained to be under the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1973 to 1983, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America. South Korea continued to experience the multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, nurses and miners to West Germany), Middle-East-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, construction workers to the Middle East), Japan-dependent economies, and the United States of America-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, North and South America). In 1983, normalization of relations between China and South Korea, deepening economic and political ties happened. (Ye, Min 2024; Hwang, Jaeho, 2021) Thus, South Korea went under the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1983 until now, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan. South Korea continued to experience the multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies, especially Japan-dependent economies, China-dependent economies, and the United States of America-dependent economies. According to the Observatory of Economic Complexity (OEC), in August 2024, South Korea exported predominantly to China (\$11.3B), the United States of America (\$9.93B), Vietnam (\$5.08B), Chinese Taipei (\$3.15B), and Chinese Hong Kong (\$2.97B), and imported predominantly from China (\$11.5B), the United States of America (\$6.21B), Japan (\$3.91B), Australia (\$2.75B), and Vietnam (\$2.59B)). (OEC, 2024) South Korea is accounted of the 5<sup>th</sup> among the top 10 most powerful nations in the world, by military strength in 2024 and is accounted of the 13<sup>th</sup> among the top 15 nations by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2024. (Lee, Joyce & Kim, Cynthia, 2024; Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) This means that South Korea is among the world's most China-dependent economies and United States of America-dependent economies. In February 2025, South Korea is among the countries that have significant economic, military, and furthermore political influence on a global scale and its economy is one of the world's largest in terms of gross domestic product (\$1.71 trillion) and gross domestic product per capita (Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)) (\$54,033). It has ranked as the 6<sup>th</sup> most powerful nation. Its economy that is driven by leading technology and manufactory industries has a central role in the Asia-Pacific region. However, in March 2025, it chiefly increased to export to the United States of America (\$1.24B, 12.5%), Chinese Taipei (\$1.07B, 39%), and Chinese-Hong Kong (\$812M, 42.9%), and mainly increased to import from China (\$1.9B, 20%), Netherlands (\$862M, 115%), and Chinese Taipei (\$516M, 21.6%). (OEC, 2025) On the one hand, this means that all in all, South Korea is still among the world's most China-dependent economies, Japan-dependent economies, and United States of America-dependent economies<sup>10</sup>,

(1953 or 1955-1975) where their combined efforts attempted to prevent the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. States/nations, which did not support the United States of America in the Vietnam War (1953 or 1955-1975), are as follows: (i) The communist powers, namely Soviet Union and China, mainly supported North Vietnam by providing military and logistical aid, (ii) Western European states/nations, namely France and the United Kingdom, were not directly involved in combat like the United States of America; however, they were critical of the war and provided limited support, with the United Kingdom even playing a secret role in supporting the United States of America war effort, (iii) Most of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members: while some North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members like the United States of America and its allies sent troops, a great number of European North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) states/nations declined to participate due to a variety of factors, which included differing strategic priorities and domestic opposition, and (iv) other states/nations: a great number of states/nations, which include Pakistan, declined to participate, while others like Taiwan were non-treaty participants, which mean that they did not send combat troops. (Artificial Intelligence (AI), 2025)

<sup>10</sup>The United States of America has felt obliged to defend South Korea but might defend itself easily. It is highly seen that the United States of America dominates the globe, and the United States of America military presence

is still under the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America, and is prone to co-exist with another. On the other hand, South Korea has transformed from a (formally) colonized country into a brutal sub-neo-colonial and sub-neo-imperial hard power country under the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America, then into a neo-colonial and neo-imperial soft power country.

**Far foreign civilizations/states/nations sharing borders with no land and/or sea borders civilizations/states/nations in the Korean Peninsula: Mongolia, European colonial and imperial powers, and the United States of America**

**In medieval times**, after the Mongol invasions of the 13<sup>th</sup> century C.E., the powerful Goryeo/Koryô Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) lost its independence, became a vassal state of the Yuan Dynasty (Mongol) ruling over a unified China (1271 or 1279-1368), and was dominated and colonized by Mongols, who was a nomadic people from Northern Asia and conquered China and much of Asia and Eastern Europe, from 1231 to 1336. (Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) Thus, the powerful Goryeo/Koryô Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) went under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of the Mongols-ruled China, unwillingly. (Meng Weizhan, 2015) In 1338, the Korean Peninsula went under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China, and furthermore the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, indirectly through China. After the Zhu Yuanzhang founded the Ming dynasty in 1368, the powerful Goryeo/Koryô Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) immediately expressed its willingness to come to be the fanshu state of Ming China. Thus, the powerful Goryeo/Koryô Dynasty (918 C.E.-1392 C.E.) maintained to be under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China, willingly. However, their relation did not develop well at first, and conflicts arose. (Meng Weizhan, 2015) After its establishment in 1392, the Chosôn Dynasty (1392-1876) continued to be under the formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of China, and furthermore the partly but not formally medieval colonial and imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, indirectly through China. **In modern times**, between the years of 1592 and 1598, the Korean Peninsula came to be under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of Japan, and thus it became under the multiple modern colonial and old-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, indirectly through China since 1338 and indirectly through Japan since 1543. In 1627, the Korean Peninsula continued to be under the multiple modern colonial and new-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China until the Chinese empire' influence on the Korean Peninsula weakened in 1858 and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, indirectly through China. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century European colonial and imperial powers began to attempt to the modern colonial and old-imperial rule on the Korean Peninsula. It was the first time that those European colonial and imperial powers (i.e., three Dutch sailors who were shipwrecked off Cheju Island) had landed on the partly isolated the Korean Peninsula in the year 1628, but they were forbidden to go away from there. They were very welcomed by the people who rescued them. (Kim, Bonnie, S., 2006) In 1628, European colonial and imperial powers paid to the first visit to the Korean Peninsula. Thus, the Korean Peninsula began to be under partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers in the context of religion, especially Catholicism, directly as it was under the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China. Thus, the Korean Peninsula became to be the multiple modern colonial and new-imperial rules: the formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China until the Chinese empire' influence on the Korean Peninsula weakened in 1858 and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, directly. In the year 1653, another Dutch shipwreck occurred, and then they were similarly treated very well. (Stern, 2002) Besides, the Korean Peninsula's elites were highly impressed by the spread of Christianity in China in the late 1700s. After aristocrat Yi Seung-hun, who was baptized by a French Jesuit in a Beijing Catholic church in 1784, had returned to the Korean Peninsula, Yi baptized a few fellow scholars and together they gave rise to the formation of the first Christian community in the Korean Peninsula. (Christianity Today, 2018) In 1784, less/weak influence of China on both Japan and the Korean Peninsula led them to be under the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China, and thus they went

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in South Korea is just the United States of America military dominance in the Asia-Pacific region and the rise of great power rivals. (Glaser, 2014) This may be regarded as external interference and intervention within the framework of South Korea's self-defense and self-determination and forced South Korea to continually co-exist with another. Dependence of South Korea on the United States of America permits the United States of America to interfere with South Korea's defense plans. This is because South Korea still rejects to defend itself.

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under the multiple modern colonial and old-imperial rules: the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, directly, and the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of the United States of America, indirectly through China. French ships *Boussole* and *Astrolabe* arrived in the Korean Peninsula in 1787. (Kim, Bonnie, S., 2006; Kim, Jeong-ran, 2013) **In the contemporary times from French Revolution (5 May 1789-9 November 1799) until World War II or the Second World War (1939-1945)**, French and English ships maintained to visit to the Korean Peninsula in 1799, 1811, and 1832 (Kim, Bonnie, S., 2006; Kim, Jeong-ran, 2013). (KCCUK, 2024) Apart from the partly but not formally modern colonial and old-imperial rule of the United States of America in China since 1784 and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America in Japan since 1791, contemporary colonial and new-imperial goal and ambition of the United States of America was to establish trade and commerce relations with the Korean Peninsula in 1844. Thus, as the Korean Peninsula still went under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1628, directly, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, indirectly through China since 1784 and indirectly through Japan since 1791, it went under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers since 1628, directly, and the partly but not contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America in 1844, directly. Other French and English ships visited to the Korean Peninsula in 1845, 1846 and 1854 (Kim, Bonnie, S., 2006; Kim, Jeong-ran, 2013). In 1866, naval attacks to the Korean Peninsula were applied by France, and in 1871, other naval attacks to the Korean Peninsula were applied by the United States of America. (KCCUK, 2024) In 1876, as the Korean Peninsula came under the sway of the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, it began to go under the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan as well, and thus to be under the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America.<sup>11</sup> Japan, as the most recognized dominant colonial and imperial power on the Korean Peninsula, allowed the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: from 1876 until 1884, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America. By 1884, the Korean Peninsula became the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia, and thus Japan, as the most recognized dominant colonial and imperial power on the Korean Peninsula, allowed the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: from 1884 until 1895, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia. Such events divided the Korean Peninsula's court into pro-Chinese, pro-Japanese, pro-United States, and pro-Russian factions, each of which had an influence on policy until the formally multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Japan after the final annexation of the Korean Peninsula in 1905. (Facts and Details, 2022) In 1895, Japan became a formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power and initiated the formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule on the Korean Peninsula and allowed the multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial

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<sup>11</sup> The Korean Peninsula signed with the United States of America in 1882, namely the United States of America-Korea Treaty of 1882, the United Kingdom in 1883, namely the United Kingdom-Korea Treaty of 1883, with Germany in 1883, namely the Germany- Korea Treaty of 1883, with Italy in 1884, namely Italy-Korea Treaty of 1884, with Russia in 1884, namely Russia-Korea Treaty of 1884 and with France in 1886, namely the French-the Korean Peninsula Treaty of 1886. The Korean Peninsula turned into the religious hotbed of France and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of France in the context of religion, to be more precisely, Catholicism. The Korean government finally came to be a compromise, where the French were allowed to travel in the interior to study and teach arts, industrial skills, and language. (Neff, 2024)

rules: from 1895 until 1905, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia, but not the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of China. In 1905, in the aftermath of the formal end to the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, Russia could not influence on the Korean Peninsula and Japan, as formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power, maintained to be the formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule on the Korean Peninsula and permitted the partly but not formally multiple contemporary colonial and new-imperial rules: from 1905 until 1945, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of the United States of America, but not the partly but not formally contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule of Russia. (For more details, please see, Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) In the aftermath of the third but historic ideological division from 1945 and the third but historic official and formal ideological division from 1948, South Korea was under the formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America, as formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule European colonial and imperial powers and North Korea was under the formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of China and the Soviet Union. (For more details, please see, Yurdagul, Forthcoming-a and Forthcoming-b) **In contemporary times after World War II or the Second World War (1939-1945)**, although North Korea was known as independent state, it came under the sway of the formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the Soviet Union until the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991 and then it came under sway of the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of China from 1991 until now. Although South Korea was independent state, it came under the sway of the formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America and the United States of America, as formally, internationally, practically and regionally recognized as certain and major regional and world power, allowed the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1945 to 1964, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan. South Korea began with the multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies, especially Japan-dependent economies and the United States of America-dependent economies. During the Vietnam War (1953 or 1955-1975), Vietnam came under the sway of the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1964 to 1973, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial of the United States of America and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial of South Korea, as South Korea was under the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial of the United States of America. South Korea continued to experience the multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, nurses and miners to West Germany), Middle-East-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, construction workers to the Middle East), Japan-dependent economies, Vietnam-dependent economies and the United States of America-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, North and South America). South Korea continued to be under the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1973 to 1983, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial of the United States of America. South Korea maintained to experience the multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, nurses and miners to West Germany), Middle-East-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, construction workers to the Middle East), Japan-dependent economies, and the United States of America-dependent economies (from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, North and South America). South Korea was under the multiple neo-colonial and neo-imperial rules: from 1983 until now, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of European colonial and imperial powers, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of China, the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of the United States of America, and the partly but not formally neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule of Japan. South Korea maintained to experience the multiple-dependent economies: European colonial and imperial powers-dependent economies, especially Japan-dependent economies, China-dependent economies, and the United States of America-dependent economies.

## 2. CONCLUSION

This article is excerpted from my forthcoming book related to any form of colonialism and imperialism on the Korean Peninsula, whose title has not been determined yet. This article is concluded by analyzing how and why the Korean Peninsula was sometimes formally and sometimes partly but not formally dominated and colonized

by sometimes its neighboring civilizations/nations/states that share its borders with land and/or sea borders nations (i.e., China, Japan, and Russia) and sometimes civilizations/nations/states that share borders with no land and/or sea borders civilizations/nations/states (i.e., European colonial and imperial powers, the United States of America leading to the first denominable betrayal in 1876, the second betrayal in 1905, and the third but historic betrayal in 1945, and Mongolia), and furthermore by sometimes single colonial and imperial power and sometimes multiple colonial and imperial powers, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly and sometimes willingly sometimes unwillingly. Pre-historic times meet the requirements of highlighting the main characteristics of humankind, which are considered to be universal. Thus, pre-history is thought of as being universal, and furthermore this is the real reason why modern humans are moved by the records that are uncovered and accumulated by archaeologists, although the archaeological evidence is too thin and sporadic to conclude accurately. However, due to the evidence provided by archaeogenetics, which is a subfield that combines archaeology and genetics and bridges the gap, one may imply that the warless period persisted until well some 500,000 to 300,000 years ago. After modern humans had left Africa to dominate and colonize the world, any form of colonialism and imperialism appeared because war and warfare that became a necessary byproduct of colonial and imperial rule of modern humans. Furthermore, ideological divisions of civilizations/states/nations happened. Throughout its history the Korean Peninsula had to resist to any form of colonialism and imperialism (i.e., in 195 B.C.E. the first known formally ancient colonial and imperial rule of China during the first Kingdom of Gojoseon (c. 800 or 700 B.C.E.-195 B.C.E.), and in 108 B.C.E. when the official and formal collapse of Wiman Joseon (194 B.C.E.-108 B.C.E.) took place) and an ideological divisions (i.e., the first known ideological division in 108 B.C.E. when the official and formal collapse of Wiman Joseon (194 B.C.E.-108 B.C.E.) happened, the second ideological division from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until 1945, and the third but historic ideological division from 1945 to the present and the third but historic official and formal ideological division from 1948 to the present) and had to struggle for being an independent state. It is concluded that despite its struggle for being an independent state and resistance to ideological divisions, from 108 B.C.E. to the present, the Korean Peninsula suffered from any kind of colonialism and imperialism and was prone to co-exist with another, eventually, although it has its own government and capital. North and South Korea were also prone to co-exist with another, although both of them became an independent state and have their own government and capital. China, Japan and the United States of America may be a twist of fate for the Korean Peninsula because China was the first civilization/state/nation that led to the first ancient colonial and imperial rule and the first ideological division of the Korean Peninsula in 108 B.C.E., Japan was the second state/nation that led to the contemporary colonial and new-imperial rule and the second ideological division, and the United States of America was the third state/nation that led to the neo-colonial and neo-imperial rule and the third but historic ideological division. It is concluded that sometimes the existence or the continued existence depends on co-existing with another despite any kind of colonialism and imperialism and ideological divisions.

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