The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University

DHP P274: The Politics of the Korean Peninsula: Foreign and Inter-Korean Relations
Fall 2020

Professor Sung-Yoon Lee
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Class meetings: 5:15 – 7:15 PM, Mon & Weds, November 2 (Mon) – December 16 (Weds) Cabot 501. Email: sung-yoon.lee@tufts.edu Tel: (617) 627-4307

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An examination of Korea’s modern “evolution” as a state and society, with the view of the Korean nation as undergoing a dynamic life-cycle since the late nineteenth century. Emphasis on Korea’s modern political history, from the origins and theory of statecraft in traditional Korea to the major geopolitical issues of the present day. Topics include Korea’s relations with the great powers of the North Pacific and the primacy of international relations in the Korean world: from imperialism and Japanese colonialism, partition of the Korean peninsula and the establishment of two separate Koreas, Cold War politics and the Korean War, economic development and political freedom, to the new mode of inter-Korean and international politics emerging in the post-Cold War, post-9/11 era. A comparative view of Korea’s political development, one which, for millennia, had unfolded on a disparate path from that of Europe/America. What are the cultural ramifications of the “evolution” of the Korean state—a traditional Confucian society embracing in modern times the ideals of liberal democracy and market capitalism, the intellectual offspring of Euro-American civilization? And what does North Korea, a third-generational totalitarian Communist dynasty, portend for the respective governments and peoples of the region?

General requirements:

1. Take-home final examination (due December 23. 30% of the final grade)
2. Final paper, 10 double-spaced pages (due December 21. 40%)
3. Oral presentation, class attendance, and participation (30%)

Books recommended for purchase: