

Authoritarian rule under Park Chung Hee and Chun Doo-hwan

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Discussion

- When did the North Korean economy begin to fall behind the south Korean economy? Why did that happen?
- Was Park more or less authoritarian after 1972? Did the Yushin system have any positive or negative effect on economic development?
- Why was authoritarian rule more successful in South Korea than in North Korea?
- What is the relationship between economic development and democracy?

Moving away from democracy

- 🎤 Park Chung Hee and Yun Posŏn: 1963 and 1967
- 🎤 Why did Park and Kim Jong Pil form the Democratic Republican Party?
- 🎤 Why did Park have to use non-democratic means to normalize relations with Japan in 1965?
- 🎤 How did he change the constitution in 1969 so he could run for 3rd term in 1971? Who ran against him? Kim Daejung.

Yusin

- 1972: Park becomes president for life.
- Why did he do that?
- Afraid of Kim Daejung, and afraid that the US was withdrawing from Asia.
- Only a few people opposed Parks' dictatorship? Why so few?
- Economic growth, fear of the North, a lack of legitimacy for opposition activity.
- Why were so many leaders of the democratization movement Christians?

Opposition to Yusin

- Why was Kim Chiha condemned to death by Park's government?
- Who were the "Five Bandits" he wrote about? (See Sources, pp 400-411.)
- Who was Ham Sŏkhŏn?
- What did he call the history of Korea a history of suffering? (Sources, pp 412-16)

Life under Yusin

- Authoritarian, not totalitarian: you were free to do what you wanted as long as you didn't threaten the government.
- Suppression of labour
- 1973 Kidnapping of Kim Daejung
- 1974 Assassination attempt kills Park's wife
- 1974 Student Christian Federation incident
- 1975 People's Revolutionary Army incident
- Churches as sanctuaries for protest

Park's Repression

- For those who know Korean, or enjoy Korean music (rather old-fashioned music, but Korean music, nonetheless), here is a short video about the various popular songs Park Chung Hee outlawed when he was president. The narration is in Korean as well.

안타까웠던 6~70년대의 금지곡들.

(Songs from the 1960s and 1970s that were forbidden, which we were not happy about!)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i665dF_SrJE

Legacy of the Park years

- Korea left poverty behind and was advancing rapidly toward becoming a rich, industrial society. A civil society was emerging
- Politics grew more repressive than it had been under Syngman Rhee in order to control the growing civil society.
- Economic growth was unbalanced, favoring a few large companies, and favoring Park's native region, the southeast (Kyöngsang Provinces)
- The Southwest region, home base of Kim Daejung, was disadvantaged both politically and economically.

The end of the Park Regime

- Increasing labour unrest in 1979
- Street demonstrations in Masan in the fall, some demonstrators are killed
- Oct. 26, 1979 CIA chief Kim Chaegyung kills Park. Why did he do that?
- Dec. 12, 1979 General Chun Doo-hwan seizes control of his military with an attack on army headquarters in Seoul

Seoul Spring, 1980

- Peaceful student-led demonstrations calling for free elections in Seoul and many other cities, starting in March but picking up the pace into May.
- Riot policemen were killed in Seoul on May 15, when a bus deliberately ran over them from behind while they were distracted by their efforts to push unarmed students out of the South Gate rotary. I was standing across the street and saw it all happen.
- That was the first real violence of the demonstrations. Afterwards, student leaders met to discuss how to prevent further violence. And the parliament prepared to meet the next week to end martial law and restore civilian government.

Democracy Delayed

- The 2nd part of General Chun Doo-hwan's Coup: May 18, 1980. Helped by fellow general Roh Tae-woo.
- Kwangju, Kim Daejung's home base, protests Chun's imposition of martial law. Chun dispatches Special Forces ("paratroopers") to suppress what began as peaceful demonstrations.
- The Kwangju democratization movement is crushed, with 100s dead. (The official number of dead is far too low.)

The Kwangju Uprising

- On the morning of May 18, a few hundred students gathered in front of the gate to Chŏnnam University to demand the lifting of martial law. They expected to be hit with tear gas. Instead, it was clubs and bayonets. That began 10 days of terror in what was then Korea's 5th largest city, Kwangju (Gwangju)
- On May 21, the citizens of Kwangju seized control of their city from the military.
- On the morning of May 27, the army returned. Chun's Dictatorship was saved. Hundreds of people in Kwangju were either dead, seriously wounded, in hiding, or in jail.

Korea's Democratization in videos

- There are quite a few videos about the May 18 uprising. Here is a particularly good one in English:

Legacy of the Gwangju Uprising (in English) 10 minutes long

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNPlj0vArCg>

For a recent music video, with modern music, on the Kwangju massacre ,
go to

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tolcbm1L4eU>

This is a music video by the group Speed. It's call "It's my Fault"

For a broader overview of the Korean fight for democracy, see

The Dynamic Development of Korean Democracy (46 minutes long)

This video was produced by a Republic of Korea institution known as the Korea Democracy Foundation.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jUbuykLagps>

The international impact of Kwangju

- Because the United States government took the side of stability over democracy, there was a rise in anti-Americanism in Korea after 1980.
- Japanese progressives played an important role in letting the world know what happened in Kwangju, and Japanese labour unions protested plans to execute Kim Dae Jung.
- US government also worked to keep Kim alive, and later may also have put pressure on the South Korean government in 1987 to keep the military in its barracks.
- Canada and West Germany accepted Kwangju refugees but they had to get to get out of Korea on their own.