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Stanford

APARC (Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center)

Korean Politics and the Next Presidential Election

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Impeachment in the National Assembly, 2005



After Impeachment Backlash GNP Moved to Tents & Containers



Impeachment But Enormous Backlash

■ **Madam Park G.H. emerged**

1. Abandoned large & well-decorated party-headquarters

→ Moved to humble tents and containers

2. No talk of policies, but lowered her head to seek forgiveness

⇒ Astonishing results; unexpected success

⇒ Acquired 40% of seats

⇒ Resuscitated the party. Nick-named “Korea’s Jeanne d’Arc”

⇒ 8 years later, President of the country

Democracy Index 2014

(The Economist Intelligence Unit, <http://www.eiu.com>)

| Rank | Country | Overall Score |
|------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Norway | 9.93 |
| 2 | Sweden | 9.73 |
| 3 | Iceland | 9.58 |
| 4 | New Zealand | 9.26 |
| 5 | Denmark | 9.11 |
| 6 | Switzerland | 9.09 |
| 7 | Canada | 9.08 |
| 8 | Finland | 9.03 |
| 9 | Australia | 9.01 |
| 10 | Netherlands | 8.92 |
| 11 | Luxembourg | 8.88 |
| 12 | Ireland | 8.72 |
| 13 | Germany | 8.64 |
| 14 | Austria | 8.54 |
| 15 | Malta | 8.39 |
| 16 | United Kingdom | 8.31 |
| =17 | Uruguay | 8.17 |
| =17 | Mauritius | 8.17 |
| 19 | United States | 8.11 |
| 20 | Japan | 8.08 |
| 21 | South Korea | 8.06 |
| 22 | Spain | 8.05 |
| 23 | France | 8.04 |
| 24 | Costa Rica | 8.03 |

Korea's Ranking in Democracy Index 2014?

(The Economist Intelligence Unit , <http://www.eiu.com>)

- **Korea 21st, US 19th, France 23rd**
⇒ For 3 years “Full Democracy Country”
- Among 87 countries adopting the presidential system, South Korea is second to the US.

Democracy Index 2014

(The Economist Intelligence Unit, <http://www.eiu.com>)

| Rank | Country | Overall Score | Electoral Process and pluralism | Functioning of government | Political participation | Political culture | Civil liberties |
|------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 19 | United States | 8.11 | 9.17 | 7.50 | 7.22 | 8.13 | 8.53 |
| 20 | Japan | 8.08 | 9.17 | 8.21 | 6.11 | 7.50 | 9.41 |
| 21 | South Korea | 8.06 | 9.17 | 7.86 | 7.22 | 7.50 | 8.53 |
| 22 | Spain | 8.05 | 9.58 | 7.14 | 7.22 | 6.88 | 9.41 |
| 23 | France | 8.04 | 9.58 | 7.14 | 7.78 | 6.88 | 8.82 |
| 24 | Costa Rica | 8.03 | 9.58 | 7.86 | 6.11 | 6.88 | 9.71 |

Democracy Index 2013

(The Economist Intelligence Unit, <http://www.eiu.com>)

| Rank | Country | Overall Score |
|------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Norway | 9.93 |
| 2 | Sweden | 9.73 |
| 3 | Iceland | 9.65 |
| 4 | Denmark | 9.38 |
| 5 | New Zealand | 9.26 |
| 6 | Australia | 9.13 |
| 8 | Canada | 9.08 |
| 11 | Netherlands | 8.84 |
| 14 | United Kingdom | 8.31 |
| 15 | Germany | 8.31 |
| 19 | United States | 8.11 |
| 20 | Japan | 8.08 |
| =21 | Czech Republic | 8.06 |
| =21 | South Korea | 8.06 |
| 23 | Belgium | 8.05 |
| 24 | Costa Rica | 8.03 |
| 25 | Spain | 8.02 |

Democracy Index 2012

(The Economist Intelligence Unit, <http://www.eiu.com>)

| Rank | Country | Overall Score |
|------|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | Norway | 9.93 |
| 2 | Sweden | 9.73 |
| 3 | Iceland | 9.65 |
| 4 | Denmark | 9.52 |
| 5 | New Zealand | 9.26 |
| 6 | Australia | 9.22 |
| 8 | Canada | 9.08 |
| 10 | Netherlands | 8.99 |
| 14 | Germany | 8.34 |
| 16 | United Kingdom | 8.21 |
| 17 | Czech Republic | 8.19 |
| 20 | South Korea | 8.13 |
| 21 | United States | 8.11 |
| 22 | Costa Rica | 8.10 |
| 23 | Japan | 8.08 |
| 24 | Belgium | 8.05 |
| 25 | Spain | 8.02 |

Passed the “Two Turn-Over Test”

: Successfully Institutionalizing Democracy (S. Huntington “The Third Wave”)

Emerging from the ashes of destruction (Korean War)

Overcame the Asian financial crisis (1997~2002)

- 8th trading nation
- 7th foreign exchange reserves holder
- G20 member
- From aid-recipient to donor country
- Advanced IT power, “Korean Wave”
: K-pop music and dramas

Achievement of ROK – US Alliance

Share universal values : freedom, democracy

“No stronger alliance than blood.”

⇒ More meaningful roles for the future.



Presidential Election I

Broaden the horizon of democracy

- 1992. Kim Young-sam : Civilian government
- 1997. Kim Dae-jung : Regional balance
- 2002. Roh Moo-hyun : Bigger voice of non-mainstream
- 2007. Lee Myung-bak : Economic leadership
- 2012. Park Geun-hye : First female head of state,
Northeast Asia

Presidential Election II

«What Choice Should Korea Make in 2017?»

- Why the next presidential election is important in Korea?
 - Will have nationwide elections for 3 years in a row
 - 2016. 4 : General election
 - 2017. 12 : Presidential election
 - 2018. 6 : Nationwide local election
 - ※ Serious conflicts and national schisms may emerge around the elections
 - What are the Least to Prevent ill-Repercussions?

Presidential Election III

- Neck-and-neck seesaw game
- Dividing axes of public opinion
 - Regional rivalry : southeast **vs** southwest
 - Ideology, generation, class, capital, urbanization...
- More fierce competition and narrow margin between the two leading candidates

South Korean Presidential Election, 1997~2012

www.wikipedia.com

| | Elected | Percentage | Vote gap |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------|----------|
| 15 th (1997. 12.19) | Kim Dae-jung | 40.3 % | 1.6 %p |
| 16 th (2002. 12.19) | Roh Moo-hyun | 48.91 % | 2.32 %p |
| 17 th (2007. 12.19) | Lee Myung-bak | 48.7 % | 22.6 %p |
| 18 th (2012.12.19) | Park Geun-hye | 51.6 % | 3.6 %p |

Presidential Election IV

United will Succeed, Split will Fail

- Kim Young-sam, merging 3 major parties (1992)
- Kim Dae-jung, union with Kim Jong-pil (DJP union, 1997)
- Roh Moo-hyun, agreeing with Chung Mong-joon on single candidacy (2002)
- Lee Myung-bak, preventing Park G.H. from leaving the camp (2007)

Presidential Election V

- No president, recognized as a “successful leader”
(after democratization)
 - Structural problems : 5-year single-term presidency
 - Imprudent alliances between different political groups
 - Disregard of values causes political instability
 - Only to win the election, resort to political realignment
- <after midterm>
- President loses control over state, becoming a lame-duck
 - Opposition party took a tough attitude against government

The Problems of Korean Politics (examples)

- The year 2008 : Power shift in 10 years
(progressive to conservative)
 - 3 major leadership changes :
government, congress, parties
(also the ruling and opposition party)
- Party to party competition was fierce:
refused to budge even an inch

Three Chronic Problems in Korean Democracy

1. Extreme confrontation between the ruling party and the opposition;
2. Imbalance of power between the president and legislature;
3. Supremacy of the presidency.



— THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA —
CHEONG WA DAE

VS



대한민국 국회
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Extreme Confrontation Between Major Parties

1. Extreme confrontation between major parties
Failure to reach a consensus; impossible to vote on a bill : No dialogue, no compromises, no understanding.

※US : Failure to agree on Budget Bill 2013

2. Imbalance between the president and legislature
 - Presidents sometimes forgot they also had been National Assembly members.
 - Did not see Parliament as an equal partner, but saw as a subordinate to the President.

These Two Chronic Problems Could Be Resolved

- “Advancement Act” is now in effect
 - Preventing physical violence and building a culture of consensus.
 - Requires at least 60% consent to vote on a bill
 - ※ Caused delay in processing the bills
 - Impacts the principle of majority but will progress Korean democracy.

**“A change in the political system could result
in a change in its culture,
but system unchanged, the culture will never change.”**

3. Supremacy of Presidency : Negative Consequences and Remedy

- Only 3 years : Effectively implement president's policy
 - 1st year : Aftermath of the election and budget
 - Last year and α : bogged down by lame-duck
- Power shift : Opposition's criticism increases, no cooperation
 - Struggle for power for the next 5 years
- President's concentrated power should be reduced
 - Best way is a constitutional reform
 - The President's will is important

The Dream of Korean Reunification

■ The year 2015

- 70th anniversary of liberation from Japanese colonialism
- 70th year of division on the Korean peninsula
- The longest armistice period, with the largest forces confronting each other

※ Demarcation Line

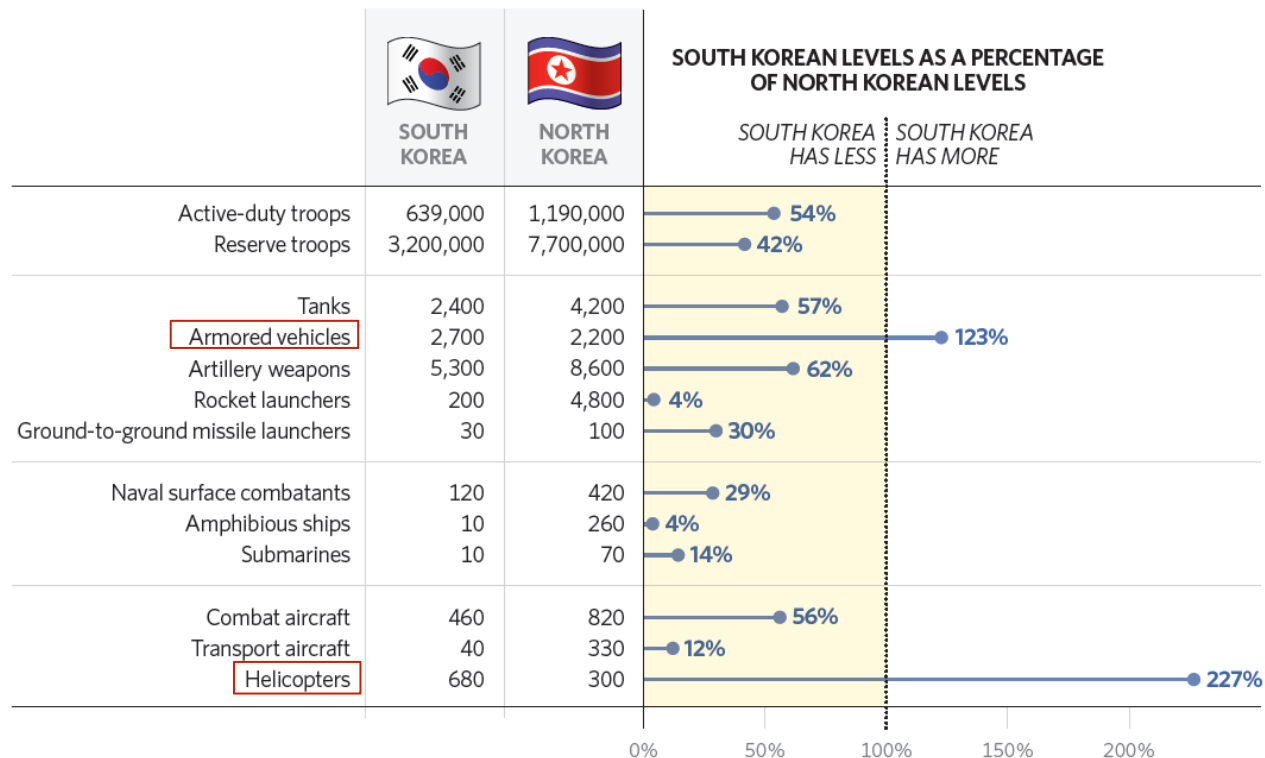
- 240km in length and 4km in width
- 70% of both troops centered

Compare South Korea's Military Strength with North Korea (2015 Index of US Military Strength, Heritage Foundation)

CHART 1

South Korean Military Significantly Smaller than North Korean

South Korea has about half as many active-duty troops as North Korea, and the size disadvantage carries over to many categories of military equipment and vehicles.



Source: South Korea Ministry of National Defense, 2012 Defense White Paper, p. 353,
http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/mnd_eng/upload/pblicitn/PBLICTNEBOOK_201308140915094310.pdf (accessed October 30, 2014).

 heritage.org

Countries Ranked by Military Strength 2015

(GFP : www.globalfirepower.com)

| Rank | | Country | Military Power Index |
|------|---|---------------|----------------------|
| 1 |  | United States | 0.1661 |
| 2 |  | Russia | 0.1865 |
| 3 |  | China | 0.2315 |
| ⋮ | | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 7 |  | South Korea | 0.3098 |
| ⋮ | | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 9 |  | Japan | 0.3838 |
| ⋮ | | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 36 |  | North Korea | 1.0232 |


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- Relieving tension and maintaining stability are crucial for both Koreas and peace in Northeast Asia.
 - 10 years of progressive governments
 - Sunshine Policy, but nuclear development in return
 - 5 years and more conservative government
 - Maintain principle
 - Strained by North's sinking of naval vessel & shelling of island.



- “Pyongyang has the ability to put a nuclear weapon on a KN-08, shoot it at US homeland.”
(William Gortney : Commander of U.S. Northern Command)
- “We cannot carry a nuclear weapon on our head.”
- “We must resolve the North Korean nuclear problem.”
- No success in making any substantial progress for 20 years.
 - The 6-party talks suspended in Dec. 2008

No Country Approves NK Nuclear Weapons, No Country Actively Solves the Issue

- US's strategic patience
- North Korea's progress in both policies
(nuclear development and economic growth)
- “How can we awaken Pyongyang to the fact that Two-Goals can never be pursued together?”
- Pyongyang's main goal is the guarantee of the regime
 - They think nuclear weapons will preserve the regime
- If the international community clearly recognizes the NK regime, no need for NK to rely on nuclear program.

- 
- South Korea could take the lead to seek a breakthrough.
 - Restart the talk of a non-aggression treaty between both Koreas (discussed during the Roh Tae-woo period)
 - Replacement of the armistice agreement with a peace treaty (Kim Dae-jung period)
 - Consider all possible options to resolve the state of division

Diplomacy to Establish Peace Mechanisms in Northeast Asia

- Korea should use its diplomatic skills to earn the common support of the 3 powers (US, Japan, China)

<US>

- Stabilizer in Northeast Asia : military, economic, soft and smart power
- Reunification of Korea : very useful in retaining peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia
- Value sharing : Democracy, Market Economy and Strong Alliance



<Japan>

- Over 1,500 years, oscillated between war and peace
 - Koreans perceive Japan to have an insincere attitude:
 - Visit war criminals shrine, distort history textbooks.
 - Must acknowledge infliction of great pain on many countries : aggression, colonial rule, war.... Especially sex slavery
 - Not “Cheap applause by vilifying a former enemy”
(US Undersecretary of State, Wendy Sherman)
But smooth out the obstacles for the future
- ※A genuine and sincere summit dialogue is needed between Korea and Japan.



























<China>

- Close relationship : Just 23 year of economic, social, and cultural ties
 - Korea's first and largest Trade market : Larger than US and Japan combined
- Old ally of North Korea
 - South's economic sanctions on North
 - North strengthens economic ties with China
 - ※ 89.6% trade dependence on China
- Opposes North's nuclear weapons, but
 - Doesn't want regime change or collapse of North
 - Worried about unified Korea under US influence.
- Supports peace, stability, cooperation between two Koreas
 - Welcome Seoul's efforts in stabilizing North Korea
 - South must persuade China : Korean unification will not be a threat to China

Trade Statistics 2014

(Korea International Trade Association, 2015)

| | Export | | | Import | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Korea (1,000 US \$) | China(1 st)  (145,287,701) | US(2 nd)  (70,284,872) | Japan(3 rd)  (32,183,788) | China(1 st)  (90,082,226) | Japan(2 nd)  (53,768,313) | US(3 rd)  (45,283,254) |
| US | China(3 rd)  (145,287,701) | Japan(4 th)  (32,183,788) | Korea(10 th)  (32,183,788) | China(1 st)  (90,082,226) | Japan(4 th)  (53,768,313) | Korea(6 th)  (45,283,254) |
| China | US(1 st)  (70,284,872) | Japan(3 rd)  (32,183,788) | Korea(4 th)  (32,183,788) | Korea(1 st)  (32,183,788) | Japan(2 nd)  (53,768,313) | US(3 rd)  (45,283,254) |
| Japan | US(1 st)  (70,284,872) | China(2 nd)  (145,287,701) | Korea(3 rd)  (32,183,788) | China(1 st)  (90,082,226) | US(2 nd)  (70,284,872) | Korea(5 th)  (32,183,788) |

3 Practical Strategies for Presidential Candidates

1. Improving diplomatic skills for a unified Korea

- Corner-stone should be ROK-US relation and alliance
 - Enormous values and interests shared by two countries
 - Korea is asked to play a new role in Northeast Asia.
- South Korea is only middle power among 4 world powers
 - Improving inter-Korean relations is a challenge
- Enhancing diplomatic skills and gaining people's consent for unification.
 - Beyond the existing framework.

※ S.Korea's failed initiative in THAAD(US) and AIIB(China)?

Practical Strategy 2

2. Growth of a healthy civil society

- Existing government-led system has its limits.
 - State's failure in protecting lives and property of individuals
 - ※ Sewol ferry disaster (Apr. 2014)
- Civil society still immature
 - Highly dependent on the state & bureaucracy
 - Vested interest groups and collectivism
 - ※ Addressing citizenship and citizen's willingness is the task of our time.

Practical Strategy 3

3. Building a transparent society without corruption and irregularities.

- Corruption : Korea ranked 43rd among 175 countries, 27th among 34 OECD countries.
(2014 Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International)
- Anti-Corruption Act (Kim Young-ran Act) passed the National Assembly early this year
 - Punish an official who accepts a gift, whether or not a favor is given in return.
- List scandal may lead to lame-duck of Park government
 - Use opportunity to sever the corruptive ties between politics and business
 - ※ Strict investigations, no sanctuary, to usher in a more transparent society.

CPI : Corruption Perceptions Index 2014

(Transparency International)

| RANK | COUNTRY | SCORE |
|------|---------------|-------|
| 1 | Denmark | 92 |
| 2 | New Zealand | 91 |
| 3 | Finland | 89 |
| 4 | Sweden | 87 |
| 5 | Norway | 86 |
| 6 | Switzerland | 86 |
| 7 | Singapore | 84 |
| 8 | Netherlands | 83 |
| 9 | Luxembourg | 82 |
| 10 | Canada | 81 |
| ⋮ | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 15 | Japan | 76 |
| ⋮ | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 17 | United States | 74 |
| ⋮ | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 43 | South Korea | 55 |
| ⋮ | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 100 | China | 36 |
| ⋮ | ⋮ | ⋮ |
| 174 | North Korea | 8 |

Qualifications and Virtues of Future Leaders

1. A leader should be morally respectable.

- If morality is questioned : loss of confidence and momentum, won't integrate society, grow distrust in politics.

2. A leader should have political skills to restore the function of politics

- Korea faces numerous challenges
 - : many conflicts and much confrontation
- ※ Anxiously waiting for a leader and leadership with effective communication and consensus-building skills.

Leadership On Top of Moral Qualities

- His(her) pledges will be national vision, envision the future together. Support his endeavors.
 - People will trust the President and join in the effort, even if sensitive and delicate issues
 - ※ Regional conflicts, balancing welfare and tax, growth and distribution, labor and wage...



<Conclusion>

- Korea is not big but it is a strong nation.
 - Territory : 1/95 US, 1/4 Japan
- Geopolitical : Maritime powers and continental powers are competing for influence.
- The peninsula still remains divided : Koreans struggled and worked hard to preserve democracy and peace.
- Korea joined the “20-50” club in 2012
 - 7th country : US, Japan, France, Italy, Germany and the UK
 - ※ Korea is to enter the “30-50” club this year.

- 
- Koreans are dynamic, emotional and critical
 - Not generous with praise for previous Presidents
 - Korea ranked 13th in GDP size, and 21st in democracy, 118th in terms of happiness
 - Result of fierce competition, small land size, divided territory, also weakening of traditional wisdom (importance on spiritual values, on sharing and on community)
 - Speedy economic growth, political confrontation

Koreans Need Self-Confidence and Pride

- No country made greater strides than Korea after 70 years of independence since World War II
- No other example of achieving both industrialization and democratization in three decades
- Most successful political system that adopted the US political model

The ROK and US are allies and friends.



같이 갑시다.

We go together.

- End -