

Chapter 9

Korean War

ABSTRACT

All throughout history, Korea has been a peninsula in the Far East where the common interests of three sovereign powers (Russia, China, Japan) met and each of whom wanted to have it. Its geopolitical position has made Korea a bridge between the Asian Continent and the Japanese Islands since ancient times, turning them into a battlefield. The Korean War between South and North Korea, which lasted from June 1950 to July 1953, is in fact a US-USSR conflict. With North Korea crossing the 38th parallel and capturing Seoul, the United Nations Security Council called for military assistance to South Korea. As per this call, the soldiers of 15 Western countries, including the Turkish Armed Forces, formed the “Korean Union” and participated in the war in Korea. While the Korean War impacted the entire world, Korea itself paid a terrible price in loss of life, family separation, and the destruction of property and homes, not to mention the millions of refugees. Even the eating habits and structure of Korean food were changed.

INTRODUCTION

Following the Second World War, the USSR formed a security zone in its immediate vicinity and did not want to experience the pain it experienced during the war again and gave all its power to spread in the regions that would be the transit route of the attacks against it. It recognized that the only way to do this was in the formation of regimes affiliated with it. The signing of an alliance and mutual aid treaty between the Soviet Union and China on

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February 14, 1950, increased the US's concern that communism would dominate the world (edge band). With this border policy, there was no hot war between the USA and the Soviet Union during the Cold War period. In the important events that developed after the Second World War, the Soviets took a step back under the pressure of the USA (West) and could not risk a hot conflict. However, implicitly the two blocks (tutorage) came face to face in wars. One of them was the Korean War and the other one was the Vietnam War (Öke, 1990).

Korean Peninsula, where the 38th parallel made famous by the Korean War today forms the border between the two countries (the Republics of North and South Korea), is a mountainous peninsula in East Asia extending towards the south. It has Yellow Sea to the west and the Sea of Japan to the east. Its land neighbors are Chinese Manchuria and the Russian Federation. It was occupied by Japan during World War II. In fact, for centuries, Korea has served as a buffer between the lands of the three great countries that surrounded it. Korean Peninsula was a natural route for Chinese civilization to reach Japan and later played the role of a bridgehead for Japan's expansion into Asia. As Korea lies at the crossroads of Asian empires, throughout its history it has been subject to attacks and invasions from powerful neighbors and overseas powers. Due to its geographical location, Korea could not save itself from being a war zone for centuries (Denizli, 1994).

Korea was invaded about 900 times during its 2000-year recorded history. From 1231 to the beginning of the 14th century, Mongolia was occupied and devastated by Chinese armies, both official and rebel. Besides, the Choson Dynasty, ruled by members of the Yi tribe around this time, was renamed as Koryo in year 1392. On the other hand, in 1592 and 1597, the unifying power of the Japanese, Hideyoshi, launched major Korean invasions (Nenes, 2009, p. 272), but Hideyoshi was unsuccessful in both operations. Korea remained as independent until the end of the 19th century, even though the Choson Dynasty proved its loyalty to the Chinese side and recognized Chinese control of East Asia. At that period, China struggled to curb the growing Japanese influence on the Korean peninsula and Russian commercial pressure there. This rivalry gave rise to the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. In 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War, both countries fought for dominance in Korea. In this war, which gave impetus to the rise of Japanese imperialism, China fought to remove Japan from the Korean Peninsula and secure its position on the Peninsula, but Japan won

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